

1Yr02 – Planning to Become a Man Matthew 1:1-16

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Open your Bibles, please. We are headed to Matthew. Title of the message, “Planning to Become a Man.” This is God planning to become a man, not boys planning to become a man. Our key scripture is Matthew 1:1-16.

When was it exactly that God began planning to become a man in Jesus Christ? Answers? Don’t answer, it’s a trick question. Because God is outside of time, and the word “planning” implies time, as if time were passing. But we know that God sees the end from the beginning. And so we know that where God exists there was no planning as in time passing and so I have to re-state the question. The story of Jesus is about God crashing in to our world including its time constraints. And so the question is from our perspective. “When did God begin planning to become a man?” Wait, don’t answer.

Let’s pray first. *Heavenly Father please help us to grasp the hugeness, the eternal spectrum of this Lord. Help us to see, God that your plan has always been in existence where you are. Help us to see the extent, the volume, and the gravity of your plan to become a man to save us from eternal separation from you Lord. Open our eyes to it today, we pray in Jesus’ name, amen.*

Alright, while we were praying were you thinking, “When is it? When is it?” Just raise your hand if you said Genesis Chapter 3. Genesis 3:15. I’m going to blow through the Old Testament this message.

Genesis 3 verse 15. Immediately after the devil orchestrated the fall of mankind in bringing sin into the world through Adam and Eve’s choice, immediately following that God speaks to Satan as the serpent in Genesis 3:15. And he says this:

Genesis 3:15 (NLT)

15 And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring (meaning the demons) and her offspring (singular, meaning Jesus.) He (that’s Jesus) will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

This verse we call the protoevangelium. It is the prototype, it is the beginning, it’s the first of the Gospel. The first mention of the Gospel, but also just in essence it is the proto, the beginning the first of the Gospel. All the major aspects of the Gospel message are found in Genesis 3:15. Pretty cool, right? That’s all the time we have for that.

So the way that God was going to bring this plan to pass of him becoming a man, was through a man that he renamed Abraham. And so at Abraham, from our perspective we

really see God's plan to become a man start to take shape. We're in Genesis 12 next. Genesis Chapter 12 is the first of the covenant promise that God made to Abraham and his lineage, his descendants. The covenant promise was that the Messiah would come through Abraham to bless, or to save the entire world.

Genesis 12:2 (NLT)

2 I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.

Genesis 12:3 (NLT)

3 I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

All the families on earth will be blessed through you." That line is the first place that we really learn that God's plan to become a man is through the lineage of Abraham through Abraham's descendants because certainly that's the only way that all of the families on earth could be blessed, is through the Messiah.

Can I just stop for a moment? It's not a tangent if I tell you it's a tangent. So I couldn't help it. I rewrote this six or eight times trying to make it softer, and I did. It's softer than when I first wrote it. Look at Genesis 12:3, the beginning. I will bless those who bless you, Abraham, and curse those who treat you with contempt. That is a Biblical prophecy that is just as meaningful and accurate today as it was when God spoke it to Abraham.

For time's sake, and to do a time stamp for those who are listening later, the President of the United States, his name is Barak Hussein Obama. Every modern president, prior to this one, republican and democrat in the United States have taken heed to this prophetic verse in Genesis Chapter 12 verse 3. Every one. It almost kind of goes with the job, you might say.

"I will bless those who bless Israel, the people of Abraham and I will curse those who treat Israel with contempt."

Can I tell you this? Whether you feel positively or negatively, you'll probably agree with me, we have never had a President like our current one. He has honestly, I'm telling you the truth, and he has an unnatural level of contempt and hostility toward Israel. Easily documented, easily proven. He also has seemingly an unnatural level of support for those who those who are committed to destroying Israel. Say for instance if there was a neighboring nation who promised the world about a thousand times that if they got a nuclear bomb the first day, the first moment that they had it they would drop it on Israel.

If our President were to give them that bomb then it might be an indication that he is a supporter of those who have contempt and hate for Israel. It's really true; I'm not being political up here. I am telling you Biblically this is the fact.

