

18.12.22 am

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Date: 18 December 2022

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [0 : 00] Now this time of worship we'll sing that loved carol, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King.
- Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King.
- Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconcile. Joyful, O ye nations, ride, Joy the triumph of the skies.
- With the angelic host proclaim, Christ is born in Bethlehem. Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King.
- Christ my highest and my Lord, Christ the everlasting Lord. Late in time before them come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
- [1 : 32] Hail, O ye nations, hail the incarnate deity. Waste as man with man to dwell, Jesus, Lord Emmanuel.
- Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King. Hail, O ye nations, hail the Son of Righteousness.
- Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King.
- Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King.
- Let's unite our hearts in prayer together. Let's pray.
- [3 : 05] Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day and we thank you for the wonder of all that we sang.
- We thank you for the greatest message that we sang year on year and yet they never become tiresome because they are packed with the greatest message that was ever told.
- And the wonder of the wonder of the wonder of the world.
- That we are able to enjoy because of Jesus. We thank you for the joy that we are able to enjoy because of Jesus. We thank you that Jesus came to reconcile God with sinners. We thank you that we who are enemies of God by nature are able to find peace with God through the blood of Jesus.
- We thank you for the joy which we are able to receive in our hearts when we are trusting in Christ. A joy that is a joy that is a joy that is a joy that is a joy that is a joy that is a joy that is a joy that is grounded in eternal truth.
- [4 : 38] The truth of Jesus coming and living and dying and rising for our salvation. We thank you for the heart of Jesus. We thank you for the healing that we sang of in the wings of Jesus.

We thank you, Lord, for the healing that we receive for our souls when we are trusting in Christ. we thank you that the sin the infection of sin which has been passed on ever since the beginning through Adam is an infection that has been removed by Jesus we thank you that he took the sting of sin and the sting of death into his body on the tree so that if we believe in him we have the promise of healing health that is eternal and that is irreversible so help us Lord we pray to be trusting in Jesus help us to know in our own being the peace and the joy and the contentment and the health the eternal heart health that Christ alone can bring and we thank you that we come to you Father in the name of Jesus on the basis of all that Jesus has done for us we thank you for the cross that we must never drift from the place where our sin was paid for we thank you for the resurrection that we remember every Sunday the first day of the week the day where we celebrate the fact that Christ has risen and we pray Lord that we would know the life of Jesus in each one of our lives and we pray especially for those who are struggling at this time we pray for those who are battling with health issues and we we we see them in our minds we we we name them in our hearts and in our lips Lord we we bring them to you we're conscious of so many just now who are battling with their health we pray for Marlene and we pray for Elaine in hospital in Glasgow we pray for Isabella as she struggles to recover after eye surgery we pray for we

Iona in Glasgow as well and Shona as she seeks to support them in the family we pray for Roddy and Mia Vig for Rachel McSweeney and Scalpy we pray on for Hannah and for others Lord that we that we see in our our mind's eye and perhaps we're not able to speak so freely about we we pray for those who are struggling and we ask Lord that they would know the help and the healing touch of Jesus where that be your will and where Lord there is the inevitability of of life in this world coming towards an end we pray for your grace and for your peace to be given to those who are approaching death's dark veil we thank you that Jesus is the one who can carry us through death into life that's everlasting and we praise you Lord for the the hope and for the comfort that that brings to us we pray for those who are grieving we bring them to you also at this time we pray on for Kenny and for Elaine we pray on for Ross and for for Mary Cameron and we pray for

Dahl and Scadabee and the McLeod family after Dahl losing his sister Christine overnight we bring them to you Lord in prayer and we ask that the comfort of God and the peace of God would be known throughout the family and for all those who struggle at this time of year with grief and the that sense of those who are absent we pray for your spirit to be given in great measure to those who are grieving we thank you that you bring comfort to those who mourn we pray for those also who would desire to be with us those who are at home just now and who are seeking to recover from procedures and and those who are at home for for different reasons infirmity and and the passing of the years we we bring them to you also Lord and we ask that as as we come together physically to worship that they would know that sense of togetherness with us and with you in the place of worship Lord we thank you that you are not bound by these walls but you are the God who is everywhere at all times and we pray for others

