

## The Gift We Need

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But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. <sup>5</sup> God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. Galatians 4:4, 5

### Why does Matthew include the people he does when telling Jesus' genealogy?

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham...

<sup>3</sup> Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar... <sup>5</sup> Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab... <sup>6</sup> and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife...

Matthew 1:1-6

- Tamar
- Rahab
- Ruth
- Bathsheba

The people in the genealogy weren't just part of the story;  
they were the point of the story.

Sin was the issue that Jesus came to address.

- Jesus didn't just come *for* sinners, He came *from* sinners.

Jesus has the authority to forgive our sin. (Matthew 9:1-8)

"...Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." Matthew 9:2

Jesus calls people with a past.

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. ... <sup>12</sup> On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. <sup>13</sup> But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Matthew 9:9, 12-13

- God can work through your life despite your past.

God invites us to approach Him, not based on what we have done, but based on what He has done for us through Jesus Christ.

*How have you responded to the invitation to receive God's gift of righteousness?*

## Let's Connect

- Have you ever researched your ancestry? If so, what did you learn?

## Let's Talk About It

Jesus' lineage is filled with shady characters, people with less than stellar pasts . . . none of whom could have come to God on their own merits. But a relationship with God has never been based on our own goodness. God offers an amazing gift to ordinary people—forgiveness and the gift of righteousness through Jesus Christ. We are invited to approach God and receive this gift, not based on what we have done, but based on what God has done for us through Jesus Christ.

Galatians 4:4-5; Matthew 1:1-6; Genesis 3:14-15; Matthew 9:1-8, 9-13; Luke 5:28

- Which part of the message impacted or challenged you?
- Read Matthew 1:1-6. What do you learn about Jesus' genealogy? What surprises you about his ancestry?
- Read Matthew 9:9-13. Who are the most despised characters in modern society? Jesus seems to be okay with spending time with sinners. How does Jesus model living a godly life without removing himself from the company of sinners?
- Who could you do a better job of loving despite it being "complicated"? What would loving them better look like?
- Discuss the magnitude of what God gives us through Jesus. Do you tend to focus on what you have or haven't done? Or do you understand and appreciate what's been done for you through Jesus Christ?

## Take a Step

- If there's anything that the Christmas season reminds us of, it's that we're *all* in need of forgiveness – and Jesus is willing and able to give that to us. What can you do this week to focus on what Jesus has done for you rather than your own attempts at righteousness?

## Here's My Prayer

Thank You, God, for being a good, compassionate Father who always cares about Your children. I am so grateful that You provided a way for me to receive forgiveness and Your amazing gift of righteousness through Jesus. I know I don't deserve it. Empower me by Your Holy Spirit to live a life that brings glory to Your name and is worthy of Christ's sacrifice. In Jesus' name amen.