

Intro: Joke: Factory: 1 Million to fix it. Not matter how long it might take...I'll do it for that amount
Little things mean a Lot!

This morning we finish our series on the Promise of Christmas by looking at a number of small but very meaningful prophecies of the OT that surrounded the birth of Jesus. Turn with me to Matthew 1 and lets look at 6 small details mean a lot

Matthew 1-2 Page 681 Promises: "Little Things Mean A Lot!"

Each Promise Teaches Us Something New About God's Work In Our Life!

1. The Details of Jesus Genealogy Teach Us That Everyone Is Important To God! 1:1-17

A genealogy has a specific purpose. It was created to demonstrate and validate the right to inherit

Or, in this instance, the right to rule as King...Because the Messiah HAD to come from the house of David

If that could not be demonstrated...then Jesus couldn't ever be considered as the Messiah!

So, that is the obvious and surface level intent of the genealogy...But, There is something else going on in the genealogy of Jesus

2 Important Lessons In The Genealogy

1. Jesus had the right to be the Messiah

2. EVERYONE is important to God

No matter who you are, where you came from, what station, position or standing in life...YOU are important to God!

You see that because of the people that were included in the genealogy

- The usual genealogy would include famous teachers, prophets, leaders, kings...whoever would reflect well (Men)

- THIS genealogy is entirely different!

 - ~Icon's ~Nobody's

 - ~Kings ~Paupers

 - ~Men ~women

 - ~Israelites ~Foreigners

 - ~Priests ~Prostitutes

Here is the point that God, through Matthew, is trying to make. EVERYONE is welcome in the family of God

This is an amazing difference from the attitude that had grown up in the Nation of Israel (Us four and NO more!)

Applic: This is lived out in the life and ministry of Jesus Samaritans and Gentiles, Women and Men

Pharisees and prostitutes; Jews and Gentiles WELCOME!

Paul reinforced this for us in Galatians 3:26-29 Pg 825

I am always amazed when someone says to me "*Pastor, I just don't think that God could love or accept me*"

The genealogy of Jesus teaches us that is absolutely not true!

Applic: The Promise of Christmas: You are welcome into the family of God! Whoever, Whenever, However!!!

2. The Name Given To Jesus by the Angel Teaches Us God is Always With Us! 1:18-25

The prophecy and the name come from the book of Isaiah: Look a what was taking place:

It was an awful time in the nation. War was underway, a siege was set, people were shaking with fear

And in the middle of that there is a prophecy of encouragement to the people *Isaiah 7:14*

And so, when the Angel quotes that prophecy with Joseph, when HIS world was shaking and falling apart

He is encouraged and he is built up and he is strengthened to do what God called him to do!

We usually focus on Mary...but it must have been hard for Joseph as well!

Everyone HAD to think either he was guilty...OR that Mary had been unfaithful...(He was wondering!)

But in the middle of that trial and uncertainty God comes through...and tells him. "I am with YOU!"

- Jesus taught US that as well right?

 - Author of Hebrews reinforced it

Mt 28:20 "*I am with you always...to the ends of the earth!*"

Heb 13:5 "*I will never leave you or forsake you!*"

Applic: That is the promise of Christmas:

"I am always with you, never forsake you, never walk alone...I'm here!"

3. Place of Jesus Birth Teaches Us That God Uses The Small Things Of This World! 2:1-12

- Jesus born in Bethlehem to...a small, nondescript place.

 - There were other options: Caesarea; Jerusalem; Rome Illus: When I visited Israel: #1 Lesson

- It was to in order to fulfill the prophecy of Micah 5:2

- Paul in Cor tells us about the work of God through small things 1Cor 1:24-29 *Not many wise....*

Applic: You don't have to be the smartest, prettiest, most wealthy...God loves ordinary people (Made so many of them!)

