

# GOSPEL BEGINNINGS: MATTHEW

Matthew 1

## Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- What do you already know about Jesus' family tree and lineage?
- Why is it helpful to study and understand how something begins?

Exploring one's family tree is a modern day hobby perfect for those that possess the time and inclination. However, it is task easily ignored by many who lack the interest. Likewise, as the Christmas season begins, it can be tempting to skip the opening verses of Matthew 1 to get right to the parts of the traditional Christmas story that we recognize. Yet, embracing the spirit of Advent and pausing to reflect on Matthew's record of Jesus Christ's genealogy helps us place this reminder of God's unending faithfulness at the forefront of what's about to take place. Taking the time to study Matthew 1 both affirms Jesus' rightful title as Messiah and offers us comfort about our place in the family of God.

**Listen:** [Gospel Beginnings: Matthew](#)

## Reflection

After listening, consider:

- How are you observing Advent in spiritual preparation for Christmas?
- Why is the connection of Matthew's gospel to the Old Testament important? What does it affirm about God and his promises?
- What skeletons or blemishes exist in your life? Do they keep you from relationship with God? How are you encouraged in your faith by the record of Jesus' genealogy in Matthew 1?
- How does a genealogy help us see Jesus as Immanuel (God with us)? Why was this meaningful to the Jewish contemporaries of the apostle Matthew? Why is understanding it's importance to the original audience helpful for us? Is it meaningful to you? Does it comfort you?

## Related Passages

- **Luke 3:21-38**

*The gospel of Luke also traces Jesus' family tree in its third chapter. While we might expect these genealogies to be identical, they aren't. Scholars offer a few plausible explanations based on Israelite history and law. Possible explanations include:*

*1) Matthew is tracing the royal lineage*

*2) Matthew traces his lineage through Joseph and Luke traces it through Mary's family.*

- **1 Chronicles 3**

- **Genesis 38:6-30**

*Tamar*

- **Joshua 2:1-21**

*Rahab*

- **Joshua 6:17-25**

*Rahab*

- **Ruth 4:13-22**

*Ruth*

- **2 Samuel 11:2-12:25**

*Bathsheba: Uriah's wife*

## **Conclusion**

Reflect on your family tree. How has it shaped who you are? Where have you seen God's grace? If you were to create a family tree that reflected those who influenced your faith journey, who would you include? Offer prayers of thanksgiving as you reflect on specific individuals and on God's hand in your faith journey. Conclude by reflecting in prayer on God's faithfulness throughout the generations and what it means to you that in Jesus Christ he became God with us.

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