



Sermon Discussion Guide

December 7th, 2025 | Matthew 1:1-17 | Pastor Greg Doty

Series // Christmas @ Willow Creek

Summary

In this week's sermon, Pastor Greg walks through the opening genealogy in Matthew to show how it highlights God's promise, our hope, and the people through whom Jesus came. The genealogy points back to Genesis 3:15 and to God's covenants with Abraham and David which promises that a Savior would come from their line. Matthew includes the exile to Babylon to remind readers that hope does not come from earthly stability but from God himself. Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is the "son of David," even structuring the genealogy around the number 14—the numerical value of David's name—to make clear that Jesus is the promised King in whom Israel's hope rests. Israel expected a conqueror and a healer, and Jesus fulfills these roles, especially as he describes himself as the healer in Matthew 11. We often doubt his ability to heal us because of our sin or struggles, but Jesus alone can restore us to God. Pastor Greg also points out that the genealogy is full of deeply flawed, sinful people like Abraham, David, and many others. And yet, Jesus enters into that messiness and brokenness rather than distancing himself from it. He sits with us in the mess and invites us to come to him for the hope and healing our hearts ultimately need.

Discussion Questions:

The Promise

- What does Matthew's genealogy reveal about God's long-term faithfulness to His promises to Abraham and David?
- How does seeing Jesus as the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 shape the way we understand the Christmas story?

The Hope

- Why do you think Matthew includes the deportation to Babylon in the genealogy?
- What are some things we "enthrone" in our lives as sources of healing or security besides Jesus?
- **Read Matthew 11:4:** How do our personal struggles or sins make it difficult to trust Jesus as healer and how does this verse help us?

After Creation

- How does the presence of imperfect people in Jesus' genealogy encourage us in our own spiritual lives?
- Where do you currently need Jesus' healing, and what obstacles make it hard to receive it?
- How might Jesus' willingness to enter into our "messiness" reshape the way we think about approaching Him?