

Series: **Christmas 2020**
CDOBC – beginning on 12/20/20
Today's Title: **"Christmas Grace"**
December 20, 2020 - Matthew 1:1-6

OBJECTIVE: To help people learn that Christmas is full of grace and 2nd chances.

There are moments in life where you find yourself at a crossroads – a fork in the road – where you have to make a decision.

And some of those decisions have life-long consequences. A decision made today which determines the direction of the next 10+ years of your life!

"Will you marry me?"

"I quit!"

"Ok, let's put the house up for sale and move there."

"Ok, let's try and have a baby!"

Decisions which have a lasting impact for you – and others in your life.

As a parent, you find yourself worrying about your kids – especially when they enter HS and college – hoping they make good, wise, God-honoring decisions.

You want their future to be full of blessing, not limited and restricted because of poor, unwise, rash decisions made in haste, ignorance or in the heat of the moment.

A parent's worst fear is their son/daughter will *"throw it all away"* with 1 bad decision!

Christmas is not normally associated with bad decisions or people who “*threw it all away*” with their lifestyle choices. ***But*** Christmas is a reality that includes a history of bad choices – really bad choices and messed up people.

One of the practices of rulers in ancient times is they cherry-picked their history.

They only shared their successes – never their failures or bad decisions.

Hollywood publicist do the same thing.

We’ve seen this in our modern-day with the former North Korean dictator, Kim Jong-Il.

- The Korean people were told Kim Jong-Il never used the toilet because his body was so perfectly calibrated with what he ate and drank.
- The people were told that his gray military-inspired wardrobe was a fashion frenzy throughout the world.
- The North Korean people were also told that all the countries of the world loved their leader, and the world celebrated his birthday each year.

We see it in our own country as each political party highlights their successes – and minimizes, ignores or lies about the other party’s successes.

If you sent out a Christmas letter this year, you probably highlighted the past year’s success, but not the failures.

But the Bible is different.

The Bible reveals the successes of the heroes of the faith – Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, King David, King Solomon and the various Apostles – but it also shares their failures – their lowest points.

The Christmas story is no different.

In fact, I would propose that the Christmas story is the most blatant display of both spiritual and moral success and failure.

When you speak of the birth of Jesus, one of the main considerations of Jesus' birth was His rightful genetic line to the throne of David...His royal blood.

Hence, both **Matthew** and **Luke** – the 2 Gospels which give us the birth accounts of Jesus – also include genealogies.

The main point of the genealogies is to prove that Jesus belongs to the royal line of David, and He is therefore qualified to be considered as the Messiah – the Christ.

But within those genealogies we see something else – something tremendously encouraging to us – we see God's grace – because in Matthew's genealogy, we see immense moral failure and bad decisions.

Turn to Matthew 1

This morning I want to show you some people who were outcasts – people that Scripture reveals as falling far short of God's standards – yet God not only redeemed them, He also included them in the royal line – the Messianic line of Jesus

– and this is not just a history lesson of Jesus’ blood line. It has great implications for you and me here today!

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

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

3 and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram,

4 and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon,

5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse,

6 and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah...”

Judah and Tamar - vs. 3

“Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron...”

Genesis 38 records a terrible series of events within the larger story of Jacob, his wives and his 12 sons.

Chapter 38 is a horrific account of evil, judgment, broken promises, deceit and illicit sexual encounters.

Tamar was Judah’s daughter-in-law, and she deceives Judah – because of his broken promises to her – and she pretended to be a prostitute – and became pregnant through their encounter.

Tamar had twins – and Perez – was one of those twins.

The sin of Judah and Tamar is a horrific blight on their life – and yet, we see God’s grace displayed not only in the blessings they would experience later in life, but they and their son (Perez) are included in the Messianic line.

Rahab the prostitute - vs. 5

“and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab”

Tamar played a prostitute for a specific instance, but for Rahab, it was her profession.

Joshua 2 & 6

Rahab was a prostitute – she was also a Canaanite, which is another aspect of God’s grace in the Messianic line of Jesus. The royal line of David – the Messianic line to the eternal, royal throne of Israel includes Gentile blood – which drives home the point that the Messiah is not only for the Jews – but for all people!

Rahab lived in the city of Jericho – in a house on the great wall of Jericho.

Because of her fear of Israel’s God (2:8-13), she made a decision to protect the men who were Israeli spies instead of turning them over to the King of Jericho.

When Israel defeated Jericho (Joshua 6), Rahab and her family were spared.

Later, Rahab married a Jewish man named Salmon, and they had a son which they named Boaz.

In addition, because of His grace, God included her in the royal line of David – the Messianic line.

Ruth the Moabite - vs. 5

“and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse...”

Ruth is another Gentile in the list.

Her story is recorded in the O.T. book of Ruth.

She was a Moabite – a pagan people whose origin was the incest of Lot and his daughters (**Gen. 19:30-38**).

The son of one of Lot’s daughters was named Moab, who became the father of the Moabites – who became one of Israel’s most intense enemies.

Ruth married a Jewish man – the son of a woman named Naomi.

Ruth’s husband died, but she was faithful to Naomi and put her faith in Naomi’s God – the God of Israel – the one, true God.

Ruth eventually married a Jewish man named Boaz and they had a boy named Obed. Obed eventually had a son named Jesse, who himself had 8 sons (1 Samuel 16:10-11), the youngest whose name was David.

David and the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba) - vs. 6

“And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah...”

David was Israel’s greatest King, but he wasn’t perfect – or even close to perfect.

He did many great things – He had a heart after God, but it was a human heart and he sinned greatly on multiple occasions.

His greatest sin is found in **2 Samuel 11** – where in **vs. 2** the ominous words read: “It happened, late one afternoon...”

David’s sexual sin with Bathsheba has been described many ways, from an adulterous affair to rape. After all, he was the king, and what is a woman to say to the king? Bathsheba became pregnant by David, but his sexual sin was not the worst sin in the episode - for he also murdered her husband, Uriah, to conceal the ‘*affair*’ and Bathsheba’s pregnancy.

It’s a horrific stain on the Kingship of David – and on David himself.

That baby died on the 7th day – but God allowed them to conceive another child – and this child’s name was Solomon – who succeeded his father on the throne as the 3rd King of Israel, and it is through Solomon the royal, Messianic line traveled.

Once again, the grace of God is on full display – as God blesses those who don’t deserve blessing.

They deserve judgement, but instead receive God’s mercy and grace.

Instead of judgement, God gives them the eternal honor of being in the royal, Messianic line.

Apply it...

It's easy to read the accounts in the Bible of other people's sins – and to judge them – to look down on them.

Truth be told...we're just as guilty.

Even if we haven't committed the same sins – we have plenty of our own sins to worry about.

The good news this morning is Christmas is not just an event that happened in a far-away place 2,000 years ago. It's a historical reality that still impacts us today!

The line of Christ not only looks back at the lives of the royal line, but it also gives us hope knowing that God's plan of salvation is for all people – and His grace is given to those who don't deserve it – ***it's given to us!***

Have you asked Jesus for His grace and forgiveness?

Have you admitted your sin – and believed in Jesus – His death and resurrection – for your forgiveness?

This is truly...Christmas grace.

Closing prayer -