

Women ^{of} the Word

02.09.18

Hope

for the broken

The Women of Matthew 1





Meeting Overview

Tonight we'll be starting a two-part series in which we will pick apart Matthew 1 and the women it honors. God mightily used broken people in the Bible – and he can use us too.

Schedule

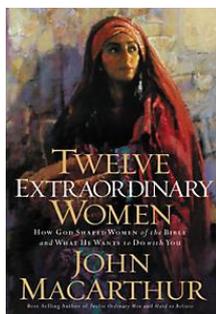
6:00 Welcome and Dinner

6:45 Session 1: God Keeps His Promises to Broken People

7:25 Session 2: God Uses Even Broken People to Accomplish His
Will

8:15 Workshop: Rahab

Follow Up:



If you're interested in taking up a small group study – we've got you covered! John MacArthur's book *Twelve Extraordinary Women* is a wonderful study on how God used several women in the Bible, and how he can use us too. Contact Brittany at 317.518.4430 for details.



Session 1: God Keeps His Promises to Broken People

Matthew 1

As a child, when a parent promises to take you to the park, you do not give up on that promise. It's got to happen – they promised! Though human parents often fall short, our God does not. Throughout the Bible, there are countless times where God makes a promise and it is fulfilled. One of the most beautiful instances is exemplified in Christ's genealogy in Matthew 1.

1. God kept the promises he made to broken people in the Bible.

Scripture Survey:

- Genesis 3:14-15
- Genesis 22:15-18
- Genesis 26:4-5
- Genesis 28:13-15
- Genesis 49:8-10 (Jacob's blessing)
- Isaiah 11:1
- 1 Samuel 7:17
- Jeremiah 23:5
- Isaiah 7:14
- Matthew 1

A. God kept his promises despite human failures.

Throughout history, humans have worked tirelessly to keep royal bloodlines clean. It meant power stayed in

the family; it meant they would not be tainted by the lower class; it meant they would be aligned with other powers. God didn't do that. Many of these promises were made at times of spiritual victory, but God knew many of them would fail, and fail hard. Besides Mary, we can read of the obvious failures of everyone on the list, yet God remained faithful.

B. God kept his promises despite the passing of time.

Perhaps part of the reason God inspired people to write the Bible over thousands of years is to show us that he keeps his promises, regardless of the passing of time. Out of this whole list, Mary is the only one who actually got to see Jesus Christ in the flesh. What an awesome day it must have been for the line of Abraham to, one by one, see as they went to heaven how God was fulfilling his promise to them!

2. God keeps the promises he makes to broken people today.

Scripture Survey:

- Numbers 23:19
- Deuteronomy 7:9
- Lamentations 3:22-23
- Malachi 3:6
- Psalm 90:2
- Titus 1:1-3
- 2 Timothy 2:13
- Hebrews 13:8

A. God keeps his promises to us despite our many failures.

Do you ever fail in a big way and feel like you can't come back? Do you ever see a friend, a brother, a mentor, fail in a big way and fear they can't come back? Pornography

addictions, drug addictions, running from discipline, burning relationships, looking back and feeling like we made the wrong decision – we can all come back. God keeps his promises to broken people despite our failures. As long as there is life, there is hope.

Do you ever fail in a small way and feel like you can't come back? Seemingly little lies to get out of an awkward situation, money not well spent, service opportunities not taken – there is grace for that too. The more we mature as believers, the more sensitive our conscious should get as we grow in knowledge and discernment. Even when we fail in seemingly smaller ways, God still keeps his promises to us. He's still refining.

B. God keeps his promises to us despite the passing of time.

God hasn't changed for the last few thousand years – He's not changing today. If He said something will happen, it will. He promises to supply all of our need out of his riches – He will. He promises to draw near to us as we draw near to Him – He will. He promises to give wisdom – He will. He promises to give us peace when we keep our mind stayed on Him – He will. Don't give up. Keep meditating, praying, and thanking God. His promises are always fulfilled.

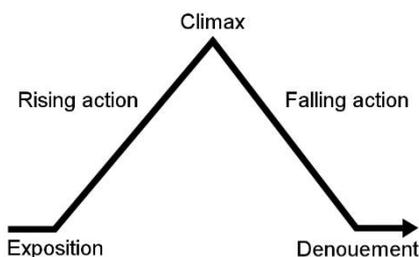


Session 2: God Uses Even Broken People

Genesis 38

After the fall, God brings a curse. Though the curse brings heavy grief, there is a sliver of hope: the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent. Genesis 3:15 is the proto-evangelium, or the 'first gospel.' From there on out, a war is waged: Satan will do everything he can to prevent his destruction. Satan will do anything to pollute God's plan.

