

Matthew 1:1-17

The Resume

Please turn to Matthew 1

This week an Australian woman named Veronica Theriault was sentenced to 25 months in prison for lying on her resume to land a \$185,000 job as CIO. Her resume was filled with a fabricated education, an embellished work history and false references. She even went so far as to pretend to be one of her own references when a recruiter called as part of the hiring process!

With any person that is being put into a position, we want to know their backgrounds well.

Whether it's Presidents of countries...of companies or country Pastors

We want to know their backgrounds

We want to know if they are fit for the job

We want to know if they are the right person

- ❖ And that is the question that Matthew confronts right up front in his Gospel
 - The Jews have been waiting for the Messiah for 2,000 years since Abraham
 - And the question is...
 - Is this Jesus of Nazareth Him?
- ❖ Is he the right person?
- ❖ Is Jesus the promised snake-crusher? (Gen 3)
- ❖ Is he the one through whom all nations would be blessed? (Gen 12)
- ❖ Is Jesus the shoot from the stump of Jesse?
 - And Matthew answers these questions in the form of a Genealogy

READ 1:1-17

- ❖ Mathew is 1 of the 3 synoptic Gospel
 - Matthew, Mark & Luke
 - Synoptic meaning “seen together”
 - They take a similar view of Jesus’ life
 - Like picking up a diamond and looking at it from different angles
 - It is the same object, but different aspects are seen
- ❖ Probably written between 50 and 80 AD
- ❖ Written by one of the eyewitnesses of Jesus’ ministry...Mathew
 - A converted Jewish tax collector whose Jewish name is Levi
- ❖ This is probably the reason that his Gospel has a decidedly Jewish flavor
 - It seems to be written with a Jewish audience in mind
 - We see that through the many prophecies quoted and alluded to
 - 40 quoted directly and dozens alluded to
 - We see this through the numerous interactions between Jesus and the Jewish Authorities
 - We see this through the massive amount of rabbinic-style teaching
 - We see this through the multiple indictments of Jewish belief
 - Some of the strongest in any of the Gospels
- ❖ But right here....
 - And we see this Jewish-ness through the way he starts his Gospel...
 - With a Genealogy
- ❖ Genealogies were critical to the Jewish people
 - By them they keep their identity
 - By them they proved their uniqueness as a people of God
 - Their “called out-ness”

- By them they ground themselves in their history
- ❖ Genealogies, to us, are boring...
 - We usually skip over it in our devotions!
 - But a Jew would read & study them, meditate on them & treasure them!
- ❖ So I invite you to act a “little Jewish” this morning and sit forward in your pew
 - Look closely with me at this list of names
 - And the first name that would jump out at you is...Jesus Christ
- ❖ Christ is the Greek word for Messiah
 - So Matthew right off the bat is claiming that this Jesus...
 - Who was crucified some 20-40 years previous...
 - Was the snake-crusher of Genesis 3
 - He was the Messiah that had been written about in their Scriptures
 - That they had been longing for
- ❖ And Matthew knows that they will need proof
 - So the very next words he writes Confirm this

Confirmation

OVERHEAD

- ❖ Look @ v. 1 - Jesus Christ, **the son of David**
 - If Matthew is going to claim the Jesus is the Christ...
 - The one thing he had better prove or confirm is that he is in David’s line
- ❖ And that is what he is doing in v. 2-16
 - While Luke’s Genealogy shows the paternal lineage of Mary
 - Matthew’s Genealogy is more concerned with showing the royal lineage of Joseph
- ❖ And was absolutely critical to the Jews

- No matter who claimed to be the Messiah
 - If he was not in the bloodline of David
 - It was not him
 - Like the British Royal line
 - There has to be a blood connection
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- ❖ It was the promise given to King David in 950 years earlier
 - God told David... *When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom*
 - The messiah would come from David's blood line
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- ❖ And God reinforced and remind His people throughout the centuries of this
 - Through the Prophet Jeremiah He said...
 - *The days are coming, when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land (Jer 23:5-6)*
 - This was further reiterated by the prophet Isaiah that...
 - ... a child will be born, (and) a son will be given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom (Isa 9:6-7)
 - And a little later that...
 - (The Messiah had to be) the "shoot" that will come from the stump of Jesse that we read earlier (Isa 11:1)
 - The ability for Israel to have a King was cut off in 586 BC when Babylonian conquered them
 - The royal line was cut off and dead like a stump

- But a new shoot of the Messiah would appear out of what looked dead and gone

- ❖ The Jew on the street might not know of all the other expectations of the Messiah
 - But they knew he had to have the blood of King David running in his veins
 - They needed confirmation of a blood relative

- ❖ And now Matthew is saying...
 - Here he is!
 - Here is your king!

