Long Expected

Jesus Has Some History
Matthew 1:1-2, Galatians 3:24 – 4:7
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November 29th, 2026
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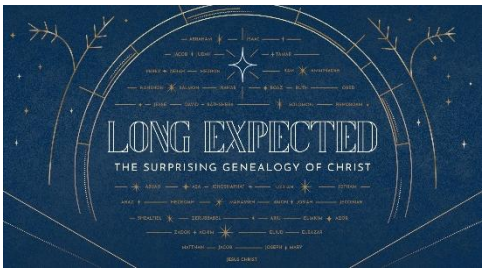

We know the word "genre" because of movies and books. A movie that features groups of people breaking into song, lots of choreographed dance numbers and beautiful sets – you know it's in the genre of MUSICALS. If you see a movie that features horses, an old wild west town, a corrupt Sherrif and some rugged brave cowboys who shoot the bad guys – you know it's the genre of a WESTERN.
If you see a movie that features a detective, a dead body, suspects and a creepy old mansion – you know it's in the genre of a MURDER MYSTERY.

If you have a story that starts "Once Upon a Time there was a girl called Little Red Riding Hood. She lived in a forest with her mother." Now contrast that with the opening of the Gospel of Matthew, it begins with a Genealogy.

"This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the sone 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 fathers of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab." Matthew 1:1-4

You see, right away, from the opening verses, the Gospel of Matthew is telling us…
Real People
Real Time Periods
Real Places

Matthew is grounding who Jesus Christ is and what he does in history. Jesus is not a metaphor. He is real. This all happened.

Have you thought of that aspect before? What other reasons can you point to, to give evidence that the 4 Gospels (Matthew/Mark/Luke/John] are reliable and tell us truth?

I. Old Dead People with a Story to Tell

The list begins with Abraham. The old kids song said, "Father, Abraham had many sons, many sons had Father Abraham. I am one of them and so are you…". We are over 3000 years removed from Abraham, we are so far downstream that many of us, if we searched back our family tree far enough, we would arrive at Abraham. **Genesis 12:3** has God making a promise to Abraham, ***"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*** That promise doesn't just mean that lots of people would be born in a giant family tree from Abraham, that is a prophecy about the coming of Jesus the Messiah. The Messiah would be in the line of Abraham and would be the most important blessing the world has ever seen.

"You cannot judge God by your calendar. God may appear to be slow but he never forgets his promises." – Timmothy Keller (Hidden Christmas)

As pastor and author Tim Keller points out…it would be century after century, well over a millennia before the Angel Gabriel would appear and announce to Mary that she was miraculously pregnant and would give birth to the long-awaited Messiah. Mary herself recognizes this and in her beautiful response song sings… ***"He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever; just as he promised our ancestors."*** **(Luke 1:54-55).** That promise was a long time coming! In the previous 400 years since the end of the book of Malachi, no prophets were sent, let alone the promised Saviour. It really looked like God had forgotten them. But then, all of a sudden – Jesus was born. God became man and nothing has ever been the same since.

What have you been praying and waiting for God to do? Do you ever feel like giving up? Is this example of Abraham in the genealogy inspiring for you to keep praying and waiting?

II. Jesus' Birth Has Big Implications for Us.

****Read Galatians 3:24-4:7****. In one brilliant and inspired passage the Apostle Paul has helped us understand how the whole Bible fits together. The 10 Commandments are the heart of a bigger section that God gave to his chosen people, the nation of Israel in the first half of the Bible in order to give them a guide for how to live and work, worship and interact with each other and the broader world. We refer to it as "The Law." Paul shows that the Law was like a guardian; a person in charge of teaching, training and keeping safe a young princess or prince as they grew until they became an adult, when they were recognized as royalty. I love verse 4***, "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.*** That's Christmas. The moment when you and I went from underage slaves to full heirs – princesses and princes, daughters and sons of the King of Kings.

How are you entering the Advent season this year? Head down and feeling like a nobody or striding in with confidence as a daughter or son of Jesus – the King of Kings?