The first woman mentioned in Matthew 1 is none other than Tamar, the daughter-in-law of Judah, the son of Jacob.



1. Exposition: Tamar's Background

A. Judah's rough background.

God's people are now in a precarious position. Jacob is a passive, permissive father, and it seems every brother, save Joseph and Benjamin, are polluting the family line. As we

examine the life of Judah, the man whom God carried Christ's line through, a few surprising things come to mind:

- Leah is not the favorite wife. (Genesis 29:30)
- Judah is not the favorite son. (Genesis 37:3)
- Judah suggested selling Joseph into slavery. (Genesis 37:26-28)
- Judah left his family. (Genesis 38:1)
- Judah married a Canaanite. (Genesis 38:2; cf. 24:3, 28:1-2)
- Judah has three sons by his wife: Er, Onan, and Shelah. (Genesis 38:1-5)

B. Tamar's unorthodox lineage (v. 6)

We don't have any information on Tamar's life before Genesis 38. Judah leaves his family and marries a Canaanite woman. As we review the introduction of Tamar, we notice a few things:

- Tamar was most likely a Canaanite as well.
- Judah was active in putting Tamar and Er together.

2. Rising Action: Tamar's Disappointment (vv. 6-11)

Right now, little girls grow up dreaming of falling in love. Then, little girls dreamed of growing up and continuing their husbands' family line. The earth wasn't nearly as populated as it is now, and people were very spread out. Living off the land meant two things: you needed to have rain every single year, and you needed to have enough people to do the work. Honor and favor were closely tied to the number of children you had.

A. Tamar became a widow with no heir. (v. 7)

We don't know how exactly Er was wicked, but looking at Judah's life, are we surprised? Er was so wicked that God

put him to death before they even got the opportunity to have children.

B. Tamar became a widow again with no heir. (vv. 8-10)

At the time, the people practiced levirate marriage. Having an heir was so important that if a man died without any offspring, his brother would take the widow as his wife and produce an heir. But there was one catch – the child would be considered offspring of the dead brother's, not the living brother. This was still a common practice even in Ruth's day (Ruth 1:11-13).

i. Onan took Tamar to be his wife.

Tamar had hope! She would still be provided for after her husband's death, and she would still have the opportunity to produce an heir.

ii. Onan put his own desires first.

Onan took what he wanted from Tamar, but refused her the opportunity to fulfill her desire producing an heir.

iii. Onan's deeds were so wicked that God put him to death also.

We don't understand all of cultural expectations and pressure, but God saw Onan's deeds as very wicked – wicked enough to deserve death immediately as well.

C. Tamar was given hope to marry again to produce an heir. (v. 11)

i. Judah was blind to his children's sins.

Ever hear a parent excuse their child's sins? "They probably didn't mean to" or "I'm sure it was just an accident, Sammy would never do that" are so frustrating to hear when you saw their child do it. Judah's words to Tamar in verse 11 seem to indicate that Judah thought the issue lay with Tamar, not with his sons.

ii. Judah gave Tamar false hope.

Judah told Tamar to go back and wait while his youngest son grew up. Tamar could have gone on and tried to marry someone else, but she waited because Judah told her she could marry Shelah.

3. Climax: Tamar's Response (vv. 12-23)

A. Tamar waited. (vv. 11, 14)

Tamar did exactly what Judah told her to. We don't know how long Tamar waited thinking she would marry Shelah, but she waited long enough for Shelah to grow up. We see in verse 14 that she even wore widow's garments the whole time.

B. Tamar manipulated. (vv. 14-19)

The only way for Tamar to have an heir for Er and not be punished for immorality was to have a child through Judah. When Judah's wife died, Tamar saw her opportunity. She knew he would fall for it, and she knew exactly how to set it up to ensure she could prove Judah was the father.

C. Tamar succeeded. (v. 18)

Tamar's plan went off without a hitch. She disguised herself, she set herself up as cult prostitute – and she knew Judah

would fall for it. Tamar knew exactly what to ask for as a pledge for the payment she knew Judah wouldn't have. She didn't even have to approach him either – he came straight to her. She even got pregnant the first time; there was no need to try again.

4. Falling Action: Tamar's Protection (vv. 20-30)

A. Judah's passivity. (vv. 20-23)

Judah tried to give her the payment he promised, but when he hit a wall, he didn't try any harder. He left it as is and probably would not have worried about it ever again.

