

# The Family of God

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Matthew chapter 1, verse 1, reading through verse 17.

! And Judah the father of Perez, and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nishan, and Nishan the father of Solomon, and Solomon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiad, and Abiad the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliad, and Eliad the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Mathen, and Mathen the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom

Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations, from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations, and from the deportation to Babylon the Christ, 14 generations. May God add the blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated while I catch my breath? Every word of Scripture is God's Word. Even a collection of hard-to-pronounce names of people who lived a long time ago have rich truths that are applicable to our modern-day lives.

But let's be honest. What we've just read is one of those parts of Scripture that we tend to skip over in our study of God's Word, isn't it? And if we're honest, we wonder when we come to sections of Scripture like that, especially here in Matthew, we wonder why would Matthew introduce his gospel in such a way? When I was first enrolled in seminary, I remember my advisor recommended to me that I read the introduction of every one of my textbooks before our classes began. And to me, that sounded like an awful waste of time. But since then, in taking his advice, I've learned that the introduction of a book is an important and incredibly helpful part of the book in understanding what the author is wanting to say or the issue that he is trying to address. In the introduction, the author will usually, almost all the time, address the issue that they are going to then attempt to fix or talk about throughout the rest of their book. And so the introduction is important because it helps you understand what it is that you're going to be reading. And so Matthew, we understand, is the human author of this divinely inspired book of the Bible. Before his conversion,

[ 4 : 3 1 ] Matthew was a tax collector, an occupation which drew the scorn of his fellow Jews. But Jesus, if you remember, saw him and called him saying, follow me. And from that point on, Matthew followed Jesus as one of his disciples. Matthew wrote this gospel primarily for a Jewish audience. His purpose was to demonstrate that Jesus is the long-promised and long-awaited King and Messiah whom the Old Testament scriptures had foretold. And so he begins his gospel by introducing that reality to his audience, connecting Jesus and his royal lineage through three eras of Jewish history. So why, as we approach Christmas, have I chosen to pause our study of John's gospel to focus now on Matthew's gospel and begin that study with a sermon which again contains such a lengthy genealogy which many of us are prone to skip over when we read Matthew's gospel. Well, we know how culturally the birth of Christ gets overshadowed by everything else that we associate with Christmas. With all the preparation and all the planning that goes into our Christmas celebrations, it's easy for us to lose sight of what we, as followers of Christ, have to celebrate in the

incarnation and the theological significance of the virgin birth of the eternal

Son of God who came as promised to save us from our sins. And you know, it seems to me that every Christmas what Christians believe about the incarnation and about the virgin birth of Jesus Christ is scrutinized and is criticized by unbelieving skeptics of our faith. This time of year, the secular media is sure to turn their attention to the core doctrines of the Christian faith and express their surprise and their dismay that people who live in a modern age and scientific times would still believe in such supernatural and in their estimation unscientific things. A few years ago, I read an article in the New York Times and the journalist said this, The faith in the virgin birth reflects the way American Christianity is becoming less intellectual and more mystical over time. And tragically, research reveals, you read LifeWay studies or studies conducted by Pew Research and other Christian entities and even secular ones, and what they're revealing is that over time, fewer and fewer

Christians are believing in what the Bible says about the birth of their Savior, the way in which He was incarnated, the way in which He became one of us, denying the supernatural-ness of it. So the point of turning to Matthew's gospel here where we'll be today and for the next couple of Sundays is that as we approach Christmas, we need to, as followers of Christ, be able to confront the heirs dispensed by a secular world regarding biblical truth.

To fill ourselves also with awe and wonder and worship for our God who saves us by reflecting upon the lengths and the means He took to ensure our salvation.

And in digging deeper and peering more intently into this collection of names recorded in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, the Savior of the world, we'll encounter three principles about God which His Son's birth discloses, which brings us to the main idea for this morning's passage.

