

Jesus' Roots

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Knowing your family background can be interesting and give you a sense of identity. However, the genealogical records of Jesus (Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38) accomplish far more important goals. When we discipline ourselves to work through all those "begots" and difficult names, the genealogies provide us with essential information.

Matthew traces Jesus' family tree on Joseph's side. Joseph wasn't Jesus' biological father; Jesus, being born of a virgin, had none. Nevertheless, Matthew's primarily Jewish readers would be concerned with Jesus' legal genealogy through Joseph. They knew that God had promised Abraham that the world would be blessed through his seed (Genesis 22:18). Under no circumstances would they accept a Messiah who was not legally descended from Abraham.

The Jews also knew of God's promise to David that Messiah would descend from him (2 Samuel 7:12-16). So, not just any descendant of Abraham would do; the Messiah would have to come through the line of David. Matthew's genealogy of Jesus proves that He meets these qualifications to be the Christ. Matthew even introduces the listing with these words: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1).

Luke, on the other hand, traces Jesus' lineage all the way back to Adam (actually, back to God)! He uses Mary's side of the tree, being concerned with the literal, fleshly descent of the Lord. There, too, we find that Jesus descended through both Abraham and David (Luke 3:31, 34). But by looking all the way back to Adam, Luke emphasizes that Jesus is the savior of all people, not just of the Jews. This would be of particular interest to Luke,

a Gentile, as well as to Theophilus, another Gentile to whom Luke wrote (and to countless other Gentiles who have read Luke's material over the centuries).

Both genealogies emphasize Jesus' historical reality. He is not a legendary or mythical character, but a real, historical person who actually lived and did the things which are written of Him. Legends and myths may teach certain moral lessons; but when we need someone to forgive our sins, only Jesus, the God/Man, will do!

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Teaching the Teacher

William Glasser (psychologist) said
that we learn . . .

10% of what we read.

20% of what we hear

30% of what we see

50% of what we see and hear.

70% of what we discuss with others.

80% of what we experience personally.

95% OF WHAT WE TEACH OTHERS.

--via House-to-House/Heart-to-Heart

I Saw The Light

"And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven" (Acts 9:3 ASV).

From my childhood years, I have very clear, and fond memories of the times spent with my grandparents. One of those memories is that of playing records on my grandmother's victrola. One of those records was a song entitled "I Saw The Light." The lyrics convey the thought of one who has found Christ. The chorus goes like this:

I saw the light, I saw the light.
No more darkness, no more night
Now I'm so happy, no sorrow in sight.
Praise the Lord, I saw the light.

Throughout the Bible, we see the contrast of light and darkness where darkness represents all that is ungodly and light represents all that is of God. In our natural, daily lives we seek a source of light for our way. When we walk out into the dark at night, or into a dark room, we seek a source of light. Likewise, we live in a world of spiritual darkness and should also seek a light for our way. God has provided that light source. *"Again therefore Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world"* (John 8:12). Jesus goes on to say that if we follow him we shall not walk in darkness.

Paul met the light on the road to Damascus, and subsequently, obeyed the gospel and continued walking in the light.

Jesus is still the light of the world. He still wants to light the way for you, and me, as we walk through this life. Have you seen the light? Are you *"walking in the light"* (I John 1:7). If, as Paul, you have seen the light and obeyed the gospel then you need to continually walk in the light, *"for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness"* (I Timothy 5:5).

--Roy A. Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)