

Repent!

Christ's Genealogy (Luke 3:23-38)

- Matthew's account begins with Jesus' genealogy. The Hebrew Bible begins with genealogies (the theme of Genesis - check it out) and ends with 1&2 Chronicles, which concludes with a genealogy.
- Genealogies are needed to (taken from Moore):
 - Served as a commentary of the character for a particular line. A man's descendants act like him (whether good or bad).
 - Show God's providential care through a particular family. This helped establish a corporate identity.
 - Prove biological succession. This was used to (a) handle property disputes, (b) prove one could serve as a priest, (c) prove your lines were "clean" and not intermingled with non-Jews, (d) provide military arrangement, (e) establish taxes and offerings, (f) establish the Davidic kingdom.
- There are differences between Matthew's and Luke's genealogies. Different explanations are given (Mary's line vs. Joseph's, legal vs. biological, etc.).
- I love how Matthew includes women (not unheard of, but not common). They are Tamar (guilty of prostitution and incest), Rahab (a foreign prostitute), Ruth (a foreigner), and Bathsheba (an adulteress). We can all have embarrassing family members, and we've seen people turn to a forgiving God. The Holy Spirit was not hiding Jesus' lineage.
- (In vs. 23, Jesus was about 30 years old (29) when He started to make Himself known.)

Who's Who (Luke 3:1-2a)

- Why begin the narrative with all these heavy hitters? Because this poor boy-now-become-man from Nazareth will get the world's attention. We have celebrities who take the world by storm but had no clue in their youth that such a thing would happen. We have brilliant minds who will help change how we interact and advance technology, but they probably didn't dream their names would be so well known in their youth. Jesus would make waves. Eventually, over a relatively short time, everyone would know His name and story. However, before we get to Jesus, we encounter John. No ruler would cause John to flinch. He was wholly devoted to God and would prepare the way of the Lord even if it cost him his life . . . and it would. He would begin by asking God's people to look inward and have the courage and faith to address their shortcomings.
- Let's begin with the rulers. The Information is taken from Faithlife Study Bible and Moore's "The Chronological Life of Christ."
- **Tiberius Caesar:** "Successor of Caesar Augustus; ruled ca. AD 14–37. This reference puts the start of John's ministry around AD 28."
- **Pontius Pilate (governor of Judea):** "Little is known of this Roman governor of Judaea, but his rule of the Jews is often depicted as turbulent. Philo, a first-century Hellenistic-Jewish philosopher, describes Pilate's reign as characterized by theft, dishonesty, violence, and frequent executions of untried prisoners (Philo, Gaium 302; compare Luke 13:1 and note)."
- **Herod (tetrarch of Galilee):** "Refers to Herod Antipas. After the death of Herod the Great, his kingdom was divided among his sons. Antipas controlled Galilee and Perea; Archelaus ruled Samaria, Judaea, and Idumea; and Philip governed the smaller enclaves northeast of

the Sea of Galilee, composed primarily of Syrians and Greeks." "Herod Antipas controlled Galilee and Perea from 4 BC to AD 39. The son of Herod the Great and Malthrace, he was raised in Rome. This background made him the logical choice to preside over "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matt 4:15), given the region's large Gentile population and its proximity to the Decapolis (a federation of Hellenized cities). Like his father, Herod Antipas was a master builder, and, generally speaking, he respected Jewish religious customs. The Gospels mention him twice in connection with important events: the beheading of John the Baptist (Matt 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29; Luke 3:19–20; 9:7–9) and the questioning of Jesus before the crucifixion (23:6–12)."

- **Philip (tetrarch of Iturea & Trachonitis):** "Like Herod Antipas, he was a son of Herod the Great. He ruled Iturea and Traconitis, northeast of Palestine from 4 B.C. to A.D. 33/34. A Trtrach was one who ruled over part of Palestine which was then divided into four parts."
- **Lysanias (tetrarch of Abilene):** "No significant historical reference."
- **Anna (high priest):** "He held the office of high priest from A.D. 7-15. It appears that Annas, according to the Jewish law, was high priest for life (cf. Jn 11:49; 18:13; Acts 4:6). He was still powerful and diplomatic enough to have five of his sons (Josephus, Ant. 10.9.1) and his son-in-law, Caiaphas, installed after him. He was the virtual ruler even when his children held the actual title."
- **Caiphas:** "He was the officially designated high priest by the Roman government (A.D. 18-36). He was the fourth to be appointed after Annas. The people, however, would still look for leadership."