[ 9 : 17 ] The birth of Jesus Christ reveals the greatness of God and His worthiness of praise.

So again, three principles about God which the birth of Christ discloses and which should open our eyes to see His greatness and to see, again, how worthy He is of our praise.

Now this won't be a verse-by-verse study, but more of an expositional overview explaining what this passage reveals about, again, the greatness and the worthiness of God to receive our greatest and our highest praise.

Because we, of all people, Christians, have the most to rejoice over, not just during Christmas, but always and forever.

And so the first thing that we see about God in the genealogy of His Son is that God is sovereign. God is sovereign.

[ 10 : 29 ] Matthew makes that point clear at the very beginning with verse 1. He says, This is the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

Genealogy in the Greek is the word *genesios* or *genesis*. So Matthew's introductory statement could be translated in this way.

The book of the genesis of Jesus Christ. Genesis means origin. Or beginning. And in God's providence, just as the Old Testament begins with genesis, so here the New Testament begins with a genesis, linking the old to the new, and proceeding to reveal how in Jesus God has established a new covenant with His people through the life, the death, and the resurrection of His only begotten Son.

But before I continue, it must be understood and made clear that the Son of God is eternal and has eternally existed as God.

So while there was a time when you and I were not, truly God, one person with two natures, and was given the name Jesus, which means Savior.

[ 12 : 10 ] So while there was a time when you and I were not, there was never a time when the Son of God was not. In other words, though Jesus was born as we were, His existence did not begin at conception as ours did.

While Matthew's gospel focuses primarily on the truth that Jesus is the promised Messiah, John's gospel, where we've been for a long time, primarily focuses on the truth that Jesus is divine and that in the beginning of His gospel, we see that He's made that truth explicitly clear.

John 1, 1-4 in verse 14. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

And then in verse 14, And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

[13:24] But Matthew here, by beginning his gospel with Jesus' genealogy, establishes His humanity, and sets us up for what follows.

But before we move on with that, look again with me at the end of this passage in verse 17, with how Matthew establishes Jesus' genealogy.

There he says, So all the generations from Abraham to David were 14 generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ, 14 generations.

Now, biblical scholars disagree about the importance and relevance of the number 14 in this verse, but the more important thing for us to see, I believe, is how over such a long period of time, God's sovereignty is so clearly seen in each and every one of these significant periods of Jewish history. The first period from Abraham to David was that of the patriarchs, Isaac and Jacob, and then Joseph and his brothers, and then Moses and Joshua and the judges, which all cover the first eight books of the Bible.

[14:48] This period was marked by a time of wandering, of enslavement in a foreign land, of deliverance, of covenant making, of law giving, and of conquest and victory in acquiring the promised land.

The second period from David to the deportation to Babylon was that of monarchy, when Israel, if you remember, desired to have a human king just like their neighbors, and they discovered, just as God told them that they would, that their human kings led them further away from God than closer to God, which often led them into times of trouble and disaster, instead of times of peace and prosperity.

That was a period of almost uninterrupted decline, rebellion, immorality, apostasy, and tragedy.

Then there's the third period, the time of the deportation to Babylon, to the time of Christ.

That was a time of captivity, a time of exile, a time of frustration, and a time of prolonged waiting.

Most of the men Matthew mentions in this period, from Shealtiel to Jacob, the father of Joseph, are unknowable to us apart from this list.

This period was a time for the Israelites like the dark ages. It had been 400 years since the people of God last heard from their creator.

[16:25] But then, the silence was broken by an angel sent from God first to Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, who would be the forerunner, preparing the way for Christ.

And then that angel appeared to a remarkable young lady, a virgin, betrothed to a man named Joseph, with the news that she, Mary, would bear the one who would bear the sins of his people.

And so what all of this points to, what we need to see, is that God is in control. God is in control. No matter how things may appear to us, God is working all things together for the good.

