A New Beginning: Understanding God’s Unfolding Plan
message #1 in the series
Choosing a Christ-Centered Christmas
Sunday, December 1, 2019 • Tim McCoy, Lead Pastor

A Chapter a Day

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Matthew 1

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (v. 1, ESV)

“Matthew’s introduction echoes the language of Genesis. The word rendered “genealogy” (1:1) is Greek genesis (“beginning, origin, birth, genealogy”), and this is also the title of the Greek translation of Genesis, implying that it is a book of “beginnings.” “The book of the genealogy” appears to function not only a head for the genealogy itself (1:2-17) but also as a title for the entire story to follow: a new beginning with the arrival of Jesus the Messiah and the kingdom of God (cf. note on Gen. 2:4).” (ESV Study Bible, p. 1820)

1. No matter what your life has been up to now, you can have a __________________ in Jesus Christ.

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV)
Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. (vv. 2-17, ESV)

2. God’s unfolding plan involves both _______________ and _______________ – and there’s a role for you!

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27, ESV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28, ESV)

*Men and women are the same, but different!*
3. God’s plan unfolds across __________________________
– and our job is to be __________________________ in ours!

For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. (Acts 13:36-37, ESV)

- Our lives have been __________________________ – both positively and negatively – by those who have gone before us.

I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:5b-6, ESV)

Human experience confirms that immoral behavior on the part of parents often results in suffering for their children and grandchildren. This is one of the grievous aspects of sin, that it harms others besides the sinner himself. But this general principle is qualified in two ways: First, it applies only to those who hate me, i.e., to those who persist in unbelief as enemies of God. The cycle of sin and suffering can be broken through repentance. Second, the suffering comes to the third and the fourth generation, while God shows steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments (i.e., to the thousandth generation; see ESV footnote, and cf. Deut. 7:9). (ESV Study Bible, p. 176)

- Our lives will influence generations that ____________ us – for good or for ill.

A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children, but the sinner’s wealth is laid up for the righteous. (Proverbs 13.22, ESV)

In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge. (Proverbs 14:26, ESV)

The righteous who walks in his integrity— blessed are his children after him! (Proverbs 20:7, ESV)
• God does not hold us ____________________________ for the sins of our parents or the sins of our children.

  19 “Yet you say, ‘Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?’ When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. 20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. (Ezekiel 18:19-20, ESV)

• We are ____________________________ to God only for our own choices – and by his grace, we do not have to repeat the waywardness of our ancestors.

4. As God’s plan unfolds, he uses ____________________________ people to accomplish his purposes.

5. God’s plan culminates in the coming of Jesus, who is . . .

  • The son of Abraham ➔ the one in whom the covenant ____________________________ of God are fulfilled (cf. Galatians 3).

  • The Son of David ➔ the Messiah-________________ who will reign forever (cf. 2 Samuel 7).

  • The Son of God ➔ born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for our sins, was raised to life, is at the Father’s right hand today, and one day will come again to rule and to reign.

A Prayer for a New Beginning

Dear God,

I need you . . . and I need a new beginning. I am sorry for my sins, please forgive me. I believe that Jesus is your Son, and I receive him by faith now as my Savior and I commit to following him as my Lord. Please fill me with your Spirit and teach me to walk in your ways. I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.