

2.8.26 am

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Date: 02 August 2026

Preacher: Stuart King

[0:00] Well good morning. It's wonderful to be with you all and very well welcome to all of you who have come this morning and especially a warm welcome to any visitors that are with us you're especially welcome and those that are joining us online as well.

I'll go through it hopefully you've managed to see some of the intimations popping up on the screen but I'll just pick out a few of them. First it says after the service there'll be tea and coffee served just here at the front of the church so please do stay behind if you're able to especially if you're visiting with us so that we can have a bit of time of fellowship together.

There's a creche provision if you wish which is just through the wall behind me here and you can either go round through this door and into the left if you wish to access the creche.

There'll be a Sunday school for primary aged children and then visiting children as well very much welcome to go to that. After the second singing you'll be able to see all the young ones heading out so please do follow them.

This evening at 5.30 just before the service there'll be an informal time of prayer just in the room next door as you come in so please do be encouraged to come along to that.

[1:07] Six o'clock service if you're able to come will be taken by Farrakhan MacLeod so please be encouraged if able to come out to that service as well. I'll then quickly swizz through some of these other ones.

Ladies fellowship we'll be meeting on an ad hoc basis but speak to either Lucy or to Peggy to find out about tomorrow evening. Minister will be back on Tuesday. David will be back so hopefully he's had a time of refreshment whilst away and if there's any issues or any concerns please speak to Scott or one of the elders over the course of the next couple of days.

Little fishes on Tuesday morning. I did say I would only pick out a few of these but I seem to be going through them all. And Porter wanted to know there's a deacon's court on Tuesday evening at 6.30 so all deacons and elders please take note of that.

Road to recovery we'll meet in the same evening at 7pm. Holiday club starts this week so any of primary age please do come along to holiday club.

It's 10.15 till 12.30 Wednesday through to Friday so please be encouraged first and foremost to pray. Everyone else those that are not in that age group pray for this work.

[2:14] We've been blessed over recent years with multiple children coming in to hear the word of God so please do pray for that work. And if anyone wants to help there's never not enough space for helpers so either get in touch with myself or Joyce after the service if you're able to come along and do anything.

Whether that is filling out forms at the door, handing out juice, standing up on stage, singing and dancing, whatever you want to do. I can see a few of you would be keen to do that so please do speak to us afterwards.

The prayer meeting will be on Wednesday and there's a couple of other notices there which I won't go through in any great detail. But we'll begin our public worship of God this morning by singing in Psalm 51 from the Scottish Psalter.

Psalm 51 and the first seven verses of the Psalm. Psalm 51 and the first seven verses of the Psalm. Behold thou in the inward parts and truth delighted art and wisdom thou shalt make me know within the hidden part. Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me? I shall be cleansed so.

[3:44] Ye wash thou me and then I shall be whiter than the snow. So we'll sing 1 to 7 of Psalm 51 to God's praise. After thy loving kindness, Lord, For thy compassion's great product, All my iniquity.

Be cleansed from sin and thoroughly washed from mine iniquity.

For my transgressions I confess, My sin I ever see.

Gens thee only have I sinned in thy sight unbecile.

That when thou speak thou mayst be just, And clear in judging still.

[5 : 40] Behold thou mayst be in the inward parts of the world. Before thy iniquity was formed the womb within, My mother of God's grace.

My mother of God's grace. So we'll sing thee only conceded in guiltiness and sin. In guiltiness and sin.

Behold thou mayst be in the inward parts, Before thou mayst be in the inward parts, With truth delighted art, And wisdom thou shalt make me know, And wisdom thou shalt make me know, With faith that hidden part.

You thou with faith that hidden part. I shall be cleansed so.

Yea, wash thou me, And then I shall be whiter than the snow.

[7 : 29] Let's come before the Lord in prayer. Let's pray. Amen. Our gracious and ever-blessed Father, Lord, We come before you in praise and worship of your most glorious name.

We give thanks that as we come before you, We come before a loving and gracious and a merciful God. We come before a God that's not distant from us. We come before a God that desires fellowship with us, And desires us to bring our petitions before you.

So we give thanks that we can indeed do that. And not just this on your day, But throughout the week that we ought to be continuing to pray, Continuing to turn to you, Continue to give thanks for answered prayers as well.

And we give thanks that even as we gather on this most glorious day, We're able to see your handiwork around us. We're able to see the beauty of your created hand around us.

And we give thanks that it's you who's the one that's sovereign over each and every one of us. We give thanks that it's not in and of ourselves, That there's no requirement of us to lead our lives in a way that we see fit.

[8 : 44] But that we're able to turn to that sovereign and holy God. So we thank you that as we gather and as we sing praises to your name, You have promised that where two or three are gathered, You are there with us.

And we thank you that that is the case today. And indeed the case wherever Christ crucified is preached, Lord. We pray for the congregations around us, Those in Tarbert and those further afield in Harris and in Lewis And across our wider islands and wider nation.