All I can tell you is God meant this promise. Those who bless Israel God will bless, those who have contempt for Israel God will curse. Pray for Israel, especially right now. Pray for this country because of our role currently in Israel's attempted destruction. I promise you there is no nuclear bomb big enough that God can't handle it. And if you read Ezekiel 38 and 39 you can read the future newspaper. Because God tells us exactly what's going to happen there.

Alright, the real point is God's plan began with Abraham right here. That was a little side note, but it wasn't political because eventually I'm going to get thrown in jail for speaking against this country and its leaders as soon as they re-write the first amendment. Which I think they are working on.

God was faithful to Abraham, Genesis 12:2-3. He promised that the whole world would be blessed through Abraham, through the lineage of Abraham, even though in Genesis Chapter 16, Abraham foolishly tries to fulfill in the flesh what God promised to fulfill in the Spirit. If you're familiar with the story it has to do with Ishmael and Isaac. God was still faithful even after that. And so in God's time, Isaac the son of promise was born through Abraham miraculously.

Now you have to kind of follow me, this is genealogy stuff. It's important. Isaac had a son, his name was Jacob. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. We call them the patriarchs of the faith. When Jacob grew up, God renewed his promise to bring the Savior through the lineage of Abraham through his descendants who are in Genesis 28, now. God promised Jacob that he would bring the Messiah through his lineage in Genesis 28. Then Genesis 35 verse 10 God changed Jacob's name to Israel. Jacob meant Heel-catcher. He was a deceiver. He was a wild sinner and God changed his name from Heel-catcher, Deceiver to Governed by God. Israel.

So, Israel, previously Jacob had twelve sons. Those twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve tribes or twelve sons of Israel whose name was changed from Jacob to Israel.

One of those sons, his name was Judah. And Judah became the ruling tribe of Israel. Judah became the ruling tribe, the ruling line of Israel. Meaning that all the rulers of Israel from this point forward would come out of the tribe of Judah. Revelation, just to

give you a hint of the end, calls Jesus the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Because all of Israel's leaders would now come out of this tribe.

The long and winding road, (read through the Old Testament – I recommend the book “The Story” which makes the Old Testament so pleasant to read and it's actual scripture) of the Old Testament for the nation of Israel eventually, a thousand years after Abraham, comes King David. King David is Israel's greatest king. We taught the life of David here many years ago and I would love to re-teach it all the time. So King David is the one who captured Jerusalem, made the City of David (you can see the City of David with us when we go next February.) King David secures the City of David and ultimately that becomes what we know today as Jerusalem.

In 2 Samuel Chapter 7. King David is obviously a direct descendant of Abraham through the line of Judah, the tribe of Judah. This matters! I know you're thinking “Hey I don't know how this matters.” It matters. In 2 Samuel 7 there is a great story I really don't have time to share too much of, but David wanted to build the Lord a temple. He really did. He had this beautiful house, the Lord is still in the Tabernacle, the Shekinah glory of God and the Ark are still in the Tabernacle. He wanted to build the Lord a house, so he said he was going to and Nathan thought in his mind, not in his spirit, go ahead and build God a house. And God said, “Hey, pal what happened to asking me?” He says that to Nathan, and he says go back and tell David “You can't build me a temple. You're a man of war. You're a warrior. I need your son to build me a temple (meaning Solomon.) But in 2 Samuel 7 the second half of verse 11 Nathan, on behalf of God speaking to David says:

2 Samuel 7:11(b) (NLT)

11(b)“Furthermore, the LORD declares that he will make a house for you—a dynasty of kings!

So God says to David you can't make a temple but you are going to become the beginning of a dynasty of kings. You will have a dynasty of kings, speaking of a lineage of Kings.

And then down in verse 16 continuing God's word through Nathan to David he says:

2 Samuel 7:16 (NLT)

16 Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever.'"

