

Matthew 1A

- Tonight we begin a verse-by-verse study through the Gospel of Matthew
 - I hope you'll join us here weekly to walk side-by-side with our Lord, Jesus of Nazareth
 - Let's learn all we can about Jesus so that we might serve Him all the more, both here in church and in the world

Matt. 1:1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Matt. 1:2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

Matt. 1:3 Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram.

Matt. 1:4 Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon.

Matt. 1:5 Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse.

Matt. 1:6 Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah.

Matt. 1:7 Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa.

Matt. 1:8 Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah.

Matt. 1:9 Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah.

Matt. 1:10 Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah.

Matt. 1:11 Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

Matt. 1:12 After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel.

Matt. 1:13 Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor.

Matt. 1:14 Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud.

[Matt. 1:15](#) Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob.

[Matt. 1:16](#) Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

[Matt. 1:17](#) So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

- Beginning a study of any of the four Gospels in our Bible always requires some preliminary observations
 - During the 3+ years that Jesus ministered on earth, there were tens of thousands of people who witnessed His miracles and heard His teaching, so:
 - Theoretically, we could have many accounts of Jesus written by those eyewitnesses
 - But only the Holy Spirit can inspire or lead someone to author scripture, as Peter reminds us

[2 Pet. 1:20](#) But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,

[2 Pet. 1:21](#) for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

- So what we have in our Bibles, we have because God moved someone to write it. In God's providence, only four men were moved by the Spirit to author an account of Jesus' life on earth
 - And those four accounts are the first four books of the New Testament
 - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (not to be confused with John, Paul, George and Ringo – if you don't get that joke, it means you're under the age of 50)
- The first three Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) are structured very similarly
 - They all report the events of Jesus' life on earth, ending with His death and resurrection

- So naturally, these three Gospels report very similar things, as we would expect
- In fact, they are often called the Synoptic Gospels because they are so similar in their perspectives
 - The word *synoptic* is Greek, meaning “to see together”
 - These Gospels are called synoptic because those authors share a similar view of Jesus’ life
 - But interestingly, two of three synoptic authors were not even disciples of Jesus; they never knew Him while He walked the earth
- Matthew was one of the twelve Apostles, but Luke and Mark became Christians only after Jesus ascended into Heaven
 - So how could Luke and Mark have seen the same things that Matthew saw?
 - The answer is that they reported things through the eyes of others
- Specifically, Mark was a traveling companion of the Apostle Peter while Luke was the companion of the Apostle Paul
 - So what Mark wrote in his Gospel is what Peter related to him from his experiences accompanying Jesus before His death and resurrection
 - And what Luke wrote in his Gospel, he received from Paul; and what Paul received, he gained from the encounters he had with Jesus after His resurrection
- So the first three Gospels are similar because they record the experience of three men (Matthew, Mark and Luke) who were all eyewitnesses (or influenced by eyewitnesses) to the events of Jesus’ life
 - Nevertheless, these three Gospels are not identical, which causes some people to question their trustworthiness
 - For example, only Matthew’s and Luke’s Gospels include a genealogy of Jesus
 - But Luke’s genealogy is different than Matthew’s – and we would hardly expect genealogies to be different

- And there are others differences across the first three Gospels
 - Which causes us to wonder if these differences mean we can't trust the Gospel accounts
 - And in particular for our study, we should ask, "Why are Jesus' genealogies different?"
- Before I address the question of the genealogies specifically, let's consider the general question of why differences exist at all and what does that say about the Gospels?
 - Imagine for a moment what if the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke were identical?
 - What if each book was word-for-word exactly the same as the other two?
 - Would there be any value in having the first three Gospels being identical works? Why would God want to inspire such repetition?
 - In fact, wouldn't such perfection leave us suspicious?
 - Wouldn't we assume that one author merely copied another?
 - If these books were exactly the same, wouldn't we feel less confident in their inspiration, not more confident?
 - The Lord intentionally allowed each man's personality and memory to play a part in the formation of each Gospel, yet without making mistakes and without contradictions. In doing so, we actually gain greater confidence in their accuracy
 - Imagine you're a detective investigating the scene of a crime and you had four witnesses to the crime
 - You interview each witness separately and each one tells you exactly the same story, word-for-word
 - Would you find that a reassuring finding or cause for suspicion?
 - If their stories were identical, wouldn't you assume the witnesses prearranged their testimonies?
 - It's actually evidence of a conspiracy
 - In fact, in true detective work, if two witnesses have identical stories, they immediately think of it as a conspiracy