- ❖ This is a theme we have to watch for over and over again in the Gospel
 - Matt 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9 & 15

- ❖ This is what the NT also confirms over and over again
 - Acts 2:29-30; Rev 22:16; Rom 1:3
 - 2 Tim 2:8
 - Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David
 - ***Jesus Christ is the heir to David's throne!***

APP

- ❖ And that is what he is saying to you and me today
 - Here he is!
 - Here is your King!
 - Jesus Christ is the heir to the throne of your heart
 - You are the vassal of King Jesus...
 - Living in his Upside Down Kingdom

- ❖ I have named the sermon series in Matthew “The Upside Down Kingdom”
 - Because over the next year or so our King Jesus is going to challenge us with how to live in this world
 - And it will seem counter-intuitive

- Like putting others before yourself
- Counter-cultural
 - Like loving your enemies
- Strange
 - Like being quick to forgive
- Odd
 - Like not worrying about tomorrow
- Peculiar
 - Like living such a radically generous life that effects your lifestyle
- Upside down like
 - Giving of your life for those who don't deserve it

❖ Which is just what our King modeled for us on the cross

- Rom 5:6-8
 - You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

❖ Throughout the Gospel of Matthew

- We are going to be called by our king to live what to the world will seem like an upside-down life
 - That's because we are called to live right-side up in an upside-down world

❖ The second Name that would pop out at us is Abraham

- V. 1 – Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham

- There was also an expectation that the Messiah would be a Jew
 - One of the chosen people of God
 - And this genealogy is validation of that

Validation

OVERHEAD

- ❖ One of the other differences between Luke's Genealogy and Matthews is who they go back to
 - Luke wants his Gospel to be accessible to his gentile audience
 - So he traces Jesus' lineage back to the first man...Adam
 - In essence saying...
 - Jesus is from man and for all mankind
- ❖ Matthew on the other hand, goes back only as far as Abraham
 - The Father of the Jewish race
- ❖ Abraham, if you remember, was living a fine and comfortable pagan life in the city of Ur
 - When God appeared to him and called him to leave
- ❖ Genesis 12:1-3
 - The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.
 - "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;
 - I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
 - I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse;
 - and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."
- ❖ God promises three things in this promise
 - God will form a covenant people

- There will be a great spiritual nation coming from Abraham
- God will give them a promised inheritance
 - They will be God's people in God's place
 - The Promised Land
- ❖ Finally and most significantly...
 - God will use them to accomplish a global purpose
 - "And all peoples on earth will be blessed by you"
- ❖ This is the John 3:16 of the OT
 - There will be a descendant of Abraham that will bless the whole world
 - And Matthew is telling us through this genealogy
 - Jesus is Abraham's seed
 - Through Jesus the whole world will be blessed
- ❖ And that is what we are going to see unfold in the pages of Matthew's Gospel
 - Jesus is going to bless the whole world
 - But he will go about it in an upside-down manner
 - The blessing will not come through strength...
 - But through weakness
 - Not conquering the Roman armies...
 - But by crying out on a cross
 - Not by living a victorious life...
 - But by dying a shameful death
- ❖ This blessing will not come by what is expected
 - But by the unexpected
 - And that mission to bless is seen here
 - Through the 4 women mentioned in the genealogy

- ❖ Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Uriah the Hittite's wife, Bathsheba
 - H.A. Ironside
 - What a list this is! How it tells out the grace that is in the heart of God who, in his sovereignty, chose to bring these...women into the line of promise!
 - And each one gives us an insight into Jesus' mission to bless the world

- ❖ His mission to...

Bring in outcasts like Tamar

- ❖ This Upside-Down Kingdom is going to include
 - The dejected and desperate...
 - The Outcasts like Tamar

- ❖ Tamar shows up in Genesis 38
 - Abraham's grandson Judah has 3 sons
 - Er, the oldest, married Tamar
 - Er Died
 - It was the custom in that culture for the other brothers to keep the line alive by marrying the dead brother's wife
 - Judah's second son (Onan) refused
 - And Judah withheld the third son (Shelah)
 - So Tamar was sent away...destitute

- ❖ You see...
 - Tamar was an outcast in the very family she married into
 - And that is who Jesus was born for...
 - The outcasts in society

- Those whom our culture looks down on
 - Those whom our culture rejects...**Jesus accepts**

❖ It is interesting...

- America was built on that principle
 - Quote on Statue of Liberty (Emma Lazarus)
 - Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,

❖ And that is how the kingdom of God is built as well

- Jesus says to all the outcasts
 - *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matt 11:28-30)*

❖ Jesus came to give rest to the outcasts

- He ate and drank with publicans and sinners
- The wretched refuse of society at that time
 - And I think, from the human standpoint, when we get to heaven we will be surprised by who IS there
 - There will be many whom the world cast aside, forgot about, dismissed...The poor Lazarus' of the world

❖ Because Jesus does not look at a person the way the world does...externally

- It is the internal that Jesus is consumed with
 - It is not what you have...

- It is who you are
- It is not what you know
 - It is what you believe
- It is not your human pedigree that is important...
 - It is your spiritual pedigree

Secondly, Jesus' mission was to...

Make friends of enemies like Rahab

- ❖ Rahab lived in Jericho in the land of Canaan
 - In a land that rejected Yahweh as God
 - In Jericho, a city resistant to the Lord and his people
- ❖ Yet, in that land, in that city, the Lord reached down and showed mercy and grace to one...
 - Rahab

The Civil War had just ended, and the northerners were lording it over the Southerners. Early on Lincoln admitted into his office an audience of Southerners in order to allow them to air their grievances. They entered bitter and angry ready for a fight but Lincoln's gentle, friendly manner soon thawed the ice, and the Southerners left with a new respect for their old foe.