We pray indeed for those congregations that meet and that gather, Whether they be few in number or great in number. We pray that you would indeed bless them and that you would encourage them. We give thanks again, Lord, that as we come before you, We have this word so readily available to us. We have your word, this glorious good news that we can turn to without the fear of persecution, Without the fear of the doors of this building being closed and being silenced.

But we know that's not the case across the world. And we pray for those nations where they are deeply persecuted. We pray for those nations where even uttering your name, You can see people's lives put in danger.

[10 : 02] So we pray for Christians in these areas, In all corners of your vineyard. We pray that they would continue to be courageous, That they would continue to be wise. But as they gather even this very day in secret, That they would also be reminded of that promise, That where they gather, You are indeed with them.

So we pray for that persecuted church. We pray for your church across the entire world. We pray for the upcoming mission conference at the end of this month, And ask Lord that you would bless that.

We are mindful of those who seek to fulfill that great commission, Not just here on home soil, But across the world. And we pray for Christians and for missionaries, That go out to share your gospel in all corners of your vineyard.

So we pray that you would continue to equip them, And that you would go before them in all that they do. Especially those associated and linked with our own congregation. We pray for those who are unable to be with us this morning, Those who are maybe unwell at this time, Those who are maybe housebound at this time.

We ask Lord that you would be with them, That they would be comforted by your presence. So we ask Lord that they would be turning to your word, Be turning to you in prayer, And that you would indeed be with all of those who are unable to be with us.

[11:22] Because we especially pray for those who have made a decision not to come here today, That have woken up this beautiful Lord's Day, And have had no thought of you. They have no desire to come to hear your word, No desire to fellowship with your people.

We pray for them and ask that you would reveal yourself to them. That you would reveal your love and your peace to them. Whether that be through someone in the congregation here speaking, Whether that be through a word that is heard, Whether that be through whatever means you choose Lord, That they would be able to one day come into your house, To hear your word and to be transformed by it.

So we pray for those who have no thought of you, But we pray as well that you would equip us to speak to them, That we would not just stand back and hope that they come in, But that we would be intentional, That we would step out in faith, That as we leave this building here each and every week, That we would go forth and that we would seek to make disciples, That we would share your word, That we would encourage others around that work, That we would pray with others, And that you would give us that boldness and that courage, To have these gospel conversations in everyday circumstances, Be that in our workplace, In our shop, In our restaurant, In our fishing boat, Wherever it may be, Wherever you've placed us, We know our mission field is as long and as wide, As our own feet.

So wherever we are, Equip us to share your word, And to encourage others, To come in. We pray as well Lord, For the vacancies across our denomination, We pray for vacancies in other denominations as well Lord, And ask that you would raise up men of your choosing, To go into these places, To preach your word, To pastor and to shepherd your flock.

We pray for Scott, As he continues to prepare to go to Graver, As they have moved in there Lord, We pray for the induction scheduled for the end of the month, And ask that you would bless that ministry there, That you would bless and encourage the congregation there, Who've been vacant for some time, That they would be blessed by that ministry, And by the word being preached, And as they come alongside through visitation, And other pastoral means Lord, That you would equip them and go before them, And go before them in all that they do.

[13:39] We pray as well for Gordon and for Gillian, We ask and give thanks for a time of placement, In Helmsdale in recent weeks, And ask that you would continue to go before him in his studies, In his final year Lord, And again that you would place him, In a place of your choosing, In that corner of your vineyard, Where we would hope to see souls saved, And that we would be able to see your word going out, Faithfully and diligently preached, To each and every week Lord.

So be with us just now, Bless our time together, Forgive us for all of our sins, In Christ's precious name we pray, Amen. Amen. Okay boys and girls, If you want to come down to the front, Please, Try and stay close to the microphone, So, People can hear us.

Are you all delighted that the holidays are nearly over? No. No? Parents? No. No? Some of the parents aren't delighted. Yeah I think, Well we are certainly looking forward to, School starting up again.

Now I've got something to quickly show you, Now Anna will know what this is, But I want to show you what this is, Can anyone tell me what this is? Can you tell what it is? Can you tell what it is? But what is this bit?

Oh, oh, Can you see that? It's lights, yeah. So, these are lights, That are beside Anna's bed, And this is what they look like. They're not, They're a mess, They're all tangled up. But I wanted to share, I'll turn them on in a wee minute, But I wanted to share with you today, With the older ones, We're going to read about a family tree, Do you know what a family tree is?

[15:11] What's a family tree, Seanny? Like, Like a tree, And all the branches of people, And all the branches of people, And all the family. So you go all the way back, All the generations, To see who's in the family. So we're going to look at, Jesus' family tree, Briefly today.

And this, When I saw this, And I was prepared, And I thought, That reminds me a wee bit, About family trees. Now I won't go into too much detail, About my own one, But I got a family tree done, A couple of years ago.

And somebody in, The health board, Does this as a hobby. And she gave me a full family tree, And it told me about some of the, Exciting people, In my past. Some of the, Some of the weird people, To be honest.