Lord who have health and who have opportunity but who have no desire to come to the place of worship and we ask Lord that you would create in them a soul thirst that would seek for the only one who is able to satisfy our souls that being Jesus so hear our prayers and bless us we pray we thank you for the we wants that we hear we thank you that they are the answer to our prayers and they are a gift from you and we pray that you would bless them and that as they grow up in this world that they would be kept close to you and that they would grow up to know you and to glorify you so hear our prayers be with those who are with us the wee ones we think also of Evelyn at home and others Lord who may be in the creche we ask Lord that you would bless them let the little children come to me said Jesus and we pray that each one of these wee ones that we have with us and that we see in the community would come to Jesus so hear our prayers take away our sins we ask in Jesus name we pray

[10:10] Amen boys and girls would you like to come out please how are you all today good stuff anything doing today stable you're going to a stable are you why are you going to go and feed some horses no I can't remember you're going to a dolphin and a horse you're going to a dolphin and a horse a donkey and a horse I've opened something I can't close now you're going to Sunday school Michael that's what he said it like going to church big smile there so some of you are going to the stable some of you have been there in the past and you can remember it but

I'm going to show you something this morning and I don't think any of you will be able to know what it is Calum's got his hand up already what is it Calum wait is it about the stables it's not about the stables no okay I think there might there might only be two or three people in the whole church that would know what this is you know what it is okay I haven't even opened the bag yet it's a chocolate it's not a chocolate no is it a beer it's not a beer no no no let's not go there okay let's get straight to the bag okay okay oh yeah it's a doctor thing it's a beer yeah yeah yeah yeah I'm going to need something for my ears in a minute it's okay you can only speak if you've got your hand up only speak so let me let me ask the questions okay okay

I'm going to take it out because I don't think you'll guess it it's not a stethoscope it's not something for your ears nothing to do with the doctors it's a thing for the cars and you fix it you're getting closer but I want I want precise answers okay Shawnee it's a thingy on a bike it's a thingy on a bike no it's not a wrench oh okay two boys at home it's not a hose it's not a hose right okay let's just anyone any guesses can you all it's quite dirty so careful all it is is a rotten metal it's a rotten metal thing that's that's the beginnings of a good answer it's a bit rusty yeah there you go so you does anybody know the name for this heard of it

I'm not sure though I think there's only probably two people who know the name of this and one of them's John Angus and one of them's John Struthers there might be Nathan might know okay Nathan do you know Nathan doesn't know Nathan knows a lot you're right but he doesn't know that one so it's John Angus what's it called it's an anti I'm glad you said that I was going to call it a bush but it's not that an anti-roll bar link and I don't know exactly what this does John what does it do exactly links you get that stops the car from rolling shiggling about yeah so so anyway I've got something else in the bag I'll show you in a second but I'll tell you the story okay

Anna's now 17 and she's learning to drive and so she was going to do a John Angus was saying to me have you taken Anna for a driving lesson yet and I said no I haven't yet but I'm hoping to but the car's making a terrible clonking noise and I'm not sure I'm not sure what it is I'll show you in a second listen to this book okay so I said I'm not sure what the noise is and John Angus said well I'll tell you what I'll tell you what Finley he said I will I will check over for you and did you know Finley that John Angus he's a mechanic he was a mechanic in the past like John and so I'd forgotten so I said that's great if you could check it over so he he took the car for a drive he said you know if Anna was going to be learning to drive the car needs to be safe he didn't seem bothered that I was going to be driving the car all the time and so John Angus he he got the car and he he jacked it up and he was looking this way and he was looking that way and he was listening to the car and he was shaking that and he checked this and he said ah this is definitely a problem he says these things shouldn't be that way see how it's all perished around there and he says that'll be clonking and he says do you feel it a bit sugary around the steering

[16:07] I said yeah I do he said well we need to change this I said is that complicated he said not really I said great let's do it so he came round to do it I said if I can help I'd like to learn a bit I couldn't learn anything I was just in the road just in the way but he took the first bolt off and it was no problem and then the second bolt he tried to take it off and what do you think happened?

exploded it was stuck it was stuck and so he was pulling it and he was pushing it and he was pulling it and he was pushing it and he was trying for about an hour and then he just couldn't get it off so what do you think he did?

