

[MATTHEW chap. 1]
Sunday 30th Dec 2007

/ Why was Jesus named Jesus?

[Introduction]

Family trees are interesting but they don't tell you much about the lives of the people they list.

Matthew's opening family tree, or *genealogy* doesn't seem to either.

Until you read the Old Testament.

Because there, the lives of some of the people in that list of names are recorded; warts and all.

Their lives, like ours, have one thing in common: Sin.

And sin kills.

Because God will punish us for our sin.

We are in danger. So what are we going to do?

Matthew 1 tells us: Trust Jesus.

We should trust Him because He came to save His people from their sins. That is why Jesus was named Jesus: Jesus means "The Lord saves."

[1] Trust Jesus as the new David

The start of Matthew 1 seems quite boring.

But it isn't.

It is exciting.

Because it signifies a new beginning, brought about by the new David.

The genealogy shows us that Jesus is the new David.

It is riddled with references to David. Matthew even draws attention to the number 14, which is the Hebrew numerical value of David.

King David was an ancient Jewish hero.

Matthew is saying "the new David is here! And he's gonna sort things out!"

And he is. He's gonna sort SIN out.

We try to sort sin out ourselves.

But we can't.

We can't stop doing it, we can't stop the problems it causes, we can't stop the nagging fear it brings.

But Jesus can.

When He died on the cross, He was exposing Himself to sin's punishment. He allowed sin to break Him so that He could break it.

When we trust Him, our ultimate enemy, sin, is defeated.

And when we trust Him, we are made secure, at peace, a person owned and defended by God.

[2] Trust Jesus as God's son

In v16, the genealogy ends. Strangely.

It doesn't say that Joseph was the father of Jesus, but simply that Jesus was born of Mary.

This is because Joseph was not the father of Jesus.

But Mary was a virgin. Strange huh?

So who is Jesus' Father?

God is.

God the Holy Spirit caused God the Son of God the Father to be born of Mary.

Jesus always was God's Son.

And He chose to be born of Mary into our world.

This is important.

Because being God's Son means He is perfect.

And being perfect means He succeeded where we constantly fail; He didn't sin. Ever.

When we trust in Him, what He *did* achieve (sinlessness) brings about what we *can't* achieve: entry into heaven.

Sinners *aren't* allowed into heaven. But if sinners trust in the sinless Son of God, they *are* allowed into heaven. Will you trust in Jesus as God's sinless Son?

It is the only way you'll get to heaven.

[3] Trust Jesus every day

If we are Christians, we should trust Jesus every day.

This is because trusting Jesus each day is essential to our sanctification.

Sanctification is growth in holy living. God requires it.

But as Christians, we still sin. Not as much, but sin still bugs us and dogs us.

We spend our lives fighting it.

But how do we fight it? How do we do sanctification?

By the power of the Holy Spirit (see Gal. 5:16).

And how do we get the Spirit?

By trusting Jesus every day.

Gal. 3:5 tells us this.

Here's how it works:

As we continue to trust in Jesus; that is, as we actively think about what His death for us means, we realize it means we are now God's sons and daughters.

God *treasures* you if you are a Christian. Like He treasures His Son.

As we believe this, we are changed. We are changed into people who love God so much we don't want anything to damage our relationship with Him. Our motivation to be holy becomes that of loving thankfulness.

And that kind of motivation is Spirit powered, and unstoppable.

So keep trusting Jesus every day!