And God works according to his divine will, that he has established by his divine timetable. In Genesis 3, after the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, if you remember, God made a promise that one day he would send a deliverer who would be born of a woman, and that deliverer would destroy Satan once and for all.

And then for centuries, century after century, after that promise was given, God was at work revealing who that deliverer would be.

[17:57] And here, when we come to Matthew, Matthew is saying and revealing to his audience, or God is revealing it through him, that that deliverer has come.

And his name is Jesus. And he is the Christ. And he is the promised one. And he has arrived. Paul declares that same truth to the Galatians, in Galatians 4, 4 through 5, but when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons.

You know, what's exciting about reading God's Word is you see how God is sovereign. You see his sovereignty on full display. And so I encourage you that as we come to the end of a year and are going to be beginning a new one here soon, make it a goal and a priority of yours to read the Bible in 2022 from cover to cover.

And I promise you that as you do that, you'll see that God is in control. God is sovereign. And in seeing that, you will rejoice. Because you know what you'll understand?

God, as he has been in control, is still in control right now. God is still sovereign. And just as he promised and prepared for the first advent, the first coming of his Son, and just as he promised that that would be fulfilled, and it was, so we, as believers living today, have every reason to believe in the promise of the second coming of his Son, that that too will be fulfilled.

[ 19 : 50 ] I've been studying in 1 Peter, and in 1 Peter 1, verse 13, I've been repeatedly coming back to this verse.

Therefore, preparing your minds for action and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

No matter what's going on now, in my life, in this world, good or bad, my hope needs to be fully placed on the surety of what is to one day happen when Jesus returns.

And the grace that is to be experienced on that day far exceeds anything that we can have or experience in this life.

And so, I enjoy Christmas and Easter because they remind me that God fulfills His promises. that God plays for keeps, that God is in control, and I have every reason to hope in Him because He is sovereign, and that is seen clearly through the birth of Jesus, His Son, revealing the greatness of God to send us a King who is worthy of our praise.

[ 21 : 18 ] So we see that God is sovereign in this genealogy. We also see that God keeps His promises. That God keeps His promises. Matthew not only divided his genealogy into three sections, but each section has to do with a specific person or event in Israel's history.

And what is significant about each one is that God made specific promises in all three. And all three of those promises had to do with the birth of a son.

The first person mentioned in verses 2 through 6 is Abraham. Abraham, if you recall, his name was originally Abram. He was the son of Terah, a descendant of Noah's son, Shem.

And he spent his early years living in the land of Ur before God chose him, God called him, and God established His covenant with him.

In Genesis 11, verse 30, we learn that Abraham was married to Sarai. Later, her name was changed to Sarah. And that she was unable to have children.

[ 22 : 31 ] In Genesis 17, verse 15, God tells Abraham that Sarah will conceive a child and that the child's name will be Isaac.

But if you remember, Abraham and Sarah were old, about 99 years old at the time that that promise was made. And when each of them received the news, they laughed in disbelief that God could do such a thing.

And then it was 25 years, 25 years after God made that promise, 25 years of suspense as they were waiting and maybe wondering if God had forgotten.

Would God fulfill His promise that finally Sarah conceived and Isaac was born? And their laughter turned to rejoicing because they knew that God keeps His word despite our temptation to doubt.

then in chapter 22, God makes a strange request. He tests Abraham's faith by commanding him to take Isaac, the son of the promise, to sacrifice him.

[ 23 : 59 ] And as Abraham is about to bring that knife down upon his son, trusting that God would bring him back to life, God stops him and he provides a ram for him to take the place of Isaac and to be sacrificed in his stead.

One life would be substituted for another life. They're picturing the substitutionary death that would find its ultimate fulfillment in God's son, Jesus, who was not spared, but who willingly laid down his life as a substitute for sinners, that they would be saved through faith in him.

And then after Abraham sacrifices that ram, God spoke to him. And there God made another promise to him. Let's look at that promise in Genesis chapter 22 verses 15 through 18.