was it stuck in the snow? it was stuck in because of the rust do you think he just said this is too difficult I'm giving up do you think that's what he said? do you think he said oh well just let Anna drive that that car that's not very safe he went away another day and he came back and he did more pushing and more pulling and more pushing and more pulling and it still wouldn't come off so he went away a third time and he got a big grinder what's a grinder?

what's a grinder? I don't know how you describe that a saw that cuts through metal and he was pushing the boat and he was banging it with a hammer and he was pulling it and then he's sawing away and there's sparks flying everywhere and look at this oh my god what is that?

look at yeah that's the boat no no it's sharp don't touch it yeah see what he did he sawed right through that he sawed right through the middle and then ping and it came loose and he got it off and he changed the power and now the car hopefully is a bit more safe than it used to be with it because the new parts on now now why did he do that?

[18 : 19] to fix it and why did he want to fix it? to help you to help me and why else? what? so the car would be safe because that's what he said John Angus he said he said we can't have Anna driving a car that's not safe so even though it was really difficult and even though it actually took a lot lot more time than we thought it was going to take he just kept on going and he kept on going because he was wanting to make sure the car and Anna and maybe me a little bit that were safe Cal?

I was a little bit harsh so anyway we'll talk about that after the service okay so that's what he did he kept on going he kept on going because he wanted us to be safe who does that remind you of?

Miriam yeah what what makes us not safe in our hearts? Emily? sin and can we fix sin ourselves?

God can God can fix sin we can't fix it no more than I could fix that thing there I just couldn't do it I just couldn't do it but but but we can't fix the sin in our hearts and so who did God send?

He sent Jesus and there was over hundreds of years he kept saying I'm going to send a saviour and God said to us over hundreds and hundreds of years I'll never give up on you and then at Christmas we remember what do we remember at Christmas?

[20 : 06] we remember that Jesus what happened about Jesus? he came so I know it's hard to listen it's Christmas time isn't it? but take this with you okay God never gives up on you he loves you and he loved you so much that he sent his son to die for you he never gives up he wants us to be safe because he loves us and Jesus came so that our sin could be broken like this little boat here and so that we could be made safe forever if we trust in him so let's pray and let's ask God to help us understand all that stuff and to trust him Lord we thank you for your love for us and we thank you that over hundreds of years we can read the message in the Bible that promises us that even though we were not safe in our hearts because of sin you were going to send a saviour your son into this world to save us from sin and we thank you that Jesus came into this world to break the power of sin and to break the power of death and to give us everlasting life and everlasting safety if we trust in him so help all the boys and girls and help all of us here we pray to be trusting in Jesus and to be looking to Jesus this Christmas help us with all the excitement and all the noise and all the activity of the season not to take our eyes off Jesus but to keep our eyes on Jesus and to be trusting him and we ask all this in Jesus name

Amen Okay let's sing again to God's praise we'll sing Mission Praise 71 Child in the Manger Heaven's Taleshou by...

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Okay, boys and girls, off to the Sunday school in the stable.

And if we could turn to Matthew chapter 1, please.

[24 : 43] Matthew chapter 1, and we'll read the whole of this chapter. And we start with the genealogy of Jesus.

Matthew chapter 1, verse 1. A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar. Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram. Ram the father of Aminadab, Aminadab the father of Nashon, Nashon the father of Salmon.

Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab. Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife.

Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah. Abijah the father of Esau. Esau the father of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram.

[25 : 52] Jehoram the father of Uzziah. Uzziah the father of Jotham. Jotham the father of Ahaz. Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah the father of Manasseh. Manasseh the father of Ammon.

Ammon the father of Josiah. and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon. After the exile to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abayad, Abayad the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akeem, Akeem the father of Eliud, Eliud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matan, Matan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Thus there were 14 generations in all from Abraham to David, 14 from David to the exile to Babylon, and 14 from the exile to the Christ. This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about.

His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, she had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet. The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son, and he gave him the name Jesus. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now to God's praise, and we sing from Psalm 89, and the first two stanzas of Psalm 89, the verses on the screen.

[28 : 28] 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, and thy faithfulness even in the heavens thou wilt establish sure.

These two verses of this psalm we sing in Gaelic and remain seated to sing. The trough we gave near heaven, the sleigh the other's day.

