



Guest List

Andy Stanley

Scriptures: Matthew 1:1-5, Matthew 9:2, 6, 9, 11–12

Visual: Small platforms I can stand on. One is labeled “What I’ve Done.” One is labeled “What He Did.” [See “Read Me” file for pictures.]

Idea: *The story of Christmas is the story of God drawing near to those who had been drawn away.*

Introduction

1. We have four accounts of the life of Jesus. They all tell the same story, but don’t give everything the same amount of emphasis. Mark and John begin the ministry of John the Baptist and say nothing of Christ’s birth. Luke begins with the birth announcement of John the Baptist and then the birth of Jesus. But Matthew chose not to begin with a story at all, but rather with a genealogy.

Matthew 1

¹ This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah [*Greek: Christ*] the son of David, the son of Abraham: ² Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

2. Matthew was writing to a predominately Jewish audience and so there was a need to answer the first question they would ask about Jesus: was he a direct descendant of David? Every Jew knew the Messiah would be a king descended from the great king David.
3. But in establishing Jesus’ credibility, Matthew reveals things about Jesus’ ancestry that probably should have remained a secret . . . things that didn’t help his case. Jesus didn’t have **divine** origins.
4. Ancient historians were often forced to put a positive slant on their records because kings/military leaders were paying them. There were gaps in the stories. Incomplete genealogies. Exaggerations. Military defeats were excluded, as well as crimes, even the names of children who didn’t turn out well.
5. When we come to the story of Jesus, it is the opposite. It is so opposite as to be offensive. Matthew unnecessarily highlights the people we would be most prone to skip.
6. In a list of men, he, out of nowhere, includes the names of four women . . . two of which he would have been better off excluding. Three were not even Jewish. They were Gentiles. And he skipped Sarah, Rebekah, Leah . . .

Matthew 1

³ Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar [*The story of Tamar is so seedy that it probably shouldn’t be told in mixed company.*], Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴ Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of