When God says for all time he means *for all time*, into eternity. Your house, the lineage of kings that come from you, David and your kingdom, your throne, your rulership will

continue before me for all time. God is promising King David in the lineage of Abraham, through the tribe of Judah that the lineage of Kings that come from him will never end. He's speaking about an eternal king that will sit on the throne of Israel, forever. Not just for Israel but for all the world.

Continue to Isaiah. Chapter 9 God is continually giving his people confirmations and promises of this. Three hundred years after King David, Isaiah is prophesying to the people of Israel, not long before the exile. And Isaiah Chapter 9 verse 6 is a verse used far too often for Christmas, it wasn't written for Christmas. God's not writing Christmas cards here, he's telling us about his promise that started with Abraham, through the tribe of Judah and ultimately centers around King David and his throne.

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NLT)

6 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!

Since Genesis Chapter 3 God has been planning to be a man. Since Genesis Chapter 3 as far as we can tell, God in expression, who we met last week has been in the process of becoming a man all the way through the Old Testament. And over and over and over he is promised through God's covenant with Abraham, through the ruling tribe of Judah and finally to Israel's greatest king, the throne of King David... God has a plan for a Savior and a King to rule with peace and fairness and justice from the throne of David in Israel in Jerusalem for all eternity.

Guess what? The enemy knows that. And if you go to Jerusalem, if you've been there with me, you know that it is the most intense spiritual battle fulcrum on the earth. We call it the spiritual center of the universe, because of these promises. Do you really think that the temple mount is that important to the people who are dead set against Jews being on that location? It's not. It's their third holiest site and it was kind of made up later on, like 700 AD plus. But the battle is on. Why? Because the enemy does not want Israel to have that mount because God promised that the Messiah would rule from there. Guess who's gonna win!

Isaiah 9 verse 7 at the end again it says ***The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!***

God has a plan. He has a plan to become a man. To die on the cross in your place. To pay the full penalty for your sins and give you his righteousness so that you can be part of his eternal family, his eternal kingdom.

Isaiah 7 verse 14 tells us how it's going to happen, again seven hundred years before Christ was born.

Isaiah 7:14 (NLT)

14 All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us')

It's happening. I want you to see it from Genesis Chapter 3 there is this ball rolling and there is this momentum building and there is this plan that's unfolding. And when it happens, when it really begins a virgin is going to conceive and bear a son and they will call him God With Us. Do you see it? I'm just reading the Bible, reading it how it's written. A hundred years later, God is prophesying through Jeremiah, really, right at the exile. Jeremiah 33 holds another promise from God, another reminder to the people.

Jeremiah 33:14 (NLT)

14 "The day will come, says the LORD, when I will do for Israel and Judah all the good things I have promised them.

Listen if anybody tells you God has replaced Israel, you and I went through this, God has not replaced Israel. God has promised he will do all the good things he has promised to Israel.

Jeremiah 33:15-16 (NLT)

15 "In those days and at that time I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David's line. He will do what is just and right throughout the land.

16 In that day Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this will be its name: 'The LORD Is Our Righteousness.'

Jehovah Tsidkenu or Yahweh Tsidkenu, The Lord is Our Righteousness. This is Jeremiah. This is still six hundred years before Christ, before the Babylonian captivity. God says listen, Jerusalem is coming back. There will be righteousness there. Judah will be saved there. The name of Jerusalem will be The Lord is Our Righteousness. That's your salvation. Yahweh Tsidkenu.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says that he became sin for you so that you can become the righteousness of God in him. The Lord is our Righteousness, Jeremiah 33:16.

Jeremiah 33:17 (NLT)

17 For this is what the LORD says: David will have a descendant sitting on the throne of Israel forever.

Now you might be saying what is this about? I thought we were studying Jesus. We are. You start studying Jesus in Genesis Chapter 3. That's where you start studying Jesus. And all the way through the Old Testament you find him, over and over and over and over again. I've told you the story about a professor in Bible College who used to start every class by telling us, "Open your Bible and find Jesus on the page." And he wouldn't stand for everyone opening to the New Testament all of the time. Every page is about Jesus.