The trough we gave near heaven, the sleigh the other's day.

controlled by rain, the equivalence of the holding whisky Tide, iiii, ■■■i oren,î Yeahifici, be theyrí e which are my nova carries ker a can.

Thank you.

[29 : 59] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

If you could have your Bibles open now please at Matthew chapter 1 you'll find that helpful Let's pray as we go there Lord we thank you for your word and we pray for your help as we study it and we pray for the wee ones as well some of them in the Sunday school through the wall we ask that you would bless them and as they think about the Christmas story we ask Lord that you would give them faith that they would be able to take hold of it and know the blessing of it and for the wee ones that are on the way to the stable we ask Lord that you would be with them that the thrill of the Christmas story would impact them and that they would be able to listen they'd be able to believe and Lord that they would know the blessing of Jesus as their saviour in their early years so bless the wee ones we pray and we ask that they would be found looking to you over these days we pray Lord that you would be with the congregations around us as well we thank you Lord for Ian Murdo and for his beginning to return to work and we ask Lord that as he preaches today that he would know your help and he would know the help of the Holy Spirit and that you would speak through him Lord as we pray that you would speak through all those who open your word and preach Christ crucified so hear our prayers and help us Lord we ask we Lord know that apart from you we can do nothing and without the help of the Holy Spirit as our teacher we can't see and we can't hear we can't understand we can't respond and so we cry out Lord and we ask that you would be amongst us and that you would speak to us and that you would minister within us and we pray this in Jesus name and for Jesus sake

Amen Over the last few weeks we've been travelling in the direction of Christmas and rather than going at high speed straight to the manger we've allowed a bit more time for the journey and we know we do that sometimes sometimes we just have to get somewhere as fast as we possibly can sometimes we want to savour the experience a bit more and we allow a bit of time for the journey and we maybe look a little to the left and a little to the right and we explore the area that we're heading towards and we've kind of taken that approach this year as we've been going towards the story of Christmas we've visited some places in the Old Testament that we might not otherwise have gone we've been to Isaiah and we've been to Micah we were in Genesis on Wednesday night and a few weeks back and so what I want to do this morning is go to another place or begin at least at another place that we don't often visit in the run up to Christmas and it's the first section of Matthew's Gospel and we see in verses 1 to verse 17 of Matthew that we have the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ that's how the Gospel begins and some of you might have been listening to me read and thinking why on earth is he is he making such a hash of reading through all these names and verses why doesn't he just go straight to the stable why doesn't he get to the shepherds and the angels and all that now don't worry we'll get there but this is how Matthew begins and so this is inspired by the Holy Spirit this is something that we are intended to read and note admittedly it's a strange way to begin one of the most exciting books ever written with this family tree and it's quite a contrast to the way that the other Gospels begin because if we glance at the other Gospels if you go to you don't need to go there but if I go to Mark

[37 : 03] Mark does everything at breakneck speed and so Mark he just begins his Gospel like this the beginning we've got the beginning in the Greek it just says beginning of the Gospel the good news about Jesus Christ the Son of God and then Luke the medical mind he's very orderly in the way that he sets things out he gives us an introduction to his report he says he's carefully investigated all these things about Jesus and he's presenting to Theophilus this report this account of things that's a very orderly and a chronological account and then John in his Gospel he is very spiritual and theological he takes us way back to before the beginning of time he says in the beginning was the Word Jesus and the Word was with God and the Word was God and our minds are blown even when we take a minute to try to think about that so these these introductions to the Gospels

Mark Luke and John are a stark contrast to Matthew's where he says here's the genealogy and here's a hundred names you're going to struggle to say and I want to just begin today by asking the question why are we given these names why does Matthew start this Gospel in this way what can we learn from these opening verses and then we'll move to the second part of the chapter towards the end and there's four points that we have to consider in the time that we have today and the first point is that God is a person God is a person the second point is that God is a promise keeper the third point is God is patient and the final point is that God is a planner to our focus is on on the character of God and the work of God the nature of God so let's think first of all of this amazing truth that God is a person verse 1 of Matthew 1 a record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David the son of Abraham now for those who know their shorter catechism and I know there's quite a few here who do we know that God is spirit question 4 is the question what is God and the answer to that question is God is a spirit infinite eternal and unchangeable

