



Links Players

Christmas 2024 | Son of David, Son of Abraham

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1, ESV).

The sons of golfing greats rarely follow in their dad's footsteps. The list of young men who reach anything near their dad's level of success is extremely short.

Some notable exceptions come to mind: Old and Young Tom Morris, Jay and Bill Haas, and Bob and Kevin Tway.

Being the "son of" in Scripture tells us many important things. For instance, Matthew tells us that Jesus is "the son of David, the son of Abraham."

For some, reading the genealogies is like watching "paint dry." Strikingly, though, Matthew's genealogy includes five women (patriarchs typically dominate genealogies). In this case, he names Tamar (she had sex with her father-in-law), Rahab (a Canaanite prostitute), Ruth (a disqualified Moabite, see Deuteronomy 23:3), the "wife of Uriah" (Bathsheba), and Mary (rumored immorality, see John 8:41).

My older brother, the PhD in the family, was intrigued by our ancestry long before there was anything like Ancestry.com. I suspect he is barking up the wrong family tree, though, because there is little chance William Wallace, Martin Luther, Thomas Jefferson, Robert E. Lee, Robert the Bruce, Marie Curie, and Margaret Thatcher are my forebears.

If he told me that my ancestors were mostly scalawags, rascals, and convicts, I might believe him. While my older brother is tracing our DNA to the "rich and famous," in Jesus' case, his ancestors include both the famous and the infamous—"warts and all."

Another surprise is this. Matthew went through all the trouble of tracing Abraham's and David's lineage to Joseph, only to find out that, in the end, Joseph is not Jesus' biological dad. So, if the point is not bloodline descent, what is?

The answer is that the Holy Spirit conceived the baby in Mary's womb. Without virginal conception and birth, Christianity is nothing more than a good fiction.

But why choose Abraham and David? In the Old Testament, God made covenants. To Abraham, God promised that his son would be the one through whom God's blessings would come to all the nations (Galatians 3:16). To David, God promised that his son would sit on his throne and his reign would endure for

all eternity. Matthew is making a serious point about the covenantal structure of redemptive history!

Matthew's genealogy is hardly boring; it points to staggering truths: Jesus fulfills these covenantal promises made millennia before with David and Abraham. Unlike our opening golf analogy, Jesus is the greater son of David.

God's saving purposes have always included gentiles (e.g., Ruth) and social outcasts (e.g., Rahab).

No moral failure, connivance, gene pool, or resistance can thwart God's plans and promises!

Jesus is not only the covenantal "seed" of Abraham and David; he is the Son of God!

The "big picture" of Christmas tells the story of God's unalterable providence—he is leading history to its appointed end—a world bowed on bended knee before the rightful heir-King Jesus!

Prayer: "Jesus! We give you thanks for shining the light of your glory into the world and into our hearts!"

READING: Matthew 1:1-17 (optional: Luke 3:23-38)

1. Would it make a difference to discover that you were the descendant of Bobby Jones, Old Tom Morris, and Ben Hogan? Why?

2. After puzzlingly over the genealogy of Matthew, what is the significance of five women, David and Abraham, and Jesus as the adopted son of Joseph?

3. Application: How might a deeper dive into the biblical story of Jesus' birth impact how you approach the Christmas season?