- Instead, you would expect each person's recollection to vary at least slightly from the others
 - Many of the things the witnesses reported would agree, but at least a few details would also differ
 - One person would recall details that the others overlooked and vice versa
 - In the end, the detective would find the true story by assimilating all four witnesses' statements into a single account of what happened
 - Having multiple perspectives of the same event gives the detective a better understanding of what happened
 - And the differences between the accounts serve to fill in gaps in the other person's testimony and add a different perspective
 - That's why the Lord provided His Church with four different perspectives on Jesus' life and words
 - Having four slightly different perspectives serves to increase our confidence in the authenticity of these accounts
 - And we gain the benefit of more information than one author could provide
 - Plus, the Lord could tailor each author's presentation to appeal to a particular audience
 - Each Gospel author, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, wrote to record the events of Jesus life and ministry from his unique perspective
 - Mark wrote primarily to Romans of his day
 - Luke wrote to the wider Gentile audience
 - Matthew wrote to Jews dispersed throughout the empire
 - And John's Gospel is very different from the others because he wrote his account decades after the first three
 - So he purposely chose to focus on certain events the other writers overlooked
- So when we find one Gospel's account of Jesus' life differing from others, we combine and assimilate the accounts to gain a single record

- We accept the reality that one author noticed or remembered things the others overlooked
 - And even if one account seems to contradict another, we have to work from the assumption that both accounts are true
 - Therefore, we seek a way to reconcile them, and there's always a way to reconcile them
- We can do this safely because we know the Bible is the inspired word of God
 - The same God Who spoke the Universe into existence also spoke these words to us – He just used a man to record them for us
 - The same God who designed the forces of nature, gave life to everything and made the sun to rise each morning also shared His thoughts with you and me in this book
 - There is no misplaced word in this book, nothing is approximate, nothing is in error, everything is in harmony
- So if we can't make sense of something here, it's not because the Bible lacks sense
 - It's because we lack understanding
 - The Bible was written by an omniscient God, and our finite minds can't absorb all that an infinite God can reveal
 - But in time, if we submit to His word and allow the Spirit to instruct us through it, the Lord will make things clear to us
 - For He delights to reveal Himself to those who sit at His feet with open hearts
 - But as Jesus says:

[Luke 10:21](#) At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to **infants**. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.

- So how do we understand the genealogy presented here in Matthew's Gospel? What's its purpose in the account of Jesus?
 - Both Matthew and Luke recorded genealogies for Jesus

- And interestingly, Matthew and Luke are also the only two Gospels to record Jesus' birth story
- Obviously, it makes sense that the two authors who chose to relate the birth story of Jesus also took an interest in His genealogy. So the two are connected –
- And this connection also explains why their two genealogies are different
- To see why, we need to remember Matthew's connection to Jesus
 - Matthew was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus who were elevated to apostle, so like the rest of the apostles he was introduced to Jesus near the beginning of Jesus' ministry – right after the baptism of John
 - And like the rest of the apostles, Matthew knew nothing of Jesus prior to His baptism
- In fact, Jesus spent his first 30 years of life on earth living and working in obscurity in a backwater region of the Galilee
 - So even if Jesus and Matthew had crossed paths during those years, Matthew wouldn't have given Jesus a second look
 - So neither Matthew nor Luke had first-hand knowledge of Jesus' birth, much less His family genealogy
 - So how did they gain all this information about His birth?
- If we compare Matthew and Luke, we find they are written from the perspective of two different eyewitnesses
 - In Matthew's Gospel, we find see intimate details of Joseph's experience, while in Luke we find intimate details of Mary's experience
 - In Matthew, we learn Joseph's inner thoughts, yet Matthew has no record of Mary's thoughts
 - Conversely, in Luke's account we learn what Mary was thinking but there's no record of Joseph's thoughts
 - In Matthew's account, we're given a description of what the angel told Joseph, but no mention of an angel visiting Mary
 - In Luke, we have a description of what the angel told Mary, but no mention of an angel appearing to Joseph