I'm apparently related to, Joe Strummer, From the clash. Random. But there were a few, Quirky characters. Surprisingly on my father's side. But there were some quirky characters. And that's what

we see, Through all of our family trees.

If you were to look at yours, You would probably see, Some strange individuals, In the past. But you probably wouldn't have thought that, For Jesus. Is Jesus perfect? Yeah. He's perfect. He's never sinned.

[16:13] Never done anything wrong. So you would probably think, Well he must have a perfect, Family tree. No mistakes. No quirky characters. But what we're going to speak to, The older ones about, Is that that's not actually the case.

And much like these lights, It reminded me that there's not, This lovely stream should be, If Anne had looked after it. But there should be a lovely stream of fairy lights, Across the side of our bed. But it's not, There's edges that are frayed.

There's possibly even some bulbs, That have maybe gone. And it reminds us of, Family trees. And it's the same, For Jesus' family tree. And, What we see in that, God did not ask for a, Did not create, Sorry, A perfect straight line, That Jesus' family tree came from.

There are some, Individuals in there, Which we're going to look at today, That are a little bit different, And not what you would expect. But Jesus, God himself, God himself, Chose to weave, His plan of salvation, So that we can be saved, Through these people.

And it's important, That we look to see, Who these people are. But what's really important is, See, Even though this is all tangled up, And it's a little bit of a mess, We'll try and fix it later. What happens if I turn it on?

[17:24] What do we see? Lights. We see the lights, Sorry I'm touching the microphone. We see the lights, And that's something that we see, Through these family trees. Even through my own family tree. There are some quirky characters, But, We're able to see, That there are Christians in there as well.

There are people that, Have gone forward, And shared the gospel with people. And what we see through Jesus as well, Is that when the light, Comes in, And the light comes into the world, Whether that's your family tree, Whether that's my family tree, And wherever we're from, When that light comes in, It turns those, Unexpected messy lives, And it even turns, This messy, Set of fairy lights, Into something that all of a sudden, Looks beautiful.

So when we look at family trees, I want you to remember, This one that we're going to read in Matthew. I'm not going to read it with you, But, Maybe afternoon, Go home and read Matthew 1, Verses 1 to 17.

And you'll see some interesting names, You'll see some names you recognise, But even although it can look, Even in our own lives, We can look and think, I've really made a mess of my life, Or I've made this big mistake.

We can look, And know, That in Jesus, And when his light comes in, That we can be transformed, And that we can do, Amazing things in his strength. Not in our strength, These lights won't fix themselves, They don't turn on themselves, There needs to be the light that comes in, And it gets rid of all the darkness.

[18:43] So, When you think about a family tree, Whether it's your own, Whether you think about the crazy uncle at Christmas, And you think, Oh my goodness, That person's in my family. We can remember that, Nobody is disqualified, From Jesus's grace.

And we can encourage people, To come, Come to church. Could be friends in your school, That they've never come here at all. And you might look at them, And think, That person's never going to come to church. But, I want you to be encouraged, To speak to people, Invite them along, Invite them along to the holiday club as well, From Wednesday through, Till Friday of this week.

So, I want you to remember that, Remember that, Even though things can look messy, Messy in our past, Messy in our present, That when we have Jesus in our lives, It completely transforms everything.

We'll close our eyes, And just say a word of prayer, Before we sing again. Gracious God, We again give you thanks that, As we look to you, And to the family tree, That your salvation plan came through, We are able to see, Messy lives, We're able to see, Disrupted lives, And interesting individuals along the way.

But we know that through, Your son, And through your sovereign will, That lives can be transformed, And that that salvation plan, Does not disqualify, Whether Jew or Gentile, We are all, Able to be included in that Lord.

[20:02] So we pray that the young ones here, Would know that, That even though they may make mistakes, In their lives, And when they grow older, They will continue to make mistakes, That it does not disqualify us. That we're able to come to you, We're able to come to your son, And ask that, He would enter into our lives, And that he would be the ruler of our lives, That we wouldn't try to, Rule our own lives, That we wouldn't try to, Live lives that we think, Are suitable, But that we would hand everything over to you, And ask that you would be, Our Lord, And our saviour.

We pray for the young ones here, Pray for them at Sunday school, As they go and learn more about you, We ask that you would bless them, And bless, The parents, All family, Who've, Been looking after these young ones, Over the holidays, We pray for the teachers, As they prepare to go back to school, In the coming weeks as well Lord, And ask that even in the playground, Or in the classroom, That these young ones here, Would be confident, And that they would share your word, With friends, And that they would encourage, Friends and loved ones, To come along, To hear, About the immense, Immense story, Of your son, And all that he did for us Lord, So go before us again just now, Forgive us for all of our sins, In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Amen. Thank you boys and girls, And we're just going to sing, This time from Mission Praise 102, The well known hymn, Come now long expected Jesus, Born to set thy people free, From our fears and sins release us, Let us find our rest in thee, So we'll sing the whole of this hymn, Mission Praise 102, And we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

And we'll sing to God's praise. Unrespected Jesus, Unrespected Jesus, Unrespected by people fee, Unrespected Jesus, is The Lord is a holy longing heart.