B. Judah's hypocrisy. (v. 24)

Judah was ready to kill Tamar for her immorality. Her sin was obvious, but Judah's was not. Just as she planned, Tamar had air-tight evidence to ensure Judah would not act out against her.

C. Judah's epiphany. (vv. 25-26)

Judah realizes that while his actions were only motivated by lust, Tamar's actions were motivated out of a desire to see an heir be born – and it's Judah's fault she didn't have another opportunity sooner. Judah does not sin with her again, and exonerates her.

D. Judah's heirs. (vv. 27-30)

As a result of their sin, Judah now has three living sons: Shelah (by his wife), Perez, and Zerah. One was born through legitimate marriage; two were born through less than honorable circumstances. Who does God choose?

5. Conclusion: Tamar's Legacy

A. Judah has a heart change. (Genesis 44:30-33; 46:8)

The next time we see Judah is when he goes to Egypt with his brothers (except Benjamin) to get food during the famine. Judah is the one who steps in during Joseph's testing and offers himself to be Joseph's slave in place of Benjamin (Genesis 44:30-33). We see Judah is recognized as a leader in Genesis 46:8, when Jacob sends him ahead to show the way to Joseph.

B. Tamar and her sons are saved from the famine. (Genesis 46:6-7)

Scripture is explicit that Jacob took *all* of his offspring, which would have included Tamar and her sons. Tamar's immorality actually ended up saving her from the famine.

C. Perez is chosen to carry the line of Christ. (Ruth 4:18-22)

The book of Ruth gives an additional genealogy, which tells us several things:

- Perez's line survived the famine.
- Perez's line survived the oppression in Egypt.
- Perez's line made it to the Promised Land.

As we continue to follow this line, we see that Perez's line led to Salmon, who married Rehab the prostitute. Rehab the prostitute has a son named Boaz. Boaz marries Ruth, and they have a son named Obed, a grandson named Jesse, and a great grandson named David.

What do we learn from Judah and Tamar?

1. God can humble proud hearts.

Judah was the epitome of pride, and God brought him to the point where he offered himself as a sacrifice for his brother Benjamin.

- God can humble your proud heart.
- God can humble the proud heart of those who you love and pray for.

2. The serpent cannot thwart God's plan.

He tried time and time again, but God won – Jesus Christ was born, and Jesus Christ is coming back to crush the serpent's head once and for all. God's plan cannot be thwarted by Satan, it cannot be thwarted by sinners, and it cannot be thwarted by sin itself. God will accomplish his purpose.

3. God can use even our sin to accomplish his purpose.

God is not glorified by sin, but in some amazing way, he is able to make beauty out of ashes. He can use immorality in Judah's life to humble him and make him a leader. Think of the testimonies you hear that floor you, where God takes people with various backgrounds, saves them, and then uses them to reach the people they used to be like.

Rosaria Champagne Butterfield had a brilliant mind. She graduated with her Ph.D., and became a tenured professor of English and Women's Studies at Syracuse University. A lesbian herself, her website describes that "she advised the LGBT student group at Syracuse, wrote the policy for same-sex couples, and lobbied for LGBT aims alongside her lesbian partner." Rosaria met a pastor in 1997. Studying religion and the Bible for research, Rosaria became a Christian two years later. Now she is a pastor's wife, a mom, and a Christian author and speaker.

God can do amazing things. Don't give up fighting to grow – God has good things ahead. Don't give up praying for your fallen brothers – God has good things ahead. Don't ever give up on someone who seems too far gone – God can save them too. It's amazing what our God can do with broken vessels.

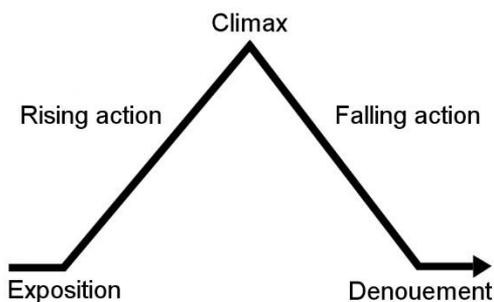


Workshop: Rahab

Joshua 2, 6:15-25, Hebrews 11:31, James 2:25-26

The next woman we find in Matthew 1 is Rahab. Her name is almost always accompanied by a rather notorious surname: Rahab, the prostitute.

Study what we know of Rahab and complete the narrative arch. What is God teaching us through this woman's life and legacy?



1. Exposition: Rahab's Background

2. Rising Action: Rahab's Actions

3. Climax: Rahab's Reward

4. Falling Action: Rahab's Later Life

5. Conclusion: Rahab's Legacy

What do we learn from Rahab?

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