

The (IM) Perfect Christmas

*Small Group Discussion Notes
Sunday, December 18, 2016
"The Imperfect Family Tree"*

Getting Started:

Who is the most interesting person in your family tree? Why?

Digging In/Digging Deeper:

In this study we will look at parts of Jesus' genealogy in Matthew 1.

1. Why would a written genealogy be important to Matthew's Jewish audience? Is family heritage as important as it once was?
2. What are some of the names that jump out in this passage? What Bible stories do you recall that include these names? Are you surprised to find any of these people in Jesus' family tree?
3. Why was it significant for Matthew to include women in this genealogy? Consider the background of Rahab and Ruth.

Rahab *Joshua 1:10- 2:21*

- Is the color of the cord significant? What does it suggest?
- In their male dominated culture, some women did what they had to just to "survive." Are things different today? Why? Are there any other types of "sins" that people might feel forced into just to "survive?"
- Is Rahab's lifestyle a result of circumstances or choices? Why?
- How might knowing a "Savior" bring provision to a desperate life? Is living in sin acceptable if you are kind to others?

Ruth *Ruth 1:1-19*

- Why are people quick to draw conclusions about others based on race and gender? How is the discrimination Ruth faced still seen today? Do you personally know others who are "judged" because of their race?
 - Is Ruth's decision not to "return to her own people" reasonable given her circumstances? Why?
 - How does acceptance from a "Savior" bring healing? *Col. 3:11*
4. How does the church (local and worldwide) relate to people from different backgrounds? Do we add to or reduce their sense of shame? How might our actions influence their acceptance of Christ?

Abide/Love/Bless:

How will you be "Christ" to someone in need this Christmas?