

Christmas Series I

Matthew's Introduction Message

Text: Matthew 1:3-6.

Introduction: Something happened on the first Christmas that was totally *different* from anything that had happened or ever will. A young virgin *conceived* and gave birth to the *Savior* of the world. It was a *difficult* time yet she submitted to God's will. The event took place in fulfillment of God's promise spoken by the prophets centuries earlier (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:21-23). It was supernatural and miraculous.

Supernatural: not of the natural world - relating to or attributed to phenomena that cannot be explained by natural laws (Encarta Dictionary: English).

Miraculous: Regarded as caused by supernatural intervention apparently contrary to the laws of nature and caused by a supernatural power (Encarta Dictionary: English).

Prior to addressing the final message of this series centered in the birth and Person of Jesus Christ, the scripture progression of Matthew's Gospel speaks some profound things to prepare for the Christmas event.

1. God uses the unusual to intensify our expectation for the unusual—Matt. 1:3-6.
 - Matthew's genealogy highlights the marvelous act of God's grace by naming four women which was unusual among Oriental and Mid-eastern listings, because names and inheritances came through the fathers.
 - a. *Tamar* – ex- prostitute-1:3; Gen.38:13-30.
 - b. *Rahab*- ex-prostitute-1:5; Josh.2:1.
 - c. *Ruth*- former pagan-1:5; Ruth 1:4.
 - d. *Bathsheba*- former adulteress-1:6; II Sam.11:1-5). *Tamar*, the mother of *Perez* (Gen.38:29) was a distant removed grandmother of King David. *Rahab* was his great, great grandmother, *Ruth* was his great grandmother and *Bathsheba* became the wife of David and mother of Solomon (Ruth 4:12-22).
2. God is unusual (inspired Matthew's expression through scripture—II Tim.3:16).
 - Unusual-remarkable or out of the ordinary.
 - a. God puts the marginalized and society's outcast on the front page of His redemptive story.
 - b. God doesn't overlook you.
 - c. God exemplifies His compassionate character.
3. God uses past history (the genealogy inclusion of four women Matthew 1:3-6).
 - a. To help present and future expectations.
 - b. To emphasize His sameness—Heb.1:10-12., 13:5; Jam.1:17.
 - Sameness—unchanged in character.

Point: God is the only one who does not change! His Character remains fixed, His plans remain steady, and His promises remain firm. This truth gives comfort, freedom, and certainty to His people. Let's celebrate this journey into this Christmas season.

JDF