- So evidently, Joseph was Matthew's source for the backstory on Jesus' genealogy and birth, while Mary was Luke's source
 - So naturally, each author's account reflects the perspective of their respective source
 - The genealogy in Matthew is the genealogy of Joseph's family
 - While the genealogy recorded in Luke was Mary's family genealogy
 - Mary was likely still alive when Luke wrote his Gospel, so he could have interviewed Mary
 - While Matthew probably received Joseph's account secondhand, perhaps from Joseph's other sons (most assume Joseph was dead by the time Jesus began His ministry because there's no mention of him)
- Knowing this, we read Matthew's genealogy understanding he was telling a story through it from Joseph's perspective – not as the father of Jesus, but as the husband of Mary
 - Turning to the genealogy itself, a genealogy is like a family tree, listing generations over time
 - Many people today are interested in knowing their family origins
 - There are websites that help you learn your ancestry
 - Most of us are drawn to the mystery and wonder of discovering our connections to people from the past
 - But it's not the size of our family tree that matters
 - It's how many nuts you find hanging on it...and every family has some
 - But for a Jew, keeping genealogy records wasn't merely a hobby, it was a crucially important part of being Jewish
 - God assigned the Jewish nation a special place among the nations of the world
 - He made covenants with that people and gave promises to the nation as a whole

- Those covenants and promises were inherited through these family lines
 - The most important promise God gave Israel was to bring a Messiah, a Savior for the world, through the Jewish nation
 - So was all important for the Jewish people to maintain a certain understanding of who was truly Jewish
 - And genealogy records were used for that very purpose
- For example, when the Jews were preparing to return to Israel to re-establish themselves in the land of Judah after spending 70 years in exile in Babylon, some couldn't prove their ancestral origins

Ezra 2:59 Now these are those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan and Immer, but they were not able to give evidence of their fathers' households and their descendants, whether they were of Israel:

Ezra 2:62 These searched among their ancestral registration, but they could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean and excluded from the priesthood.

- If you claimed to be a Jew, much more a priest or a heir to the throne of David, it was necessary to prove your claim
 - Therefore, the Jews kept scrupulous genealogies for every tribe stored and carefully preserved in the temple in Jerusalem for centuries
 - Similar to the Library of Congress, these records were open to the public, for any Jew inspect their records or the records of others
- So Matthew opens his Jewish Gospel with Jesus' genealogy on Joseph's side and he does so to prove something about Jesus' claims
 - We have no reason to doubt Matthew's genealogy
 - Because in his day it would have been easy to verify or refute Jesus' genealogy
 - Anyone could simply visit the archives in the temple and look it up
 - Yet there is no historical record of anyone disputing the accuracy of Matthew's record of Jesus' genealogy