And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore and your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.

Now in a sense that son was Isaac. Isaac was a miracle child but we know that scripture interprets scripture and that this promise was far greater than I think Abraham understood at that moment in

time.

[ 25 : 50 ] In the New Testament the Apostle Paul shows us that this promise was truly fulfilled in God's son Jesus Christ. In Galatians chapter 3 verse 16 inspired by the Holy Spirit Paul further illuminates the promise God made to Abraham there.

Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say and to offsprings referring to many but referring to one and to your offspring who is Christ.

The miraculous birth of Isaac in the Old Testament foreshadowed the miraculous birth of Jesus in the New Testament.

And so Matthew's genealogy begins and ends with the miraculous birth of a child and fulfillment of God's promises. Abraham's true heir is Jesus Christ the Son of God in whom the nations are truly blessed.

The second period Matthew mentions begins with David continuing with verse 16 and then going through verse 11. As God had made a promise to Abraham about a son so he did the same with David.

[ 27 : 05 ] God's promise to David is found in 2 Samuel chapter 7 verse 12 and 16. God says when your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom and your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before him your throne shall be established forever.

So like Abraham the promise to David was fulfilled in a sense with the birth of Solomon but Solomon did not sit on the throne forever and so this promise awaited fulfillment in another one who would and who could reign eternally and God fulfilled his promise despite the wicked sinfulness of many kings who sat on Israel's throne.

He preserved David's line which culminated in the coming of Jesus Christ who is David's true successor who is the king of kings.

Jesus' birth again proves that God keeps his promises. Then in the final period of this genealogy contained in verses 12 through 16 which addresses the time of Israel's exile from the promised land and their captivity in Babylon and just as God made promises to Abraham and to David about a son so he also made promises during this time about a son.

The book of Isaiah was written to warn God's people of their coming exile which was brought about because of their continued rejection of God.

[ 28 : 55 ] The exile was the lowest moment in Israel's history other than their rejection of their only Savior. They suffered during that time.

They suffered the loss of Jerusalem. They suffered the loss of the temple. They suffered the loss of their freedom. and it seemed as if God's promises had been lost with all those other things.

However, God, again, speaking through his prophet Isaiah, ensured his people that they would survive this time of exile because he is a God who does not forget and he is a God who keeps his promises.

And that truth would comfort them during those difficult days. Look at Isaiah 9 verses 6 through 7. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of the peace there will be no end. And on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

[ 30 : 30 ] And then earlier in Isaiah's book, the birth of that child was again prophesied that it would come in a unique and supernatural way.

That his coming would be unlike the coming of any other before or after him. In Isaiah 7.14 we read, therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. Next week we'll advance our study into the second half of chapter one of Matthew's gospel where he speaks more specifically about the virgin birth of Jesus.

But here we see him begin to hint at that in his genealogy. If you look at verse 16, that verse is significant because you see there is a change in the flow in how the descent from father to son is explained.

We've seen such and such was the father of such and such, such and such was the father of such and such, but that ends when we get to Joseph. He is not mentioned as the father of Jesus, but as

the husband of Mary of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

[ 31 : 56 ] Again, the point is that this person is unlike any other person. This one is the one who fulfills God's promises.

This one is God's son. And again, the point that we need to see here is that God keeps his promises. And Jesus is the fulfillment of those promises.

Through Jesus, the promise to Abraham has been fulfilled. And all the nations are blessed and will be blessed through him.

Because Jesus is the savior of the world. Anyone who trusts in him, no matter their nationality, will be saved. He is the fulfillment of God's promise to David that a king would rule on his throne forever.

And he is the fulfillment of God's promise to those exiles that a child would be born who would reign over all. Jesus' birth is rooted in God's promises.

[ 33 : 02 ] And there are promises made in Scripture that have yet to be fulfilled. The king of kings has come and the king of kings will return. He will return for us first.

