

Preparing to See Jesus Sunday: 12/4/2023 – Pastor Lenard Tavernelli Hunter Hankins – Matthew 1:1-17

“To prepare to see Jesus, know that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah who fulfills God’s story and has come to set all peoples free”

Overview

As we begin this Advent season Pastor Lenard invited us to prepare to see Jesus. Our passage, a long genealogy, is something we can easily pass over when reading. Pastor Lenard wanted us to see what the original 1st century audience would see in this passage. A major part of this origin story is that Jesus’ **identity** is in the line of Abraham and King David. The genealogy also presents Jesus as the climax of the **story** of God’s people. The people in this genealogy correspond to major events and promises of God. This genealogy starts with the call of Abraham from Ur. This can be seen as God calling for return from the exile of God’s people from the garden and then to David who also brought the people back to Jerusalem. Jesus, the true Israelite, then represents the period of exile after the failure of David’s kingdom. It is important to note that this story included people that were not expected, the 4 women. These women reveal that God’s plan was to include gentiles and sinners. Jesus’ story is **important** as it fulfills what the world had been waiting for.

As we approach the celebration of Jesus’ birth Pastor Lenard called us to come to faith if we haven’t, to read the story of Jesus’ birth in scripture, to talk about this story as a family. He also called us to search our hearts and examine our life so that we can repent where needed and walk with Jesus.

“The unexamined life is not worth living” Socrates

Texts

Gal 4:4-5, Isaiah 9:6-7, Genesis 2:4, 5:1, & 12:2-3, 2 Sam 7

Discussion Questions

1. There are many major events in life (new jobs, birth of a child, marriage, etc...). Can you describe a major life event from your past and how you prepared for it?
 - a. How do you prepare for Christmas.
2. The original audience of this Gospel was Jewish. When thinking of Jew / Gentile division how does this genealogy break down prejudicial walls?
 - a. How does this genealogy show us how God works?
3. As we prepare to celebrate Jesus Pastor Lenard called us to examine ourselves and not just to find sin in our lives but to find those things that distract us.
 - a. What in your life has been the greatest distraction to your walk with God?
 - b. How can you shift your focus from these distractions to Jesus?
4. Was there anything else that stood out in the sermon?

