

The Family Tree of Grace

Matthew 1:1–17

Big Idea: Jesus' family tree shows that God's grace reaches both the broken outsider, and the fallen insider, and only Christ, the true King can redeem us all.

Every family has a story. Matthew begins his Gospel not with shepherds or angels but with a family tree, a long list of names that includes saints and sinners, heroes, and scandals. It is a surprising way to tell the story of the Messiah.

The genealogy of Jesus includes people that most of us might exclude from the record. Tamar deceived her father-in-law. Rahab was a prostitute in Jericho. Ruth was a Moabite outsider. Bathsheba was remembered for a royal scandal. Then come Israel's kings: David, Solomon, and Manasseh, each great in name but flawed. Yet Matthew includes them all. Why? Because, God's grace refuses to erase the broken parts of the story. It redeems them.

Author Daniel Darling writes, "God names the exploited, the forgotten, the powerless. The world may forget your name, but you can be known and named by the One who is the name above every name." In Jesus' genealogy, the outsider and insider stand side by side. The message is obvious: *no one is beyond redemption, and no one is good enough not to need it.*

This is more than ancient history; it is our story. We too are part of a lineage marked by failure and mercy. The good news is that Jesus did not come in spite of this family; He came for this family and for us.

From generation to generation, God's grace has been chasing humanity through saints and sinners, kings and widows, patriots and wanderers, writing one story that ends and begins in Jesus Christ, the true King who reigns in mercy and redeems us all.

Human beings try to secure worth, belonging, and righteousness by:

- Erasing shameful parts of the story
- Distancing themselves from "those people."
- Trusting heritage, morality, or exclusion to save them

We are a broken family that cannot redeem itself.

Christ does **not** fix the family tree by:

- Editing out the bad names

- Replacing sinners with saints
- Starting over with “better people”

Christ resolves our fallen condition by:

- **Entering the broken family**
- **Bearing the weight of its sin**
- **Redeeming both shame and pride**
- **Becoming the true King none of the others could be**

Jesus doesn't stand *above* the genealogy.
He stands *inside* it.

*Darling, Daniel. *The Characters of Christmas: The Unlikely People Caught Up in the Story of Jesus* (p. 166). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.