- So as we look at the names in this list, the question we need to answer is what was Matthew trying to prove about Jesus with this genealogy?
 - We find our answer by starting with a few observations of the names we find in the list
 - First, we see in v.2 that the list begins with Abraham
 - Matthew uses the man's covenant name, Abraham, and not his given name, Abram
 - Back in v.1, Matthew introduced the genealogy by calling it the record of Jesus, the son of Abraham
 - God made a covenant with Abram promising to bring a nation of people from his seed, meaning from his family line
 - And through this line, God says He would bring a certain Person to bless all nations, both Jewish and Gentile – and we know that was the promise of Jesus
 - God changed Abram's name to Abraham to mark His promise
 - So beginning the genealogy with Abraham and calling Jesus the son of Abraham testifies that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham
- Secondly, Matthew also identifies Jesus as the son of David in v.1
 - Why mention David's name at all, especially before Abraham's name?
 - It's not very Jewish, because they always think of the father having greater authority than the son. Abraham had greater authority than anyone who came from him, including David
 - Once again, David received covenant promises from God concerning an eternal dynasty
 - The Lord promised David He would raise up a ruler from David's family line to rule Israel and the world forever
 - Therefore, inserting David's name before Abraham's name indicates that Jesus fulfills both covenants
 - Jesus is the son of David, meaning Jesus was the promised King coming in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant

- And Jesus is the son of Abraham because He is the promised Seed sent to bless all nations, not just Israel
- They are in this order because the Davidic covenant is uniquely Jewish – it is for the Jewish people; whereas the Abrahamic covenant is for all peoples. He puts the Jewish covenant first and the one that covers Gentiles second
- Thirdly, as Matthew tells us in v.17, we see that he arranged Jesus' genealogy into three groups of fourteen names
 - By comparing his genealogy to others in the Old Testament, we find that Matthew intentionally left out several names in Jesus' genealogy while adding a few names we wouldn't expect to find
 - For example, five kings in Jesus' family line are missing while four women have been added, which was uncommon
 - We might think that missing names would invalidate Matthew's genealogy, but the practice of skipping a generation here or there in genealogies was common in Judaism
 - Jews understood that jumping over a generation didn't invalidate a genealogy so long as the other names were accurate
 - For example, if I skipped your grandfather in your family tree but I included your great grandfather and father correctly, then your genealogy is still accurate
 - So Jews commonly left out names to produce numeric symmetry or to provide commentary on a family tree
 - In Matthew's case, he wanted to achieve both
 - So he dropped some of Jesus' ancestors to yield three groups of fourteen names to make a point
 - And he inserted four women to make a second point
- Matthew is pointing us to the themes of his Gospel, and we can see them clearly in v.1
 - First, Matthew wants to show us that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, the promised eternal King of Israel
 - Hebrew names can be assigned numeric values by adding up the numeric value of each individual letter in the name

- We're told that the numeric value of the antichrist will be 666
- And the numeric value of Jesus' full name is 749 (7 and 7x7)
- If we add up the Hebrew numbers for David's Hebrew name we arrive at the number 14
 - So Matthew arranged his genealogy into three groups of 14 to speak out the name David three times
 - Jesus is the eternal David, the King God promised to bring His people
- In fact, notice in v.17 how Matthew connects his first and second groups of names by mentioning David again
 - There were 14 generations (in Matthew's list) between Abraham to David
 - And there were 14 more from David to the Babylonian captivity
 - For 14 generations, David's descendants held power and for 14 generations they lost it
 - You can't help but notice David's prominence in this list, nor can you miss the point
 - After fourteen generations, a son of David has come to rule again
- Secondly, Matthew draws our attention to Jesus fulfilling Abraham's promise too
 - Notice that the four women inserted into the list were all Gentile women
 - Tamar and Rahab were Canaanites
 - Ruth was a Moabitess
 - Bathsheba was a Hittite
 - And three of these women were guilty of sexual sin of one kind or another
 - Matthew includes four Gentile women in Jesus' genealogy to testify that Jesus fulfills God's promise to Abraham to save Gentiles, too
 - Once again, notice how his second and third groups of 14 are connected by mention of the Jews' Babylonian captivity