That is the promise of Christmas. God meets you right where you are, with whatever you offer. Accepts us as we are

4. Jesus Coming Out Of Egypt Teaches Us That God Doesn't Miss a Single Detail! 2:13-15

When God sent Joseph to Egypt to protect the infant Jesus, He could have picked any of a dozen different countries.

But, God pays attention to the details! Sometimes we don't. And sometimes we don't think that He does.

But, notice, that God is making sure that every single one of the OT prophecies that foretold the birth of Jesus was honored

God doesn't miss anything!

Sometimes we think He does.

Sometimes we feel like He isn't paying attention, Or He has missed something Or overlooked

But He never does. He makes sure that every single detail of our life is under His watchful eye, and that He manages it

Notice What Jesus said about that one day when He was teaching His disciples.

Matthew 10:29-31 *Hairs numbered, Sparrows fall*

Applic: Do you feel like God has overlooked something in your life?

As if He isn't paying attention, or He is distracted, or He doesn't care

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Whatever is going on in your life...God knows, God cares, God is paying attention. God is concerned

5. The Grief Surrounding The Children Killed In Bethlehem Teaches Us That God Feels Our Hurt. 2:16-18

We sometimes feel like God can't or doesn't understand what takes place in our heart when we suffer.

I mean, He is God after all. How could He possibly understand what it is like to suffer the way we suffer.

Yet He does. We see that in the loss of children in Bethlehem.

It is really a three part teaching.

- There is the OT prophecy Jer 31:15- 17 Loss; Hope; Restoration
- There is NT fulfillment Mt 2:16-17 Children slaughtered Incredible loss fulfilling the prophecy
- There is the life of Jesus Born as son of God, Loss on the cross, Hope for future, Restoration/Resurrection.

Applic: God gets it! He fully and completely understand the loss of a child to hate, envy, to the ego and greed of men

When Jesus went to the cross...the heart of God was broken for His Son, Just like those parents in Bethlehem

God understands, God suffers with us, God knows and feels what we feel

Applic: That is the Promise of Christmas. God fully and completely identifies with our hearts.

We are not alone in our pain, removed from His love and concern and compassion!

Just look at life of Jesus, and how often bible says he was "moved with compassion"

- Crowds following him w/o anything to eat: Like sheep w/o a shepherd Mt 9:36
- Blind men Mt 20:30
- Leper alienated from society Mr 1:41

6. The Prophecy Of Jesus Being a Nazarene Teaches Us That We, Like Jesus Are To Be Set Apart. Mt 2:19-23

This is one of the most difficult prophecies to interpret in the NT.

Mostly because it is hard to identify the "prophets" that spoke of Jesus as a Nazarene.

There are really two different ways of interpreting this, and the good news is both convey the same truth.

Truth is: We are to be set apart for God

- Closest interpretation: Judges 13:5 "*Prophecy of Sampson, as a Nazarite Priest*" Set apart from birth for God
- Second is Nazarene people Is 53:2-3;7 (People of that village/region) Set apart because they are despised and rejected

Both are true:

- Jesus was a priest Heb calls Him our Great High priest Heb 4:14 Heb 3:1
- Jesus was set apart Is 53: says He was despised and rejected; We see that Jn 15:18 "*World hates me...hate you!*"

Applic: We are the same

- We are priests: 1 Peter 2:9 "*A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation...*"
- We are set apart: Mt 10:24 "*Student not better than teacher, or a servant than his master!*"

Applic: The promise of Christmas is that Just like Our master Jesus, we are serving as priests to our world...

We are set apart TO that by God...and We are set apart BECAUSE of that by a world that doesn't understand.

CONCL: God through Matthew went to great pains to show us...Little things mean a lot

6 prophecies in 2 chapters....covering all the details of Jesus birth..both small and large. Significant and Insignificant

Here is the Promise Of Christmas: *God is JUST as interested in the details of YOUR life...as He was Jesus*

My hope and my prayer for you this Christmas is that you will know the God that Cares...about everything!

If you are carrying a burden this Christmas...it's not too big...or too small for God: Bring it To Him!