And so the application here is that while you may think God is delayed in fulfilling his promises and that delay might cause you to doubt in him now, all you have to do really is turn back to his word.

And you'll see that God today is the same. That God continues to keep his promises. That first Christmas day revealed that God does what he says he will do.

And Jesus fulfilled all that he came to do. To make peace between holy God and sinful man by becoming the God man who has borne our sin on the cross where he died and then three days later rose again.

Jesus' birth reveals that God keeps his promises. And we see also in the genealogy and the birth of our Lord and Savior that God is gracious.

[ 34 : 19 ] God is sovereign, God keeps his promises, and God is gracious. God is gracious to save, and he is gracious in whom he chooses to associate himself with.

Abraham and David have already been mentioned. When God made great promises to them, we've seen that, but they were men whose lives were marked by repeated failure.

for instance, twice, Abraham lied about his relationship to his wife Sarah in order to save himself and potentially subject her to some horrible things.

And then we saw later that he would take matters into his own hands when he and Sarah felt like God's promise was too long delayed, where he was encouraged by her to have a child with another woman, and the birth of that child has resulted in problems between peoples and nations that has lasted to this day.

David committed adultery, and he tried to cover that sin up with murder. He also had many wives, and he had many children, many of whom rebelled against him.

[ 35 : 45 ] David was not a very good husband, and he was not a good father. Though David was a valiant warrior, though David was a man after God's heart, he had many flaws, and so do every other man recorded in this genealogy besides Jesus.

But what's really interesting here is the name of the women that Matthew records. Now, if you were a Jew reading this gospel for the first time, you would expect to hear names of Sarah, Rachel, Rebecca, Leah, the wives of the patriarchs, but instead of those names, Matthew records the names of Tamar, of Rahab, of Ruth, and a reference to Bathsheba.

Four women with interesting backgrounds. You can read about Tamar in Genesis 38 verses 1 through 30.

to make a long story short, she deceived Judah, her father-in-law, into an immoral relationship.

And he was in no way innocent of his participation in that deception. And through their incestuous relationship, two sons were born.

[ 37 : 04 ] One of those was Perez, who the messianic line continued through. Now how many of you, if you were researching your genealogy and discovered such a story as a part of your family tree, would be wanting to broadcast that all over social media?

Look what I found out about my family. You can read about Rahab in Joshua 2 verses 1 through 24 and chapter 6 verses 22 through 25.

Rahab was an outsider. She was not a Jew. She was not a member of God's chosen people. She lived in Jericho and her profession was, as they say, the oldest profession in the history of the world.

Yet God used her to protect Israel's spies and she became the mother of Boaz and Boaz was the great-grandfather of King David. And so to incest, we can now add harlotry to the family tree of Jesus.

You can read about Ruth in the book of Ruth. Ruth was another outsider. She was a Moabite.

Moabites descended from Moab who was one of the sons of Lot's daughters through Lot.

[ 38 : 26 ] And you can read about that in Genesis 19. Ruth's first husband married her in violation of the law. Deuteronomy 23.

3 says, no Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the Lord. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the Lord forever.

However, God had mercy on Ruth. And Ruth was a woman of noble character. She married Boaz who redeemed her. And so we can add now to Jesus' family tree the blood of outsiders, of foreigners.

You can read about Bathsheba in 1 Samuel chapter 11. Though Matthew doesn't mention her by name, instead calling her Uriah's wife, this served as a reminder that in Jesus' family tree, to these other things you can add adultery and murder.

Why are these women's names listed and not others? Well, I believe they are there to reveal God's amazing grace.

[ 39 : 43 ] And the Son who would come and who would be the great mediator and ultimate fulfiller of His amazing grace.

See, we read here that Jesus' family was populated not with righteous Jews, but sinners like you and me.

It was populated with people from different backgrounds, both socially and racially, just like us. And if you continue reading in the Gospel of Matthew, you'll read the words of the Son of God as He proclaims Himself in chapter 9 verse 13.