For Thine people to deliver. For the joy not yet the King.

[22:47] For to reign in us forever. And Thine gracious kingdom bring.

High Thy Lord eternal spirit. Through all our hearts alone.

High Thy all-servant planet. Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

We'll enjoy Sunday school boys and girls. And while they're heading out to Sunday school. If you could turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 1. As I mentioned there about that.

That genealogy that we're. Going to look at in Matthew chapter 1. Matthew chapter 1.

[24:01] And we'll just read the first 17 verses. Just to look at this start to the gospel. Really start to the New Testament. And we'll spend a little bit of time. As to what some of this tells us.

Seeing this family tree. So gospel according to Matthew chapter 1. And we'll read from the beginning. The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The son of David.

The son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac. And Isaac the father of Jacob. And Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. And Judah the father of Perez. And Zerah by Tamar.

And Perez the father of Hezron. And Hezron the father of Ram. And Ram the father of Aminadab. And Aminadab the father of Nashun. And Nashun the father of Salmon. And Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab.

And Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth. And Obed the father of Jesse. And Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

[25:01] And Solomon the father of Rehoboam. And Rehoboam the father of Abijah. And Abijah the father of Asaph. And Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat. and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Jeziel, and Josiah the father of Jeconiah, and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon. Jeconiah was the father of Shaltiel. And Shaltiel the father of Zerubbabel. And Zerubbabel the father of Abiud. And Abiud the father of Eliakim. And Eliakim the father of Azor. And Azor the father of Zadok. And Zadok the father of Achim. And Achim the father of Eliud. And Eliud the father of Eliasir. And Eliasir the father of Mathun. And Mathun the father of Jacob. And Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations.

Amen, and may the Lord bless that reading of his word. Before we come back to that passage, we'll just sing this time in Gaelic from Psalm 89. Psalm 89, and I'll just read the first two verses in English, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic if you're visiting with us. So Psalm 89 from the

beginning, God's mercies I will ever sing, and with my mouth I shall thy faithfulness make to be known to generations all. For mercy shall be built, said I, forever to endure thy faithfulness even in the heavens thou wilt establish sure. So we'll sing these first two stanzas of Psalm 89 to God's praise, and we'll remain seated.

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[30:06] Thank you.

Thank you.

We pray, Lord, that you'll bless all that we have to learn from it today, Lord, that you'll bless the word, that we'll even go away afterward and that we'll meditate upon the word. We won't just look at it this once throughout the week and close our Bibles, but that we would be readily in your word.

That we would be continually seeking to see your face on each and every page. As we see that golden thread of salvation running through from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation.

So we pray that you'll be with us, that you'll bless this word and that you would encourage us to be able to share whatever it is that you have for us to hear in your word with those in our homes.

[31:54] And those that we interact with throughout the week, Lord. So be with us just now.

Forgive us for all of our sins. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, if you have your Bibles, it might be helpful to have Matthew 1 open.

And maybe just as you turn there, I could maybe ask for a show of hands, but I won't ask for a show of hands. But I wonder if you've ever been reading the Bible, whether that's through your daily devotionals or you've maybe come across it.

You've an intentional plan to read through the Bible and you've maybe come to Matthew chapter 1 and you've maybe skipped just to verse 18. You've maybe thought, oh, look at all these list of names.

I'll just start at verse 18. Now, I won't ask if you've ever done that or maybe you commit to reading these 17 verses and you go through the names, but your desire is just to quickly run through them so that you can then get to verse 18.

No hands up, but you know yourselves if that's you. And my hope is that we'll be able to spend a little bit of time focusing on a couple of characters that we see here. But there are parts of the Bible where if we're not careful that we can be tempted to skim over, we can just quickly glance past elements of it.

[33:04] But there's so much rich learning for us if we do take that time. And maybe at the top of the list, it could be genealogies. This is not the only one in the Bible. There are others.

They can sometimes often feel like an impenetrable list that you're really not able to get through. It's a difficult read. You've possibly seen unfamiliar names. It can sometimes feel like maybe a dry, difficult passage.

And you want to just get through it so you can get to the story that you want to read about. But I want to maybe challenge that perception this morning. And I want to suggest that these list of names, they're not difficult.

And if we take our time and if we spend time reading them, maybe even just going a name at a time and looking at the corresponding passages where those individuals come up, we'll start to see that it's actually more of a treasure map than it is a list of difficult names.

It's a treasure map that's rich. And it's rich with a life-altering truth about who Jesus Christ is. Now what we see from this list, and we kind of spoke to the young ones about it there, is that this list in Matthew 1, it's not a record of human perfection.

[34:11] It's not a record of wonderful individuals across the generations. But it is a deliberate display of God's saving mercy. And it's designed to show us that from the very first verse of the New Testament, that Christ came from the very kind of people that he came for.

So this morning we'll explore this family tree really by examining two questions. Two questions is who and why. Very simple. Who and why.

So who is in this lineage? We're not going to go through every name, but we'll focus on a few. And then why. Why did God choose to build his story of salvation upon these people?