- The Babylonian captivity was a result of Israel's rebellion against the Lord
- Through the prophets Jeremiah and Daniel, the Lord declared He was placing Israel under judgment for a time to give opportunity to Gentiles
- This judgment period would culminate with the Messiah coming to rescue Israel after setting up His kingdom
- So Matthew's genealogy has been carefully constructed to introduce two themes
 - First, Jesus was the fulfillment of the promise God gave David to bring Israel a king
 - And secondly, He was the fulfillment of the promise God gave Abraham to bless all nations
 - David's name is listed first in v.1 because Jesus came to the Jews first, as their King offering a kingdom in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant
 - And Abraham's name is listed second because after the Jews rejected Jesus and the kingdom, Jesus would turn to Gentiles in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant
 - We will see Matthew develop these themes in his Gospel
- Finally, notice the way Matthew finishes his genealogy of Jesus
 - In v.16 he describes Joseph as the father of Mary, by whom Jesus was born
 - He doesn't call Joseph Jesus' father, which makes sense because we know Joseph wasn't the biological father of Jesus
 - Mary was a virgin before she gave birth to Jesus
 - So although Joseph assumed legal responsibility for Jesus, he was not Jesus' biological father
 - Therefore, while Jesus was Joseph's heir, He was not Joseph's descendant
 - He only shared a physical relationship with His mother, Mary

- As you look at Mary's genealogy in Luke's Gospel, you find that Mary also descended from David
- So Jesus is an heir to the throne through His father and a biological descendant of David through His mother's genealogy
- So why did Matthew want us to know that Jesus was not physically related to Joseph? Wouldn't that hurt his case that Jesus was the rightful king of Israel?
 - Actually, it strengthens Matthew's argument to a Jewish reader who knew their Old Testament
 - Back in Jeremiah 22:30 the Lord pronounced a curse on one line of David's descendants, on a king named Jechoniah
 - God cursed the king for his disobedience declaring that no descendant of Jechoniah would ever sit on the throne of David again
 - If you look at v.11, you see that Joseph is a descendant of this cursed king
 - So if Jesus had been a physical descendant of Joseph, then Jesus would have been prevented by that curse from occupying the throne of David
 - Matthew couldn't ignore this fact
 - As I said earlier, any Jew could have easily looked up Jesus' family tree and learned of this connection
 - And you can be sure Jesus' critics certainly would have pointed to this connection to discredit Him if they could
 - So Matthew preempts any criticism by providing Joseph's genealogy, but doing so demonstrates that Jesus was not a blood relative of Joseph
 - Through Joseph, Jesus meets the requirements to be an heir to the throne
 - And through Mary, Jesus meets the requirement to be a physical descendant
 - But Mary's genealogy doesn't go through Jechoniah, clearing Jesus of the curse
 - So according to Matthew, Jesus is the King promised to Israel and the Savior promised to the world

- A few years ago a Jewish doctor living on the East Coast was invited to a special church service by a Christian friend
 - The Christian man was suffering from a mysterious paralysis and had been confined to a wheel chair
 - His church scheduled a prayer service for his healing
 - So the man invited his family and friends to attend the service
 - He also invited a work colleague, a Jewish doctor, who had never set foot in a Christian church before
 - On the night of the service, the doctor arrived and took a seat in a pew
 - He quietly observed the proceedings with little understanding of what was going on
 - Until at a point near the end of the service the pastor issued an open invitation for anyone else to receive prayer
 - And at that moment and quite to his surprise, the Jewish doctor suddenly felt compelled to stand up and walk forward
 - As he reached the front, he stopped without saying a word waiting while a few elders gathered around him in prayer
 - The elders prayed over the doctor without even knowing his request, just allowing the Spirit to direct their intercession
 - The doctor remained silent through the prayer with his head bowed, and when they finished, he returned to his seat
- In that moment the Jewish doctor felt a love he had never known before
 - It seemed to be everywhere in the room and in himself at the same time
 - After the service ended, he left the church without telling anyone what he had experienced
 - But in the days that followed he couldn't shake the feeling, so he began a search for answers
 - He searched for someone or something that could explain what he encountered in that Christian church
 - He consulted his Jewish friends, he searched the Internet, he even called upon a Catholic priest in a downtown cathedral

