

A Not so Wonderful Life - A Prologue  
December 8, 2024

As you join this discussion, let the Holy Spirit guide you. Share your thoughts and reflect on the message. Work through the guide by reading Scripture and answering a few questions.

### **Open Up Together:**

- Do you have anyone famous or scandalous in your family genealogy?

### **Read Together:**

#### **Genesis 1:1-6**

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David.

#### **Matthew 1:2-3**

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar...

#### **Genesis 38:6**

Judah got a wife for Er, his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the LORD's sight; so the LORD put him to death.

#### **Genesis 38:15-16**

"When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face. Not realizing that she was his daughter-in-law, he went over to her by the roadside and said, 'Come now, let me sleep with you.' 'And what will you give me to sleep with you?' she asked."

**Genesis 38:24**

"About three months later Judah was told, 'Your daughter-in-law Tamar is guilty of prostitution, and as a result she is now pregnant.' Judah said, 'Bring her out and have her burned to death!'"

**Genesis 38:25-26**

As she was being brought out, she sent a message to her father-in-law. "I am pregnant by the man who owns these," she said. And she added, "See if you recognize whose seal and cord and staff these are." Judah recognized them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I wouldn't give her to my son Shelah." And he did not sleep with her again.

**Matthew 9:9**

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

**Matthew 1:1**

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah...

**Matthew 1:22-25**

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means "God with us")... She gave birth to a son. And [Joseph] gave him the name Jesus."

**Discuss Together:**

- Why do you think Matthew begins Jesus' story with a genealogy instead of jumping straight to the nativity?
- What does the inclusion of broken and controversial figures like Tamar, Rahab, and Judah tell us about God's character?
- How does Jesus' genealogy challenge the idea that God only works through "perfect" people?
- Why do we often skip over "messy" parts of Scripture or life stories, and how does that affect our understanding of God's grace?
- How does Matthew's own story as a tax collector reflect the message of Jesus' inclusive genealogy?

- What does it mean to you that Jesus is described as “everyone’s King” in the message?
- How does Jesus’ ability to transform brokenness into beauty encourage you in your own life or struggles?
- How can Jesus’ story inspire us to show grace to others, especially those we might find difficult to forgive or accept?
- In what ways can we model the inclusivity and love Jesus demonstrated, particularly during the Christmas season?

**Pray as a group for...**

- Gratitude for God’s ability to redeem broken stories.
- Eyes to see others through God’s grace and love.
- Trust in God’s redemptive power in your own life.
- The courage to share the good news of Jesus with those who feel unworthy or forgotten.
- A heart to forgive and extend grace to others.