I'm looking around to see if there's any lips moving God is a spirit infinite eternal and unchangeable in his being wisdom power holiness justice goodness and truth so God is a spirit but the astounding truth that Matthew underlines for us here is that the infinite eternal unchangeable wise powerful holy just good and true God he took on flesh the Christmas story is the story of the incarnation as we sang it in the carol veiled in flesh the Godhead see hail the incarnate deity pleased as man with man to dwell Jesus the

Emmanuel John puts it this way in John chapter 1 verse 14 the word Jesus became flesh and made his dwelling among us and in Matthew chapter 1 and verse 18 which we'll come to in a minute or two we read about the birth of Jesus and it was a natural birth Mary was the natural mother of Jesus and yes the conception was supernatural the conception was miraculous she verse 18 was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit but the pregnancy was natural and the birth of Jesus was natural and the child that was born was fully human and Matthew in these opening verses he lays out for us the family line of Jesus he expounds the truth to us that God the Son he is a person and you can go back through this family history you can go through all these names you can go through this family line and see the full humanness of God

Jesus is fully God and he is fully man and I think we have a good grasp of the fact that Jesus is fully God but I think it's very possible that we often overlook the fact that Jesus is fully man he's human and Matthew underlines that in these opening verses and we might ask the question why is there a need to say that I think there's at least two reasons that we can consider when we think about why Matthew begins his gospel this way and the first thing is Matthew wants us to understand that this truth about the birth of Jesus is real this Christmas story that so dominates the month of

[43 : 34] December this story of the child that was born to save his people from their sins this story is real this is truth this is believable Christmas story is not a fairy tale it's not a fable this is history not fantasy this is genealogy we can trace back through the real life family line until we get to Christ Matthew wants us to see that he wants us to see that that God that Jesus God the son is a person with a family line relations a family tree just like you have and I think the other reason that we need to take hold of this fact that

God is a person is because we need the encouragement of that we have a God who understands what it's like to be a person we don't come this morning in prayer to a God who is so remote from us and other than us that he cannot feel what we feel we have a God who understands everything that we feel and so as we come to Jesus in the privacy of our own closets and we pour out our hearts to him about all the things that might trouble us he understands Jesus knows what it's like to experience the joys and the sorrows and the pains and the temptations and the tears and the struggles and the highs and the lows of this world so when you and

I come to God in prayer our God understands us because he is a person who has walked where we've walked and who's been through what we were going through remember the story I've told in the past here about the little girl who was scared of the dark and her mum put her to bed and she didn't want to stay in the room in the dark she wanted her mum to stay with her but her mum had stuff to do and it was the time in life to try to teach them to sleep in their own room and she wasn't very happy about it but her mum said to her don't worry you're not on your own we're just here and remember God is with you and the wee girl settled down and she was okay for ten minutes but the crying was starting to rise back up and so the mum went back in and checked her and said you're okay don't worry we're just here and remember God is with you she settled back down third time back through same thing she's crying don't worry we're here

God is with you and she responded as only a little child could by saying I know God is with me but I want a God with skin on and we understand what she meant and picking up on that in a in a reverent way Jesus is God the son with skin on he was born into this world down a family line as a person he's part of a family that we can trace back into time and Matthew wants us to see that so point number one is God is a person point number two is God is a promise keeper and I'm going to accelerate through this point a little bit looking at the time the children the children were more than I could handle this morning I think they took up twice my time

God is a promise keeper and we've been into the promises of the Old Testament over the past few weeks think about Genesis 3 15 Adam and Eve they fall sin comes in and immediately there's this promise of one who would come through the seed of the woman the offspring of the woman and this one who would come would be a death crusher he would be a life giver that was God's promise and then we fast forward a little bit through the Old Testament and we get to the family line of Abraham and God says to Abraham through your line will come blessing and it seems so far-fetched because Abraham and Sarah they had no children and they were approaching a hundred years old but as they wait on God eventually the child comes we thought about the promise on Wednesday night two Genesis 22 through your offspring God says to