- No one could explain his feelings of awakening and love
- So, out of ideas, the doctor ventured into a Christian book store and asked for a copy of the Christian Bible
- This doctor had been raised in a strict Jewish home, so he had been taught all his life to despise Christianity and the Bible
 - Most Jews have never read the New Testament,
 - So they imagine it gives instructions on how to build stained glass buildings or how to kill Jews
 - So as the doctor stared at the bookshelf of Bibles, he couldn't help feeling he was betraying his heritage and his people by consulting the manual of his enemies
 - Nevertheless, something inside him, something stronger than hate and more compelling than loyalty, was calling him to read it
- So that Jewish doctor went home, opened the New Testament, and began reading at the beginning...in the Gospel of Matthew
 - And as he read chapter after chapter, his eyes opened wider, his heart beat faster
 - Instead of finding hatred and prejudice against the Jewish people, he was shocked to find a very Jewish story
 - He found an account of a humble servant sent to Israel with a salvation promised for all nations
 - And at that moment the Jewish Doctor realized Jesus was his Messiah
 - No human being preached the Gospel to this man
 - The Lord preached it to him directly through His word and the Spirit of God brought it to life in his heart
 - In that moment, the doctor was born again by faith in Jesus Christ
- I share that true story with you because it powerfully illustrates three unique qualities of Gospel of Matthew
 - First, Matthew wrote his account to persuade a Jewish audience, people like the Jewish doctor

- Matthew was a Jewish tax collector, who Jesus called to be an apostle, one of Jesus' chief disciples
- Matthew was not looking for a Savior, but the Savior found him
- So he wrote his account specifically for Jewish readers of his day, men and women who had also overlooked Jesus
- And even after 2,000 years, his Gospel is still reaching Jewish men...men like the Jewish doctor
- Secondly, Matthew's Gospel emphasizes the faithfulness of a sovereign God to fulfill His promises to bless Israel and the world through a Savior
 - God foretold everything that happens in this Gospel, by and large, through the prophets
 - And He carried everything out precisely as He promised He would, even the death of His Son
 - His challenge was to explain to the people in the moment that His death wasn't an end – it was a beginning
 - Which is why my doctor friend felt so convicted by the Gospel of Matthew
 - He saw the Lord at work through Jesus to fulfill Old Testament prophecies, promises he had been taught since he was a child
- Finally, the most important connection between Matthew's Gospel and my friend's story...this account was written to save souls
 - This isn't merely an ancient historical account or a Jewish version of a campfire story
 - Matthew didn't write this to stimulate your mind or tickle your funny bone
 - It was written to change your heart...to move us out of darkness and into the light of a salvation through faith in Jesus Christ as Messiah
 - Which is what He did for that Jewish doctor, who discovered a Jesus Who died for his sins and was resurrected to give him hope for eternal life

- We want any who hears these words to know the truth of Jesus as Messiah. No matter where you come from, no matter what you've heard about Jesus before, no matter how you've perceived Him from what others have said
 - No matter what you've done, no matter how many mistakes you've made, no matter how bad those mistakes are
 - In fact, the worse you are, the more you need Him – that's not cause to think you're unworthy, that's cause to embrace Him
 - He came for you because you're not perfect, because you made mistakes
 - The standard for Heaven, according to Paul in Romans 3, is perfection. The Glory of God. Equaling Him. Do you think you're equal to God?
 - The story of this book is that we too can be forgiven of our sins by a God who sent His only begotten Son to die for that reason
 - Jesus died on the cross to be your Savior
 - All your sins, everything you've ever done, wiped clean by that one sacrifice
 - That one sacrifice, and our faith in it, is all God requires
 - So that the penalty God requires for sin would fall on Christ instead of you
 - If only you would receive that free gift, if you would call upon His name, the Bible promises you will be saved
 - Jesus says that anyone who comes to Him, He will not cast out but will give eternal life
 - Come to Him today if you don't already know Him as Messiah