

“Only 28 Shopping Days Til Christmas” Matthew 1:1-17

This was without a doubt the loneliest Thanksgiving holiday ever for millions of people thanks to COVID 19. I'm sure Beverly and I experienced Thanksgiving like many of you with just the two of us at home enjoying a great meal of turkey and dressing and all the fixin's. And truthfully, it wasn't that lonely for us. Beverly was busy cooking and I was busy just piddlin' around. I worked on several passages of Scripture that came to mind for possible sermons in the future. And we enjoyed one another's company. And we didn't have to travel. We stayed off the roads for a change. We stayed safe.

There's more to life for those who are in Christ than what the world deems important. We have the presence of the Spirit. We have fellowship with God Himself because we have the Holy Spirit. God is there, and He is not silent.

And speaking of silence, take your Bible and turn to Matthew's gospel, chapter 1 and v.1. We're going to cover 17 verses without my reading every word in the passage. Biblical genealogies get boring, but only if we fail to see why the Spirit had them included in the word of God.

Matthew 1:1 *The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:*

Beloved, every genealogy in the word of God is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. Those boring parts of the Old Testament where dozens of names are listed are the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. Your genealogy is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, but our genealogies are after the fact. Our genealogies became new the instant we by the grace of God came to faith in Jesus the Messiah.

Speaking of genealogies, Beverly just found out that one of her ancestors came over on the Mayflower. You may have found out this morning that Jesus is in your genealogy. Can you imagine that? You are in the same family that Jesus is in. And He knows your name!

Now notice a word in v.1, the word “record.” That, beloved, is referring to a written document that has the authority of God behind it. It

is like a legal document that you might hold such as the deed to your property or your marriage license that has the authority of our government behind it.

In September my condo was officially paid off. I have just received a legal document showing that I have paid it off. The document is called “Satisfaction of Security Instrument” or satisfaction of deed. Now the monthly payments I made for 15 years are ended. Now I have to pay other stuff that the mortgage holder paid until now.

What Matthew is about to write and what we’re about to read is a legal, authorized document of God-breathed Scripture. That’s what the word “record” means. It is also the Greek word meaning “book” or “Bible.”

Now notice v.2, Mt. 1:2

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

Adam who?

Did you notice that the Lord’s genealogy begins with Abraham, not Adam? Did you notice that neither Adam nor Eve nor their children nor their children nor their children’s children were named until we get to Abraham? It isn’t like God was trying to ignore people who didn’t meet with His approval, after all, He does include Rahab the prostitute in the lineage of the Lord Jesus. We all have skeletons in our closets, don’t we? The fact is, God chose Abraham and Sarah to be our spiritual parents who were practicing idolators in the land of Ur in order to turn everything in a new direction.

Are there people in your genealogy that you wish weren’t there? Are there people in your genealogy that you are proud of? Beverly just found out through Ancestry.com that one of her ancestors was on the Mayflower when it landed at Plymouth Rock.

The genealogy of Jesus the Messiah doesn’t begin with the first man but with Abraham. God sovereignly chose Abram and Sarai out of all the people on earth to demonstrate His sovereignty and His mercy, and they came from a family of idolators.

Jesus' genealogy began with Abraham. Our spiritual genealogy begins and ends with Jesus.

We are raised up, righteous children of God.

We are loved, we are justified, we are redeemed, we are reconciled to God. We are members of the household of God.

Now drop down to Matthew 1:17. ¹⁷ *So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.*

God is deliberate and precise in all that He does, including His calling of you.

¹⁷ *So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.*

You can't miss it. Three periods of 14 generations didn't happen by accident. If you have doubts about the sovereignty of God in calling you into His family through faith in Jesus, I hope that can put it to rest by seeing God's hand in all that He did to get Jesus and you to the Cross.

"Only 400 years til Christmas"

One of my favorite Christmas hymns and yours as well, is "Silent Night." It's a very melancholic song and it always makes me a little emotional every time I sing it or hear it. But it also adds a little something to my faith in the Messiah. I imagine Jesus as a newborn baby in the manger in Bethlehem surrounded by his mother and Joseph and the shepherds who came to see Him after the multitude of angels had announced His birth to them that night. And the reality of what happened at that moment in history is what builds my faith in God. The birth of Jesus is an historical fact and that Christmas hymn builds my faith in the reality of what God did that night. **It's the reality of the birth of Jesus that makes Christmas hymns so moving. It's our God-given faith that makes His birth an undeniable fact.**

But I also remember every year at this time the fact that **this was the first time God had spoken to Israel in 400 years. They were the 400 years of silence. But they were centuries of silence ordained by God in order to prepare the world for the day of redemption.**

Do you ever question why God does things the way He does? Why does He allow so many disciples of Christ to suffer through illnesses and diseases? Why did He allow the serpent to deceive Eve? Why did He create an angel that could choose to rebel against Him and bring sin and death into His creation? Why did the members of the Godhead choose to cut Israel off from hearing the word of God for four hundred years allowing the greatest hypocrites in history to organize themselves into different schools of theology based on their perverted and man-centered view of God?

It was during these four hundred years of silence, when God ended the age of the prophets and refrained from sending a word to the Jews, that the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Sanhedrin and the lawyers and the doctors and the Scribes, all the bad guys who would send Jesus to be murdered, took matters into their own hands and rose up to lead the Jews astray. And God knew exactly what to do to get Jesus to the cross. He knew exactly what to do to get us to the cross.

There is an unwritten principle of science that says, “Nature abhors a vacuum.” Nothing in nature stays empty for very long. My neighbors never touch their backyard. There is no grass in it. So now weeds and vines and dead tree branches and bare dirt have taken over and it’s because nature abhors a vacuum. Something is going to fill that space, even if it’s weeds and vines.

I close with this, that law of nature abhorring a vacuum is true for those who are not in Christ. Their lives are the result of their being dead in their trespasses and sins. They are by nature, children of wrath.

But for us, that vacuum has been filled by the grace of God. And, beloved, once filled? “Always filled.”

Remember how I said in the beginning of this sermon that genealogies are boring if we don't understand why they are there and so many names are named? In a nutshell, here's why.

God is letting us know that He knows the names of all His children. He knows your name. And where is your name recorded in the genealogy of Christ? In the Lamb's book of life.