And the answer really reveals the very heart of the gospel. And it demonstrates that there is a grace that is wider and deeper than any of us can ever imagine. So invite as we look closer to this, that we would be inspired by this record.

That maybe even we would go away and read some more of who these individuals are and what they had to say to us. We should maybe resist that temptation to skip the list, get to verse 18, and start with the real story of Matthew's gospel.

[35:17] And I'm convinced that in these stories of these ancestors and their failures and even in their faith, we can start to see a stunning reflection of the hope that we find in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

But before we come to the who and the why, I want to just quickly start by looking at how Matthew introduces this gospel account. Look at verse 1. It says there, Why did he start in this way?

He starts by telling us that in light of all the claims to be made in this gospel, the most important thing to consider is not simply what did Jesus do, but who is he?

Who is Jesus? And Donald Carson says that in Jesus' day, Palestine was rife with messianic expectation. Not all of it was coherent and many Jews expected really two different types of messiahs.

But Matthew is linking, but Matthew's linking here of Christ and the son of David leaves no doubt about who he is claiming Jesus is. His genealogy here has a purpose and his introduction has a purpose.

[36:30] By declaring this the record of Jesus Christ, the son of David and the son of Abraham, any first century Jew reading this document and reading this gospel account knew that these were non-negotiable credentials for the true Messiah.

And the entire list that then comes after is structured to then prove that Jesus holds this legitimate royal claim to the throne. But it's no ordinary royal line.

And you can often think back in Genesis. We see stories where younger sons are promoted over the firstborn, where barren matriarchs conceive by divine promise. They all build to the anticipation for a king who will fulfill the original royal mandate given to Adam and Eve and to restore humanity's broken relationship with God.

This royal promise was progressively revealed through Israel's history. It began with God's covenant with Abraham promising that he would be, he would have an offspring of a great nation. It was then narrowed in Jacob's prophecy over his son Judah. And it culminated in God's covenant with King David promising that eternal dynasty and a throne that would last forever.

[37:45] Matthew's basically opening up this gospel account here with an irrefutable case. Jesus is the rightful king. Every detail of the record is designed to shout the king has arrived.

He's telling him that the promised son of David has come. And then he goes on to prove that. So that then takes us to our first point, the who.

Really to understand the power of this family tree or this genealogy, we have to look at the specific individuals God chose to pave the way for the Messiah. And don't worry, we're not going to spend the morning going through every single name.

But I really want to look at a few characters, specifically in our time that we have left remaining. I want to look at some of the women that are mentioned, four women that are mentioned in this tree. And then I want to focus a little bit of time, not too much on some of the kings and what they also tell us about God's plan through this lineage.

And as we investigate who they are, we quickly discover that God's methods are often contrary to human expectations. He doesn't build his kingdom on perfect bricks.

[38:56] He doesn't desire to have a perfect list of people to show how pure and wonderful that lineage is. But just as God establishes a royal line, he begins to introduce some unexpected names.

John MacArthur mentions of the four women that we're going to briefly speak about, he says these four women are an object lesson about the workings of divine grace. They're an object lesson about the workings of divine grace.

Let me do you remember when this was written, it was in a patriarchal culture where genealogies were normally exclusively male. But Matthew, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, chooses not to omit the names of these women.

And he includes these four specific women that I want us to very briefly explore. First is Tamar. We then see Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, although she's not named.

And I want to focus really just on those four. Mary's also included there, but we would have expected her as Jesus' mother to be included. So I want to focus on the first four. Now Matthew could have mentioned some of the great matriarchs of the Old Testament, Sarah, Rebecca or Rachel, but he doesn't.

[40:08] Instead, he highlights women who are outsiders, women who are marginalized, or women who are associated with prostitution or sexual scandals. The women share two characteristics.

They've got Gentile connections and flagrant sin. So there are those two characteristics that we see. They're Gentiles and they're sinful. Firstly, I want to look at Tamar, which you can look at, and maybe in the afternoon, if you feel you would like to, Genesis 38, you can read a little bit more about Tamar's story there.

But I'll briefly explain what happened to her. Tamar's story is driven by a fierce and unrelenting quest for what she thought was rightfully hers. Tamar's story is driven by Tamar's story. After she was left widowed and childless by Judah's two eldest sons, Er and Onan, Judah promised her his youngest son, Shelah.

However, fearing that his son Shelah would meet the same fate as his brothers, Judah quietly abandoned Tamar to a life of perpetual widowhood. Tamar, recognizing this deception, took drastic action.

She disguised herself and seduced her father-in-law. As collateral, she took his personal seal and cord. When then her pregnancy was discovered, a hypocritical Judah sentenced her to death for her immorality.

[41:32] So she then produced the seal and the cord, his personal items, proving that he was indeed the father. Confronted with his own belongings, Judah confessed that she is more righteous than I.

By then giving birth to Perez, who we see in this lineage, Tamar secured her place in the messianic line, proving that Matthew's genealogy in his list here of individuals embraces those messy, flawed histories of survival, rather than this sanitized, perfect family tree.

