



HEAVEN *to* EARTH

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW

Matthew 1 (ESV)


- Jesus' story begins with a genealogy that connects Him to Abraham & David, showing He is the promised King & the fulfillment of God's covenant plan.
- Matthew includes four surprising women—Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, & Bathsheba - to show that God uses ordinary, imperfect & even scandal-marked people to accomplish His purposes.
- The genealogy reveals that God's plan has always included outsiders, not just Israel, pointing to a Savior for all nations.
- Jesus is given two names—Jesus ("God saves") & Immanuel ("God with us")

Matthew 2 (ESV)

- Wise men from the East followed a star to find & worship Jesus, showing that even distant outsiders recognize Him as King.
- Herod responds to Jesus with fear & hostility, proving that self-centered hearts resist God's true King.
- Herod orders the killing of young boys in Bethlehem, echoing Pharaoh's violence in Exodus & revealing the spiritual battle surrounding Jesus' arrival.
- After Herod's death, Joseph brings the family back & settles in Nazareth, fulfilling yet another prophecy & showing God's sovereign hand guiding every step.

The Point

God can use anyone He wants to reach anyone He wants.



GOD USES ORDINARY PEOPLE

God Uses Ordinary People

- God uses surprisingly imperfect people - God can redeem any story.
- Tamar's story (Genesis 38) & Bathsheba's story (2 Samuel 11) show that God can use even painful or sinful moments.
- God welcomes outsiders & works through humble people- Ruth was a Moabite & Rahab a Canaanite, showing God's love for all nations.

God Uses Ordinary People

- Joseph & Mary were ordinary, yet God trusted them with Jesus – His grace is bigger than our failures & overcomes sin.
- If God can use Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, Joseph, & Mary, then He can use anyone - including us, at any age, in any season of life.

God *blesses* us
to be a blessing
to others



God Blesses Us to Be a Blessing to Others

- Matthew connects Jesus back to Abraham to show that God's people were always meant to share God's blessing with the world.
- God blessed Abraham to bless the world.
- Israel enjoyed God's blessing but didn't always share it.
- Jesus is the promised blessing – He fulfills God's promise to Abraham.

God Blesses Us to Be a Blessing to Others

- God's family is defined by faith - Anyone who trusts Jesus becomes part of God's people.
- We are blessed to bless others - Jesus sends His followers to share the good news.
- God never blesses us just for ourselves.
- He blesses us so that His love can flow through us to others - family, neighbors, caregivers & even strangers.

A surreal landscape featuring large, dark, rectangular blocks that resemble stone or concrete. The blocks are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and perspective. In the foreground, a small, dark figure of a person stands on a light-colored, textured ground, looking towards the blocks. The background is a gradient of blue and orange, suggesting a sky or a distant horizon. The overall mood is contemplative and mysterious.

LET GOD LEAD YOU

Let God Lead You

- Matthew highlights simple, faithful obedience - Joseph, Mary & the Magi all listened & obeyed.
- Joseph obeyed right away - He trusted God & did what God asked.
- The Magi followed the light they had - They took small steps of faith & God guided them.

Let God Lead You

- Obedience brings blessing - Jesus says His sheep hear His voice & follow Him.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:27 ESV)

- Meeting Jesus changes our direction - We begin to walk a new path when we follow Him.
- Obedience doesn't require youth, strength, or special ability - It simply requires a willing heart.
- God still leads His people & He still uses those who say "yes."

Practical Application

- Remember your story matters - He can use yours too.
- Look for small ways to bless others - A kind word, a prayer, or a smile can be a powerful ministry.
- Trust that God still has purpose for you - Age does not limit God's calling.
- Practice simple obedience - When God nudges your heart, respond with a willing "yes."
- Stay open to God's leading - Be ready to follow Him "by another way."

Discussion Questions

- How have you seen God use your life to bless someone else?
- What does it mean to you that God can use anyone to reach anyone?
- Where do you sense God inviting you to simple obedience today?
- How can our senior living community be a blessing right where we are?

The background of the image is a dramatic sky scene. Dark, swirling clouds are illuminated from above by a bright, golden light source, creating a strong contrast and casting long, radiant rays of light across the scene. The overall color palette is dominated by warm, golden-yellow and orange tones, with deep blues and greys in the shadows of the clouds.

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