

The time is fulfilled

Lesson for Sunday, April 23, 2023

INTRODUCTION: Review...

1. Genesis 1:31 – God created it all
2. Genesis 1:27 – We are all created in God’s image
3. Genesis 3:6 – The Fall changed it all
4. Genesis 3:15 – God’s promise of redemption
5. Genesis 12:2-3 – The Seed of Abraham
6. Genesis 49:10 – Judah’s Royal Seed
7. Exodus 12:23 – The Passover Lamb
8. 2 Samuel 7:13 – The Line of David
9. Isaiah 53:5 – The Suffering Servant
10. Deuteronomy 7:9 – God is true to His Word

- ⇒ We have seen over and over that God is faithful to keep His promises. Early in human history God promised to send His Promised Seed that would reverse the curse introduced in Genesis 3. Around 4000 years had passed and now it was time...
- ⇒ Turn to Matthew 1 – what do you see? These sections of the Bible warm our hearts about as much as reading a phone book.
- ⇒ Here’s an interesting thing to think about: what we consider to be the most boring, least interesting part of the Christmas story was of the utmost importance to the original audience.
- ⇒ What Matthew is doing between the lines is preaching an eloquent message on the nature of God’s mercy, judgment and faithfulness.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The **MERCY** of God (vs. 2-6)
 - a. The most striking thing about that first section is the mention of four women who remind us of God’s mercy.
 - b. First, God’s love is bigger than one **race**. Jesus is the Savior of all people.
 - i. Two of these women weren’t Jewish: Rahab was a Gentile and Ruth was a Moabite.
 - ii. Matthew chooses women who do not in any way enhance or bring credibility to the untarnished Jewishness of Jesus.
 - iii. Quite the reverse, he chooses women who show how contaminated Jesus’ bloodline was.
 - c. Second, God’s love is bigger than our **sin**.
 - i. Three of these women were notorious sinners!
 - ii. Rahab was a prostitute in Jericho.
 - iii. Tamar tricked Judah (her father-in-law) into having a child by her (incest).
 - iv. Matthew couldn’t bring himself to say Bathsheba’s name!
 - d. If we could handpick our family tree, we would most likely leave out this sort of characters. But remember that *Jesus did pick His tree*, and He chose an ordinary human family with scoundrels and saints mixed together.
2. The **JUDGMENT** of God (vs. 7-15)

- a. At the point of King David, the Jews believed they were on the brink of paradise! But suddenly it all crumbled and they entered into a difficult and dark time of Jewish history: the Babylonian Captivity.
 - b. What happened that brought this on the Jewish people? They turned their backs on God. They retained some of the outward forms of their religion, but their hearts were far from him. They divorced their religion from their behavior, so that they were as wicked as the nations around them.
 - c. Refer to Amos 5:4-27...(*don't read all this!*)
 - i. What was the key to their salvation according to verse 4? *Seek God...*
 - ii. What specific sins are mentioned in this passage? Look at verses 7, 10, 11a, 12.
 - d. These were very dark times for the Israelites. But even in the midst of God's judgment we see that He was still faithful.
3. The **FAITHFULNESS** of God (vs. 16).
- a. There was one thing that all of the people in these three sections had in common: they were **waiting**.
 - b. The promise first came to Abram in Genesis 12.
 - c. Then it came to David in 2 Samuel 7.
 - d. Meanwhile the people waited, like a child waiting for Christmas morning. Generation came, and generation went—still no Messiah. So they waited some more and kept the genealogy straight to keep track of who might come and sit on the throne.
 - e. In Christ's genealogy, we see the faithfulness of our God; when that One came, he was a lineal descendent of King David, which meant that Jesus Christ has a literal right to sit on the throne of Israel.
 - f. Not only was He a son of David; He was also the Son of God.
 - i. All the other people in this genealogy are the sons of earthly fathers.
 - ii. In verse 16, it refers to Joseph as Mary's husband.
 - iii. He's not Joseph's boy; He's God's Son!
 - g. Again, we are reminded that God is faithful to his promises.

CONCLUSION:

What does Jesus' genealogy mean for you and me today?

- People cannot grandfather their way into the kingdom of God on the coattails of their ancestors. All that matters now is faith in Jesus Christ. Question: Are you in God's Genealogy?

We all have earthly genealogies, and yet after a few generations we forget those genealogies.

- You may remember your grandfather or grandmother, but how many of you remember your great, great grandparents?
- Someday all of us are simply going to be a memory in the minds of our grandchildren. Then we're going to be a name in a faded family Bible.
- Finally, we'll be forgotten altogether by this world, and all that will matter then is: Are we remembered in the mind of God?

Add to the timeline – Matthew 1:16 – The Time is Fulfilled