[49 : 02] Abraham all nations on earth will be blessed God's promise one is coming Genesis chapter three the death crusher one is coming Abraham Genesis 22 he's the source of blessing to all nations Isaiah 9 there's the promise to Isaiah that in the darkness of this world a light was coming a child would be born a son would be given through whom there would be peace God's promise Micah 5 Israel are struggling as a nation but there's the promise of a of a savior who would help them who would be the shepherd king so from the very beginning there is this promise of God to send a savior one who would help them one who would he would give them joy one who would give them peace one who would he would bring salvation that was God's promise peace one who would he have to wait for generations for that promise to be fulfilled and we we can follow that through the the old testament now when we think about gifts promises some of us here might be waiting anxiously for gifts to arrive you know we've placed an order we've thought about what gift to get and then post went on strike and we're wondering is it ever going to come so you go back to your order you get the reference you're plugging into the track and trace system and you're you're trying to see where on earth in the timeline is this gift is it going to be delivered in time and in Matthew 1 in the first 17 verses God through Matthew has given us a list he's given us a family line of people and as we step through that list we've no time to do this but if we were to start looking through some of the names in this list we can trace the promise of God through the generations through lots of different circumstances and situations we can trace and track the progress of

God's promised gift over thousands of years we see this promise that continues that's amplified and eventually it gets to and it stops at Jesus the Savior Jesus said to learn from this list of names that God always keeps his word he had promised that in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed he had promised to raise up a savior of the family of David Genesis 12 Isaiah 11 and these 16 verses says Ryle they prove that Jesus was the son of David and the son of Abraham and that God's promise was fulfilled so even as you look at this dry list of names you might see what you and I see in this dry list of names is that God is a promise keeper

Jesus God the son is a person and God is a promise keeper Jesus Jesus is the Savior the one whom we get to through this family line he is the Savior he is the one who delivered God's promise he is the Messiah he is the one who came to destroy the works of the devil he's the one who came to take us from darkness to life he is the one who came to bring us peace peace so as we consider the message of Christmas we see we see that God is a promise keeper we can trust him God is a person who understands us God is a promise keeper one whom we can trust and the third thing here is God is patient and we see that too as we go through this as we go through this family line I don't know how many of you have done your family history we did ours some years ago or my dad did and in every family history there there can be some events to celebrate and there can be some events and characters that you'd you'd rather gloss over every family comes with some difficult characters maybe we are the difficult characters in our in our families every family will have some stories in the history that we might not like to tell but in this family tree that

Matthew sets out for us everything is out in the open for us to see one commentator says some of the names we read in this catalog remind us of shameful and sad histories and if we were to even do a little bit of study into the names on this list we can see the patience of God there are names here like Ruth and Ruth was a Moabite X who were the Moabites they were the enemies of God they hated God and yet God took hold of her and he used her he blessed her you could note the name here in the list Rahab who was she well she was a Canaanite prostitute you can note the name

Tamar Tamar what was her story well you almost couldn't broadcast it at this time of the day she deceived her father-in-law by dressing up as a prostitute and she had twins with him you'd want to delete that from your family history you see the name Jacob it's a dishonest man this likable man he was a schemer you see the name David and we love David the psalmist but we don't have to look too hard into his life to see that he was a sinner he was an adulterer he was a murderer and so the family tree of Jesus has some names in it that we might be tempted to delete this family tree of Jesus has some stories in it that we would rather not tell but God tells them and this family tree here shows the the patience of God with with broken sinful people it shows the the grace of God it shows how how God is able to take broken people and messy difficult situations and use them even for his glory remember some years ago in the in the hall the community center when we were in there there was a man who came to speak George Verwer was his name he was the head of a mission organization called OM and he said lots of things but one of the things that he said one of the things that he said that stuck with me was he was talking a little about missiology and missiology is is that study of of God's mission how God reaches out to us to seek to save us and he said to us in the in his in a comment that was kind of an off an off-the-cuff comment he said you've heard about missiology he said I want to tell you about messiology he said I want to tell you from my experience about how God works through messy people and messy lives and messy situations all over the world and he told a few incredible stories but it's a truth that we see threaded all through scripture God is patient he's patient with us and our hearts are messy our hearts are are dark there can be things that pass through our minds there can be things that lodge within our hearts that that can discourage us and and can be a grievance to God but he is able to save us he's able to cleanse us