Go and learn what this means. I desire mercy and not sacrifice, for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. And I love what Martin Luther had to say about this passage, Matthew chapter 1 verses 1 through 17.

He said, Christ is the kind of person who is not ashamed of sinners. In fact, He puts them in His family tree. And so we thank God, don't we?

[ 41 : 03 ] For a Savior who is not afraid to associate with sinners. Thank God for a Savior who willingly came to die in place of sinners and for sins that He did not commit.

That by grace through faith in Him, we who are guilty, who are sinful, who are polluted by sin, are forgiven, are cleansed, are freed, receiving eternal life in the promise of a citizenship in a greater land.

God's message for you through Jesus' genealogy is a message of truth. It's a message of hope. It's a message of peace. Jesus has come.

He is the fulfiller of God's promises. And if you don't know Him, you see who He is willing to associate with in His family tree.

It doesn't matter how dark you think your sin is. If you come to Christ in faith, in trusting in Him, you will be saved.

[ 42 : 22 ] Those sins will be removed. You will be made clean. You will be clothed in His righteousness. You will have peace with God. You will have eternal life. And that begins the moment you put your faith and trust in Him.

Thank God we have a Savior who is not ashamed to associate with people like us. So what's the main point of application here for us to take away? I think it's this.

Rejoice in who God is. Rejoice in what God has done. Rejoice in what God will do. Rejoice in who God is. Rejoice in what God has done.

Rejoice in what God will do. There's no greater joy than knowing that you are a part of the family of God.

And as I was thinking about that, as I was coming to an end of the sermon when I usually pick my title, I couldn't help but get the Gaither hymn stuck in my head.

[ 43 : 24 ] You know it? The family of God? And so I had to look it up because I couldn't remember all of the verses and one stuck out to me and I want to read one of those verses with you.

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God. I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood. Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, for I'm a part of the family, the family of God.

And I love this part. From the door of an orphanage to the house of the king, no longer an outcast, a new song I sing.

From rags to riches, from the weak to the strong, I'm not worthy to be here, but praise God, I belong.

To God be the glory. Who else is worthy of your praise? Who else is worthy of your worship? And so at Christmas, let's make sure that our focus isn't on the other things which aren't bad in themselves, but let's make sure that we are extending our voices in praise and adoration of the one who has come, the one who is sovereign, the one who keeps his promises, the one who is exceedingly and amazingly gracious to sinners like us, to bring us into his family through his son, Jesus Christ.

[ 45 : 02 ] Three questions of application. We'll discuss these tonight. I encourage you to be here for that, but if not, come back to these later today or later this week.

Question number one, why should Christians rejoice over God's sovereignty? Why is that something that we should rejoice in? And there's some scriptures there to help you as you answer that question.

Question number two, why should Christians rejoice over God's promise keeping? Promise keeping. And then finally, why should Christians rejoice over God's grace?

And I hope that tonight as we go through these questions and go through God's word and as you hopefully do that on your own, again, you will rejoice in the God who is, God who was, God who will forever be, and what he has done for you in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Will you bow your heads with me and let's pray. Heavenly Father, we of all people have the most to rejoice over. God, you are sovereign.

[ 46 : 17 ] You keep your promises and you are exceedingly and amazingly, overwhelmingly gracious to save sinners from their trespasses, place them on your Son.

That through faith in Him, we are saved and we are a part of your family forever. we are heirs. We have hope in Christ.

And so, Lord, I pray for each of us as we now or have been preparing ourselves for our celebration of Christmas. Lord, keep our attention and our focus on you and what we truly have to be thankful for and what we truly have to celebrate.

God, as we think over these things and as we celebrate these things, Lord, and as we come into contact with unbelievers, may they see in us and may they hear from us the hope that we have in Christ.

We ask these things in His precious and holy name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 47 : 31 ] Amen.