And again, you can read that in Genesis 38. We then read of Rahab, and you want to read that in the afternoon as well. It'd be good to get reading some of these stories. We read Joshua chapter 2. You'll get a little bit of further information there. But Rahab's story is probably a bit more well-known than Tamar's. But her inclusion in the lineage completely defies all cultural expectation of this time. She was a Canaanite woman. She was a known prostitute in Jericho. She was both a national enemy of Israel and a marginalized outcast in society. Yet she became an instrumental figure in the Israelites' conquest of the Promised Land by choosing to shelter Joshua's spies.

[42:48] Her faith was marked by a scarlet cord hung from her window, a sign that spared her entire family from Jericho's devastation. Rahab did more than merely survive.

She was wholly embraced by the Israelite community. She eventually married Salmon, who we read of in this list, and gave birth to Boaz. And when we read of her, we see that her narrative stands as a powerful testament that divine grace cannot be restricted by past reputations or her ethnic origins.

We then see Ruth. And there's a whole book you can read of about Ruth. And while she's wildly celebrated for her devotion to her mother-in-law, Naomi, her heritage actually presented a significant hurdle, a legal hurdle.

As a Moabitess, she belonged to a nation that was explicitly banned from the Israelite assembly for ten generations due to their hostility towards God.

By the strict letter of the law, Ruth was an outsider. Yet through her union with Boaz, she was grafted in directly into the heart of this messianic lineage.

[44:01] Her story beautifully illustrates how God's sovereign providence frequently supersedes human prejudice, legal barriers, or historical exclusions. So we see that she's then grafted in to this

lineage.

And then the last one I want us to just think of just now is Bathsheba. Now her name's not mentioned in the list there, if you see. But what we see is that she's called Uriah's wife. And he makes a deliberate and striking choice.

He refuses, Matthew refuses to actually name her. So why does he do that? Why does he call her Uriah's wife? Part of the way through verse 6. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

He doesn't name her. And this phrasing, the way that Matthew's phrased this, and some of the scholars say that he did this specifically to confront David's darkest moral failure.

King David's moral failure. We sang of some of that in Psalm 51. We cries out for mercy. And what we see in the story of Bathsheba, which you can read of in 2 Samuel, is that David had used his power to commit adultery with Bathsheba.

[45 : 10] And he subsequently then orchestrated the assassination of her husband Uriah to cover up the resulting pregnancy. By identifying or by anchoring her identity in Uriah, Matthew refuses to gloss over David's terrible sins.

Yet from this narrative of betrayal, adultery and murder emerged King Solomon, the next line in the chain to Christ. So we see there that Bathsheba's inclusion demonstrates a God who specialises in intertwining, extraordinary redemption out of humanity's most broken choices.

So why them? Why these women? Why are they chosen to be included here? And I think their inclusion is a weighty statement from Matthew. He deliberately shows that from the very beginning, God's plan of salvation was never limited to the pure, never limited to the powerful, to the good, to the rich, or even to Israel alone.

He has always made a place for Gentiles, for outsiders, for the shamed, for the morally broken. So we see these women are a preview of the inclusive nature of Christ's kingdom.

Let's now briefly look at a couple of the kings, or just one of the kings really. It's important to note that we do see further grace through some of these kings that were both flawed, that were fallen, some were good, some were bad, but the men in this lineage are no better.

[46 : 38] While the list includes righteous figures like David, it also was populated by wicked, sinful men. The genealogy demonstrates that God's grace is not inherited. It's not something that's passed down from generation to generation.

It is given as he wills. Just because one king was good did not mean his goodness was then inherited by the next king. And the book of Kings is a great place to go and read much of this. So we do see some good kings in Solomon and Asaph and Jehoshaphat, but we also see wicked kings in Rehoboam, Abijah and Joram. Virtue and spiritual standing, they're not genetic traits. They're not the things that get passed down. History shows that even the most devout monarchs could not pass their own character to their successors. Every soul enters the world with its own moral record.

While a person may be raised within a legacy of faith, surrounded by a holy and pious family, righteousness cannot be transferred. It cannot be inherited.

[47 : 43] According to the principles found in John 1, 12 to 13, every individual is a distinct entity before the creator. We're each held accountable for our own choices and our own conduct.

Is that possibly you today? Maybe you're born and brought up in the church. Maybe you're Christian parents, Christian grandparents, and you think, oh, I'll be okay. A good lineage there, good Christian parents.

I've been brought up in the church. I never miss a Sunday, never miss a Wednesday night. But ultimately, a heritage of faith is no substitute for a personal direct encounter with Jesus.

And nowhere is that divine wisdom more brilliantly displayed than in the King Jehoniah, where he's mentioned there. And there's really a problem with King Jehoniah.

You don't need to go there in your Bibles just now, but in Jeremiah 22, verse 30, there's a curse that's placed on Jehoniah. And I'll just read what it says. 22, verse 30 of Jeremiah says, Thus says the Lord, Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days.