I want you to understand that Jesus wasn't God's plan B. That Jesus wasn't God's "fix." That God wasn't like, "Hey, why don't we try this. Why don't you go down there and die for them?" This was the plan from outside of time because God knows it all, he's at work in it all and he's orchestrating it all. God knows from before time, this is the way.

We're going now to Matthew Chapter 1. That was a quick survey of the Old Testament. I love doing that!

Matthew Chapter 1. God in Expression is about to become a man. We looked at that last week. God in Expression, the Logos of God. The express image of God. He's about to become a man. Is it important how he becomes a man? Yes! Because even Jesus himself says not one jot or tittle (those are the little Hebrew pronunciation marks,) not one pronunciation mark from the law will ever pass away. Jesus says he didn't come to change the law he came to fulfill the law. Every prophecy in the Old Testament has been fulfilled or is being fulfilled. And so it's important how Jesus became a man.

The Book of Matthew is the perfect bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament, that's why God put it first at the Council of Nicene. It became first because Matthew was a devout Jew. He was hardcore. But he worked for Rome, he was a tax collector. He was the scum of the earth. Matthew was a tax collector on the road to Capernaum.

Matthew was a devout Jew. And so he connected Jesus to the Old Testament for the Jews. Every one of the Gospels has its own purpose, its own perspective. Matthew's purpose and perspective was to show Jesus as the King of the Jews. That's his purpose. So if you look at that genealogy at the beginning of Chapter 1 and you say it doesn't mean anything you're obviously not Jewish. It means everything to the Jewish world. Everything. Still to this day, if you want to stay in Israel longer than a tourist. You have

to prove you have roots in one of the twelve tribes. You can't even get citizenship there. They're serious about their genealogy. They were more serious in the first century. So Matthew is going to show that Jesus is the Messiah King, the Savior King that the Old Testament has been promising. He's proving by this "scarlet thread" that I just ran you through that Jesus is the One.

Matthew 1:1 (NLT)

1 This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham:

He has to be a descendant in order to be the King that was promised throughout the Old Testament.

Matthew 1:2 (NLT)

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

We just met all those patriarchs. I just showed them to you in a quick survey. Isn't that cool? The Bible is one story, one consistent story from Genesis to Revelation. One story, one purpose; to get you to heaven. So now, starting in verse 3 we've got some really interesting names that I am going to point out, mark them as we go.

Matthew 1:3 (NLT)

3 Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar) (mark Tamar). Perez was the father of Hezron. Hezron was the father of Ram

Matthew 1:5 (NLT)

5 Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab) (mark Rahab). Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth) (mark Ruth). Obed was the father of Jesse.

So first Judah his mother was Tamar. Boaz, his mother was Rahab. Now we have the women of the genealogy, Tamar, Rahab and Ruth.

Matthew 1:6 (NLT)

6 Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, (mark Bathsheba) the widow of Uriah).

We need to stop right there. (I really can't teach every name in the genealogy, I would.) All the scholars agree that God is sending a message in this section of the genealogy. In

all the genealogy God is sending a message, but there are two things we have to learn in general from the genealogy.

One is, most of these names neither you, nor anyone else, has ever heard of. It's not just because you are a gentile Christian in an American culture. No one's ever heard of these names. There is a whole bunch of people that God used in the lineage of Jesus Christ who are absolutely nameless in history. *God uses people who are nameless in history for crucial roles in his kingdom plan.* That's the lesson. In Nuevo we say amen. God uses people who history will never know and he places them in critical roles in his plan for the kingdom. Isn't that great!

God is not looking for famous people. He's looking for people who will stay the course, who will stay in their place and stand on the Rock and fight until Jesus returns. And everyone one of us can do that. We don't have to be "somebody," we don't have to have some "whatever," we don't have to have our fifteen minutes of fame. Forget about it. It destroys most people. What we want is to be faithful to Jesus Christ until the end. And so many people in the genealogy of Christ have no record in the Bible. Zero. Their names aren't written in the Bible. Are you faithful? Funny thing is most of the people weren't. God's grace is phenomenal.