[58 : 36] Jesus God the Son came into this world not just to be born but to live the righteous life that we can't live that we're not living and to die the death that we deserve Jesus blood was shed so that our messy lives and our dark hearts can be cleansed and God can use us even though we're we're complicated creatures with all kinds of messy situations God doesn't airbrush us out of his plans he doesn't strike us off his lists he can use us like he used Ruth like he used David he can take situations that we get ourselves into and that the devil designed for evil and

God in his sovereign power can turn them around for good and for glory and we see that in the in the incarnation as we explore the family tree of Jesus and we see that above all in the crucifixion the darkest act ever to be seen on this planet as God the Son is put to death it's an act which God used in his plan in his sovereign power to secure our salvation God is patient that's the point God is love and and he is kind and he is patient with us so so be encouraged to come to him be encouraged to trust him God is a person God is a promise

God is patient and very briefly to finish God is a planner now even as I look around the building here I can see I can see some people who are planners and planners like to have everything under control you've got lists for your Christmas cards you've got lists for your your Christmas menus you've got lists for every day and every hour over the Christmas season some people are planners everything has to be planned out and as we look at just very briefly the the second section here think about Joseph for a minute we often overlook Joseph in the in the Christmas story Joseph had a plan he had a plan to marry Mary as some of you here are are engaged he plans to marry and Joseph had this this plan to marry Mary but all of a sudden

Joseph plan was in ruins look at verse 18 and 19 this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about his mother Mary was pleased to be married to Joseph now engagements back then were rock solid it was as good as being married if you broke off an engagement you had to get a divorce so his mother Mary was pleased to be married to Joseph but before they came together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit there's the miracle because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace he had in mind to divorce her quietly so think about Joseph he must have been in a state of panic I mean what was going on his wife is pregnant she's starting to show and it's nothing to do with him so what would he do well he's a righteous man he doesn't want to hurt her there doesn't seem to be any kind of a vindictive spirit in Joseph so he plans to break things off quietly but that wasn't God's plan verse 20 but after

Joseph had considered this an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said Joseph son of David do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit so Joseph has his plans and they've just been shredded but God has a bigger plan so what was the plan of God what was God going to do through this pregnancy what was God going to do through this child what will the plan was revealed to the names of God and we saw that in Isaiah and we see here again verse 21 the angel says we she will give birth to a son Mary will give birth to a son you have to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins so God's plan was to save us from sin and that has been God's plan from the beginning take that in God's plan from

[64 : 35] Genesis chapter 3 verse 15 when Adam and Eve fell God's plan was to save his people from their sins and this child would be the Savior verse 22 all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel which means God with us see we could not and we cannot save ourselves from sin and we need to accept that that's the most humiliating thing it's a thing that I see in people that's is the greatest offense you know there are people who who sit in chairs like this and they try and live good lives and they say well you know I'm trying my best I'm doing what I can surely I can save myself surely my good works will will get to a level that's good enough that on the last day God will say you can come in surely I've sat in enough of these chairs over the years and sat through enough communion services to for God to have mercy on me and say well you know on the basis of your life you're okay but you're not okay nothing you and I can do will ever save us from our sin we can't do it and so God needed himself to come to be the savior and Jesus is God the son

Emmanuel God with us the savior and the angel as he speaks with Joseph is showing Joseph something of God's plan to save so what did Joseph do when Joseph woke up it says he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife but he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son and he gave him the name Jesus Joseph trusted Jesus and Joseph received Jesus into his life and the question I want to finish with is it's not so much what did Joseph do but it's what will you do will you trust God will you receive Jesus to be your savior will you give him your heart

God is a person he knows you he understands you he wants you to come to him he wants you to trust God is a promise keeper and you can scan through thousands of years and get evidence after evidence of the fact that he is trustworthy God is patient and he will not drive away anyone who comes to him and God is a planner and his plan was to save you and I if we will let him let's pray again Lord we pray for the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives we are conscious

God will not force his way into your heart but he knocks yes there's resistance I can feel it but if we trust him if we open our hearts to him he will come so think about this when we sing these words in the big midwinter frosty wind be low as to guard us side on water like a snow snow snow

Angels and archangels May our God prepare Cherubim and seraphim
Thrawn the air But His mother only In her maiden birth
Worship the beloved With a kiss What can I give Him
Who does I am?

[illegible]