[48 : 47] For none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah. So we just pause there for a wee second. Does this present a problem for us?

We see that Jehoniah was in this royal line. We see that in Matthew's genealogy. So how could the Messiah then come through him without inheriting this curse? Some might say there's a

contradiction in the passage, but it is in fact a testament to the infinite wisdom of God. The two genealogies that we see in Jesus and Scripture helpfully provide us with a wonderful solution to this problem. Our passage here in Matthew traces that royal line to Jesus. Through Joseph, Jecheaniah's descendant, establishing Jesus' legal right to the throne. If you then went to Luke chapter 3, you would see another genealogy in that gospel account. And that then traces Jesus' bloodline back to David through his other son Nathan, leading to Mary. So through the virgin birth, Jesus receives the legal claim to the throne through Joseph, but his blood then bypasses this curse that we read of in Jeremiah 22 on Jecheaniah. [50:02] So God sovereignly preserved that messianic line, fulfilling every prophecy with breathtaking precision. So having seen the unlikely and often scandalous who of this lineage and this family tree, we're compelled to ask an even more important question.

Why? Why would God build the lineage of his perfect son from such imperfect characters? Surely takes us to our final point, why. The why of this genealogy moves us beyond a historical record and into the very heart of God's redemptive plan.

It reveals a mercy so deep, so intentional, that it actively incorporates human failure to achieve his divine purpose. The differences between Matthew and Luke's genealogies, they're not a problem to be solved, but they're a truth to be celebrated.

They reveal the universal scope of salvation. As we've seen in Matthew, Matthew traces his lineage back to Abraham. Writing primarily to a Jewish audience, his goal is to prove that Jesus is their promised Messiah.

He is the ultimate fulfillment of their covenant story. He is the son of Abraham. But Luke's traces Jesus' lineage all the way back to Adam, the father of all humanity.

[51:22] And Luke does this deliberately. He's showing the Gentile audience that Jesus is not merely the saviour of the Jews and the Jews alone, but he is the saviour of the entire world.

He is the second Adam. Come to redeem the failure of the first Adam on behalf of every tribe, tongue, and nation. And that really leads us to the central argument of this message, and perhaps of the entire gospel of Matthew.

The inclusion of sinners, the inclusion of outsiders, the inclusion of these failures in the family tree, it's not an embarrassing footnote, it's the whole point.

One writer said, he came from the broken for the broken. The list is included to prove beyond any doubt that no one is beyond the saving reach of Christ.

Look at verse 21. We didn't read it. We'll go on to talk about the birth of Jesus Christ. Verse 21 says, She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

[52:26] The genealogy itself has just finished defining who his people are. There are people like Tamar, there are people like Rahab, people like Rehoboam, there are people like you, and there are people like me.

And this is the astounding mercy of God the Father. Jesus came from those that he came for. He did not require a perfect lineage to be born into, but he came to save imperfect people.

This family tree that we see here is God's declaration that the family he chose for his son is not one to be ashamed of. And if he's not ashamed of them, then he's not ashamed of you.

We so often focus our thoughts on Christ's coming at one time of the year. We often think at Christmas, that's when we read this passage, it's often read at Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ. But it should be something that we look at on a daily basis.

We ought to remember that he is Emmanuel. Verse 23 tells us the gritty, scandal-ridden genealogy ends with the revelation name, which means God with us.

[53:31] Emmanuel is not a name or a title, it's a descriptive term. It characterises Jesus. It is God revealed in human flesh. Christ's incarnation was not a sterile, detached event where God visited humanity from a safe distance.

He did not just descend to us, he descended through a lineage that mirrors our own. A story of brokenness, a story of scandal, a story of failure, yet also a story of persistent faith and unbreakable divine promises.

He's not a distant, unrelatable saviour, who's unfamiliar with the mess of human life. And the gospel accounts will go on to show that. Because he entered our story so completely, descending through a family just like ours, he is then uniquely qualified to be both our saviour and as the Bible says

there, God with us in the midst of our mess.

So the why that we're looking at of this genealogy is really to paint a stunning portrait of a God whose grace is greater than all our sin and whose sovereign plan is never thwarted by our failures. This is not just their story. God's word intends for it to become our story too. As we start to conclude, I want to bring some of these threads together.

[54:52] The genealogy of Jesus is a thoughtful declaration from God that he is not ashamed of this family tree and where the lineage comes from. He's not ashamed of them, he's not ashamed of the prostitutes, the adulterers, the idolaters, the outsiders.

And if that's the case, then we can be certain that that love extends to us as well. Maybe for those among us this morning that have maybe not yet put their trust in Christ, I want you to know that if you place your trust in him, then he will not disqualify you due to your past. And maybe that sin that you're holding on to, maybe decades old, you're not disqualified because of that. He will not disqualify you because of your failures. He will not disqualify you due to your brokenness.

Maybe your history of sin, your history of shame, failures, none of that disqualifies you from his family. And this is what we see when we look at this list of names.