Women, I'm not picking on you. I'm really not. But I am going to point out these four women here. And it's not because they were more dastardly than the men. The men were more dastardly by far! The men that God used! We are sinners. We are sinners saved by grace

Let's review a little bit. Tamar, verse 3. Tamar was a gentile daughter-in-law of Judah. She was married to one of Judah's sons and she couldn't get pregnant. And she pretended to be a prostitute and got her father-in-law to sleep with her so that she could have a baby in the family line. Not once, but twice!

Let's go to Rahab. Rahab, verse 5. Rahab actually was a gentile prostitute, which was her profession. She was a gentile prostitute in Jericho and God used her tremendously for the spies there and she chose to put her faith in the God of Israel and leave Jericho and go with Joshua in Israel. And God put her right in the middle of the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Ruth is our most wholesome woman in our genealogy here. She was a Moabite widow. The Moabites kind of used to be part of the tribes of Israel, but they had gotten into humanistic, pagan stuff. So they were kind of "outside the family." Ruth was outside the core of Israel and she left her homeland in Moab and sought the God of Israel, came into

Israel. God put her as a Moabite widow outside the realm of Israel and God put her right in the middle of the lineage of Christ.

Bathsheba was really, honestly, she was forced to commit adultery with King David. Compelled, she couldn't really say no, (she maybe could have used a shower curtain on the roof to keep David from seeing her.) It's all David's fault. But Bathsheba succumbed to that coercion to commit adultery with King David. She lost that baby because of it. (Her husband was murdered by King David) But then her second child was named Solomon. And Solomon was the wisest man in the world. King David himself, an adulterer and a murderer and Israel's greatest king. (Acts says he is a man after God's own heart.) An adulterer and a murderer?

Here's my point. What have you done? What have you done to get to the place you're at with God? If you're beyond prostitution, deception, adultery and murder I promise you God can still use you. But if the adulteresses, the prostitutes and the murderers in the lineage of Christ God has transformed and used, he can handle you. Is that good news, or what? Don't feel that you've done anything that God can't forgive and restore, because he can and the Bible proves it. That's the message. God can use any life fully surrendered to him, no matter how long their road has been to reach that point. (The only people God didn't use were the religious Pharisees.)

Matthew verse 11 and verse 12 have to do with the exile to Babylon and the captivity for Jerusalem. If that's foreign to you, ask at the wordbymail table for God's Plan – Genesis to Revelation and listen to message number 9.

Matthew 1:16 (NLT)

16 Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

Up to this point you can scan the genealogy. It says the father of, the father of, the father of. But when it gets to Joseph it says the husband of Mary. Joseph was the adoptive father of Jesus. Meaning that he was the legal father from a genealogical standpoint, but of course he was not the birthfather. But let me just tell you in case that throws anybody a curveball and they say Joseph from the line of David wasn't the birthfather of Jesus – but it's okay because Mary was also from the line of David!

So Joseph was in the line of David through Solomon. Mary was a descendant of David through his other son Nathan. So Joseph and Mary both come directly from the line of King David. Joseph the legal father, Mary the biological mother. Because it had to be perfectly proven that Jesus was the messiah promised in the Old Testament since Genesis

Chapter 3 and it was perfectly proven. Three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament fulfilled by Jesus Christ and his birth, life, death and resurrection. Three hundred. How many were not fulfilled? There are still a couple. Why? Because Jesus is coming back. Like the one that says he's gonna step on the Mount of Olives and split it in half. That one's still coming. But his first advent, all fulfilled.

So 2,000 years before Christ God began his genealogy in Abraham. Let's see the last moments of the plan for God to become a man. God was going to take two *very normal* and average, unlikely people to be last in line in this process of God becoming a man.