John the Baptist (2b-6)

- John has been in the wilderness. Here is where the Lord's instruction comes to him.
- He eats locusts and honey. His clothing is made of camel hair and a leather belt (like Elijah). Like Elijah, he was preaching to a people who had turned away from God.
- Baptism was tied to repentance and "for the forgiveness of sins." The Greek structure is the same as Acts 2:38 and Matthew 26:28. This message should be connected to Luke 1:76-79.
- Taken from Isaiah 40:3-5. In their day, if a King or prominent figure was approaching, servants would clear the road for their arrival. I read that this included clearing rocks, filling holes, and straightening curves (whatever that means - haha). John is preparing the road for Jesus, but he is doing so by preparing their hearts through His teaching. This also coincides with Malachi 4:5. Jesus applies this passage to John in Matthew 11:14.

Brood of Vipers (7-14)

- Why would you call them vipers when you're seeking to help? Matthew 3:7 explains that among the crowds were Pharisees & Sadducees, and upon seeing them, calls them a brood of vipers.
- Jesus also called the Pharisees a brood of vipers (Matthew 23:33) and rebuked these leaders for refusing John's baptism (Luke 7:30; Matthew 21:23-27).
- Luke doesn't include it, but John was preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matthew 3:2). God expected (and still does) His people to not just think about changing (repent means to change your mind) but actually do something about it; thus, they were to "bear fruit." Their word for repentance implied action.
- We already see a major Jewish obstacle: they believed their connection to Abraham (and the history tied to him) was what saved them. You're saved as a Jew because you are a Jew. The warning was clear: repent or be cut off and destroyed.

Who is John (15-20)

- The crowd is wondering if John could be the Messiah. John's answer was clear: he wasn't worthy to untie the straps of Jesus' sandals (a slave's job).
- Jesus had two baptisms:
 - Baptize with the Holy Spirit. This is mentioned in Acts 1:5 and comes to Peter's mind in Acts 11:16.
 - Baptism with fire. This is judgment. To be immersed/overwhelmed in fire.
- Brethren, we need to repent. It was no laughing matter to John or Jesus. Remember, John was preparing their hearts for Jesus.
- Preaching the good news doesn't allow us to run from uncomfortable conversations. For John, it resulted in prison. Remember, John was encouraging others to repent no matter who they were. He rebuked Herod for marrying his brother's wife and his overall evil ways.

Jesus' Baptism (21-22)

- Why would Jesus be baptized when it was "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins?" Yes, Jesus obeyed God and set an example for Israel. Moore suggests that He was also stepping in as a representative of His people, though He had not done the wrong. This would be seen in figures such as Moses, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Nehemiah.
- John 1:29-34 records how the Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove confirmed Jesus' identity as the Son of God. Yes, the Father was well pleased with Jesus. We know we're not on Jesus' level, but do you think God is pleased with you?
- John was preparing the way for Jesus. Some thought about his ministry:
 - John wasn't able to walk with everyone. He had a message, and God expected His people to listen. It's wonderful to have someone to take the time to learn our specific stories and struggles. Still, at the end of the day, we are responsible for identifying and repenting of the sins in our lives.
 - Abandoning a particular sin is just the beginning. John & Jesus told others to repent, but Jesus wasn't preparing the way for John. John was preparing the way for Jesus. Our repentance is only the beginning of our relationship with Jesus. He can take it deeper, but we must remove all obstacles so Jesus can truly change us.
 - We must allow God's message to penetrate our hearts. Be careful not to water down the message in order to soothe someone's feelings. There are times when we need to realize we're "poor in spirit." Only then can Jesus mold us to His image and provide comfort.
 - Are we willing and ready to repent? Only then can we truly build a relationship with Jesus.