On the contrary, it makes you a perfect candidate for the very mercy that is on display in Matthew chapter 1. The gospel message has always been Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

[56:06] And the family tree that we read of here proves that. The same God who wove a line of kings and prostitutes and saints and sinners into the magnificent story of his son is ready and waiting to write you into the history of grace today.

As you consider maybe this skimmed over passage that you've looked at in the past, I want you to realise that it is, as I mentioned earlier, a treasure map that points us directly to the heart of God's mercy.

This record is a stunning reflection of the hope that we find in a saviour who's not ashamed of the family he chose, a lineage filled with the very kind of people that he came to save.

Remember, Jesus is God with us. He's not God away from us. He's not God distant. He is God with us who descended into the mess of human life to write a new story of grace for those who are broken.

He's ready to move you from the record of guilt into his family of faith today. As we close this genealogy, we see that it's filled with foolish decisions.

[57:13] We see broken hearts, we see corrupt leaders, but we also see a son born from it as our wonderful counsellor, bringing divine wisdom into our confusion.

This family tree is also marked by human weakness, human failure, but he is our mighty God whose power is made perfect in our weakness.

The lineage itself is a story of death and it's a story of decay, of generations passing away, but he is our everlasting father, the author and possessor of eternity itself.

The history is scarred by violence, betrayal and conflict, but he is our prince of peace, the one who removes everything that disturbs our peace by his own sacrifice.

So I want you to remember the who of Jesus' lineage, which really is a striking mix of royal heirs, of sinners, of marginalised outsiders, the good, the bad, the ugly, which ultimately points us to the weighty why of God's redemptive plan.

[58:16] And that treasure map proves that Christ intentionally came from the broken to save the broken. And by weaving together a family tree that we read of here in Matthew 1, God demonstrates that there is no history of failure, there is no history of sin, no history of debauchery in your own life that disqualifies you from his grace.

Rather it makes you a perfect candidate for his mercy. As Matthew started this chapter, we in 2026 are here to also realise in no doubt about what he is claiming here.

The promised son of David has come. Christ has come. He died for you. He died for me. No matter what's happened in your own life, you may be looking at sins in the past, you may be even looking at sins in this past week, maybe you've done really well for a few months but, oh, it's right there past, I went off the rails again.

None of that disqualifies you. What you need to do is turn that spotlight away from you and turn it fully on to Christ. The work that he did on the cross is what saves, not what we do.

Nothing we can do can attain salvation. Nothing we can do can get us to a level where we're fitting proper candidates for glory. It's Christ's coming through the mess of this genealogy that we need to remember.

[59:44] So don't leave it too late. Each and every one of us here, online and in the building here, when you leave those doors today, you're making a decision. You're choosing to either follow Christ or you're choosing to depart from him.

Remember these words and remember that you may be putting yourself down, you may be saying that you're not a good candidate, you're not able to be a Christian because of this, this, this and this. None of that should enter into your mind and this genealogy helps us to show that even God's salvation plan was weaved through failures, was weaved through sinful outsiders just like each and every one of us.

So I pray that you wouldn't leave it too late, that you would remember that today is the day of salvation, none of us are guaranteed to enter into tomorrow. So it's my prayer that you would look at this passage, don't run past it again, don't skim over it, look at some of the names, see some of the people that are in Christ's own family tree and let it be an encouragement to you that it does not disqualify you from his mercy.

Amen and we'll just say a short word of prayer on those reflections of his word. Our gracious and ever blessed Father again we give you thanks for your word, we give you thanks for a word that may often be difficult for us to read, it may be difficult for us to understand but we are able to take time on that word and we're able to glean much from it and we pray that as we look to those names, as we look to those individuals that we hear of in various stories in the Old Testament and it would be an encouragement to us that even in their difficulties and their failures and in the struggles that they had with sin that we can be encouraged to know that it does not disqualify us, that it in fact makes us fit and proper candidates for grace and for mercy for we know that none of us here, not one of us are perfect, not one of us are distant from sin, we will even fail this very day and the hours that are remaining within it so we pray that we would remember that the gospel message and the good news is that

[62:00] Christ died to save us from our sins and that we are reminded to share that with others but first and foremost to consider it ourselves and to pray to ask for mercy even as David penned in Psalm 51, have mercy upon me not according to anything he had done but according to your steadfast love and abundant mercy so we pray that for each and every one of us here and ask that you would go before us this time in Jesus name, amen.

We'll just conclude by singing from Mission Praise 162 Mission Praise 162 and we'll sing again the whole of this hymn and we'll stand to sing.

From heaven you came, helpless babe, entered our world, your glory veiled, not to be served but to serve and give your life that we might live. This is our God, the servant king, he calls us now to follow him, to bring our lives as a daily offering of worship to the servant king.

There in the garden of the tears my heavy load he chose to bear, his heart with sorrow was torn yet not my will but yours. Come see his hands and his feet, the scars that speak of sacrifice, hands that flung stars into space to cruel nails surrendered.

So let us learn how to serve and in our lives enthrone him, each other's need to prefer for it is Christ we are serving. We'll sing the whole of this hymn and we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

[63:30] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.