



Sunday, December 2, 2018
Pastor Don Denyes

Intro to Matthew 1:18-25

The Bible contains many stories which appear scandalous to us. I think especially of the names written in the genealogy of Matthew 1:1-17. The women especially that are highlighted bring to mind some of the more scandalous moments in Israel's history: Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law whom he mistakenly seduced thinking she was a prostitute, which allowed the lineage to continue. Rahab, the actual prostitute, who would become an example of Gentile faith and faithfulness. Bathsheba, referred to explicitly as "the wife of Uriah," recalling the scandalous episode with King David himself. Yet despite all of these things, God proved faithful—preserving the line of Abraham through whom the blessing to the nations would come, and the line of David, to whom the eternal kingdom was promised.

Upon recalling all of these actual scandals, it makes sense that the birth of Christ would take on a similar appearance. Yet beneath the surface, there was no scandal at all. In fact, it was just two faithful people whom God chose to use to bring about the salvation of the world. What a remarkable thing that God has done!

Context

As noted, this section comes at the end of a lengthy genealogy. The genealogy is designed to highlight God's faithfulness to His covenant promises despite the best sinful efforts of His chosen people to thwart His purposes. The women that are highlighted are of special importance. While most genealogies only list the men in the line, this one mentions five women. Despite their scandalous circumstances, each of the women proved to be faithful to God's purposes and actually of exemplary character. So, it is not so surprising that the final woman mentioned would be in a similar situation—a woman of faith and upright in her character who faced a scandalous situation that led to the salvation of mankind.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Matthew 1:18-25

“His Name Shall Be Called Jesus”

Key Ideas

- 1) Joseph demonstrated his righteousness by obeying the message of the angel.
- 2) Jesus was raised by a family in the line of David to fulfill God’s promises to David (2 Sam. 7).
- 3) Names in the ancient world meant a great deal—carried some significance. Jesus means “Yahweh Saves.”
- 4) We need to know that God is on our side. Immanuel means “God with us.”
- 5) Jesus saves us from our sins.
- 6) We often don’t take advantage of the gifts we’ve been given.
- 7) Jesus is the greatest gift, we ought to devote our lives to Him.

Discuss

- 1) What are some famous scandals you can think of that have happened in your lifetime? How do we tend to view people caught in scandal?
- 2) When you think about the scandalous way that God orchestrated the birth of Christ, what does that teach us about His character?
- 3) It was significant that Joseph was descended from David because in taking Mary as his wife and Jesus as his child, he became God's instrument in fulfilling the promise made to King David centuries earlier. What are some promises that God has made to us?
- 4) How does God's fulfillment of that promise back then strengthen our faith to trust His promises to us now?
- 5) Do you really believe that God is for you? How do you know you believe that?