Let's turn to Luke and look at God's announcement to Mary first. Luke Chapter 1, second half of verse 26.

Luke 1:26(b)-29 (NLT)

26 (b) God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, 27 to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David.

28 Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

29 Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean.

Here's Mary's response. She was confused and disturbed. She is a young girl, probably seventeen or so. She is confused and disturbed. Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. She didn't have a clue. Verse 30

Luke 1:30 -32 (NLT)

30 "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God!

31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus.

32 He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David

I just went over all that Old Testament prophecy so that I could read this. ***The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David***

Luke 1:33 (NLT)

33 And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

Which is just what the entire Old Testament says about him. And that's the Millennial Kingdom and the Eternal Reign. That's what we've been seeing from Genesis.

Luke 1:34-35(NLT)

34 Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

35 The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God."

Skipping down to verse 38.

Luke 1:38 (NLT)

38 Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

A young godly girl, but a young normal girl. Betrothed to be married, which is actually a little bit more than our word engaged. And God shows up and says listen. I have a plan that you have no idea about, that leaves you confused and disturbed. I just need you to have faith, and trust what I'm doing. And he put Mary in a very, very special place.

And then God did the very same thing with Joseph back in Matthew Chapter 1.

Matthew 1:18-21 (NLT)

18 This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit.

19 Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

20 As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

21 And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

That's what has been going on since Genesis 3:15, is this moment that is about to happen. The name Jesus means literally, Savior. **Iēsous** in the Greek means Savior. The Greek equivalent is Yehoshua. It means Yahweh is Salvation. The angel says ***you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."***

Matthew 1:22-23 (NLT)

22 All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

23 "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"

The Isaiah 7:14 prophecy we read in Isaiah while we were surveying the Old Testament the Holy Spirit says in Matthew 1:22 *All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message*

The Lord's messages said there will be one that will come through the lineage of Abraham and the tribe of Judah and the throne of King David who will be God With Us, who will be the God Man, the Expression of God as a man. I want you to know the entire Old Testament points to this moment when God invades the human condition to save us because there's no other way for us to be saved. God started in Genesis 3:15, he started the process of the lineage in Genesis 12 and it is finalized almost here. We'll see it next message.

Matthew 1:24-25 (NLT)

24 When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife

25 But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Two thousand years of genealogy orchestration we just reviewed. Two thousand years we just surveyed for God to bring about a bloodline for Jesus to be the legal King of Israel and Messiah and to be the biological king through the throne of David, both from Joseph and from Mary, so that there was no doubt. But they still did not believe.

I'm going to tell you something. Those of you who like to bury people with facts. People don't believe in God because of facts. It takes faith to believe in God. God has given us all the facts but so many people still say, "That's not what I think." Well here are the facts. Please hear me; it is not until you exercise faith that God responds with the supernatural Holy Spirit that gives you the eyes to see and the ears to hear. There is this miraculous thing that occurs where God gives you the faith and you exercise the faith and some people get hung up on which comes first. Does God give me the faith or do I exercise the faith? Let me tell you – you exercise the faith – let God worry about which came first. Exercise the faith. Say "Lord, I believe. Show me. Make your Word come to life."

How many of you have gotten saved, have the Holy Spirit living inside of you, and you open the Bible and say you never saw it like this before? The Holy Spirit is alive in you. Facts don't save. Faith saves.

Let's pray. *Heavenly Father please pour your Spirit out on this place. We recognize that information doesn't save. We recognize that salvation is the only issue. Everything else, Lord, you can take care of. And so right now we pray for the faith to believe.*

(If you're not sharing that life with Jesus Christ right now I want to give you that chance to do that. Right where you are. You can say something like this.) "Jesus I believe. Help my unbelief. Give me the faith to believe, Lord. I believe what your Word says. I believe who you are. Please come into my life and reveal yourself to me. Fill me with your Holy Spirit, Lord, and give me the power to see you. My heart wants to commune with you. I want to know you. I want to live in your life. Help me do that right now. It's in your name I pray, amen."