

Grace For Our Scandalous Past Matthew 1: 1-6, 17

I. All kings had genealogies.

- A. First, what the New Testament genealogies are not.
 - 1. They are not complete. Not every generation is included.
 - (a) Matthew has 28 generations from David to Jesus.
 - (b) Luke has 43 generations from David to Jesus.
 - (c) We say, "Oh no, is there an error in Scripture?"
 - (d) The error is not in the Scripture.
 - (e) The error is in our interpretation of the Scripture.
 - 2. We need to understand Scripture from an Eastern viewpoint.
 - (a) A Western view says to be accurate it must have every generation. It must be in the exact order.
 - (b) The Eastern view comes from an oral (spoken) tradition.
 - (c) They are more concerned with the point they are making.
 - (d) The genealogies use numerical symbolism.
 - (e) 7 is the Biblical number for perfection, wholeness.
 - (f) What is Matthew saying with a pattern of 14's?(Matt.1:17)
 - (g) Luke has 77 generations from God the Father to Jesus.
 - 3. Both Gospels are saying God has sovereignly ordained Jesus to be the Chosen One, the Messiah King!
- B. Purpose of genealogy is to show that the King is the rightful king.
 - 1. It would demonstrate that the king was of royal lineage.
 - (a) In England, the genealogy would be of House of Windsor.
 - 2. Prophets had testified that the Messiah would be of the House of David.
 - (a) Matthew's genealogy shows that Jesus fulfilled prophecy.
- C. The 7 imagery is used to show God's hand in Jesus' life, calling, and identity.

II. Genealogies would usually emphasize the worthiness of the King.

- A. Show that he is a descendant of greatness.
 - 1. So there was a tendency to speak of the King in grandiose terms, maybe even do a little whitewashing of his background.
 - 2. Many of the JFK biographies written by Kennedy administration members tended to do this.
- B. Compared to secular genealogies, Matthew's genealogy of Jesus is scandalous.
 - 1. There's no hiding of the family's dirty laundry.
 - 2. If Billy the Kid was in your line that might seem colorful.
 - 3. But what if your grandfather was an SS guard at Auschwitz?
 - 4. What if your ancestor made his fortune buying and selling slaves?
- C. Jesus' lineage included adulterers, murderers, and scoundrels.

- 1. Matthew, not only acknowledges this, he emphasizes it.
- 2. Judah fathered twins by his daughter-in-law, Tamar(Matt.1:3).
- 3. Great great...grandmother Rahab was a prostitute (Matt.1:5).
- 4. Ruth was a Gentile, from Moab.
- 5. King David was an adulterer and a murderer (Matthew 1:6).
- 6. Solomon went from being the wisest man to being a very foolish one.
- 7. A number of the Kings of Judah in this genealogy were idolaters who led Israel into sin and judgment.

III. The genealogy testifies to the grace of God.

- A. Despite all the sin and brokenness in this genealogy God is faithfully working, often in spite of us more than because of us.
 - 1. God is willing and able to work through imperfect people from imperfect backgrounds with imperfect histories.
 - 2. That's good news because that means he's willing to work through you and me.
 - (a) You may have personal history that you are ashamed of.
 - (b) If you know Jesus, you have been washed of that.
 - (c) You are clean and acceptable.
 - (d) Don't believe the lies that say otherwise.
 - 3. Receive Isaiah 54
 - (a) Give the backstory first (Isaiah 54:4-10).
 - (b) In its context, this is about Jerusalem.
 - (c) Sometimes the Holy Spirit takes Scripture out of its context.
- B. The reality is we all share a common genealogy.
 - 1. We are all sons and daughters of Adam.
 - (a) Jesus is the only exception.
 - 2. None of us is more worthy because we come from the right background.
 - 3. God offers us grace!
 - (a) We also share a common genealogy with Jesus!
 - (b) The Holy Spirit caused Jesus' conception and our re-creation! The Spirit in us cries, "Abba, Father!"
 - 4. God is renewing his image in you!
 - (a) He wants to use you to bless others.
 - (b) Pass on the good things he has given you.
 - (c) Ask God to give you someone you can encourage and build up!