A northern congressman who witnessed this approached the president and criticized him for "befriending the enemy."

Lincoln smiled and replied, "Am I not destroying my enemies by making them my friends?"

- ❖ And that is what Christ was born to do
 - Make his enemies into friends
 - Col 1:21-22

- Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation

❖ We were all like Rehab at one time...

- We are all born enemies of God

❖ But there came a time when you realized your need (**Gospel here**)

- That you could not save yourself
- That you couldn't work hard enough...scrub deep enough
- That you were a sinner in need of forgiveness
 - And you learned of how Jesus came and lived a perfectly sinless life...
 - Something none of us can do
 - He earned heaven
 - Something none of us can do
 - And somewhere along the line someone told you that even though Jesus was under no obligation to do so...
 - He willingly went to the cross
 - And took the punishment and penalty for your sins upon himself
 - Suffering in your place
 - Dying for your sins
 - Taking God's wrath built up for your sins upon himself
 - Jesus did something so profoundly upside-down for you
 - He willingly became an enemy of God
 - So that you could become His friend

❖ That is part of what we celebrate at Christmas

- The great peace we can have with God
 - On the night Jesus was born
 - Angels appear to the shepherds in the field and sing...
 - Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests (Luke 2:14)
 - They announce that God is making enemies into friends

Through Ruth we see that Jesus' mission was to...

To Reach out to the Prohibited

- ❖ In v. 5 Ruth is mentioned
 - She, along with two of the other women mentioned here, was a foreigner
 - But she was from Moab!
- ❖ Moabites held a special disdain in the hearts of the Jews
 - They had refused to help the Israelites after leaving Egypt
 - Thus the judgment from the Lord in DT 23 forbade any Moabite to ever enter the assembly of God
 - In other words...
 - Because of what they had done, they were prohibited from ever become a child of God!
- ❖ That is why the book of Ruth is not only a sweet story of dedication and sisterly love
 - But scandalous too!
 - Naomi's sons not only marry Moabitesses
 - But Ruth is welcomed into the family of God
 - And here we see...into Jesus' lineage!
- ❖ And that mention of her in this genealogy foreshadows Jesus mission
 - To reach out to people who we think are prohibited from the Kingdom
 - There again is the upside-down-ness of Jesus kingdom

- It Includes those who you think should be prohibited!

I just read the introduction to a new book by Mez McConnell

Mez McConnell is the pastor for Niddrie Community Church, near Edinburgh in Scotland. He just wrote a book called, The Creaking on the Stairs. Rosaria Butterfield reviewed it and highly recommends it but adds, 'it is the most disturbing book I have ever read' because it recounts McConnell's horrific abuse at the hands of his step-mother between the ages of 2-13. It is a book that confronts the horror of child abuse with the question: Should God really forgive such a person?

In it Mez McConnell describes how she beat him and locked him in cupboards overnight hungry, knocked him unconscious for failing to wipe a dishes correctly, extinguished cigarettes on is skinny arms and stripped him naked and mocked him in front of strangers. He confronts in rare honesty his struggle between wanting her to have (quote) "*her spiritual Nuremberg moment before Almighty God, to pay for what she did to me and my sister*"...

And the call of the Gospel to forgive.

That is his struggle

- ❖ But here we see that Jesus' mission is to forgive the unforgivable
 - Like Zacchaeus and Matthew...Tax collectors!
 - Like Roman centurions and roman governors
 - Like the lepers and the lame...those the Jews prohibited
- ❖ That is part of Jesus' upside-down kingdom mission...
 - To bring into the family of God those who we think should be prohibited
 - Like these women...like Ruth the Moabitess
- ❖ One of the questions in the DG notes is to think of a person in your life that is an unlikely candidate for salvation

- Jesus' came for that person too!

Lastly, briefly and obviously...

Jesus's mission was to...

Save people from the consequences of their sin like Bathsheba

- ❖ In v. 6 the wife of Uriah is mentioned
 - This is a reference to Bathsheba
 - Whom King David slept with and covered his affair up by sending her husband Uriah up to the front lines in battle effectively murdering him
- ❖ Bathsheba had a child through the affair
 - And the consequences of David and Bathsheba's sin was that the sword would never leave David's household
 - And that the baby would die
 - What a terrible judgment
 - The consequence of their sin was death
- ❖ That is the consequence of sin from beginning to end in the Bible
 - Adam was told, "If you disobey and sin by eating of the forbidden fruit, you will die
 - Paul wrote that the wages of sin is death
 - The Bible is clear
 - If you sin
 - No matter how large or small
 - No matter many times or few
 - No matter on purpose or by accident
 - Spiritual death is the consequence
 - Separation from God eternally

- ❖ But Jesus came to save people from the consequences of their sin
 - 2 Cor 5:21 tells us that...
 - God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - He saves us by taking the consequences for our sin...himself
 - **That is what this table is all about...(Communion)**