



## MAKING A LIST

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We've officially entered the Christmas season. This evokes mixed emotions for many people. For some, this is the most exciting time of year. For others, it can be the most depressing. We hope Christmas at The Cove will renew your sense of joy as we celebrate the birth of Jesus together.

### Where Am I Today?

- 1) Have you ever felt that God wasn't able to use you? What did you think would prevent Him from using you?

### Into the Bible

- 2) God has a way of using "insignificant" people in amazing ways. **Read** Matthew 1:1-25 to see a mixture of names you'll recognize and others that you won't. What is significant about the fact that God used all of these peoples' lives to send Jesus into the world?
- 3) Some of the familiar names in Matthew 1 aren't known for being outstanding people. In fact, some of them were known for being wicked. Even the "good" people were still



# Christmas at The Cove

sinful. **Read** the following passages that tell about these people. What makes each of these people unlikely candidates to be an ancestor of the Messiah? What does this say about God's ability to use everything for His glory and our good?

- a. Genesis 16:1-6
  - b. Genesis 38:12-26
  - c. 2 Kings 16:2-18
  - d. 2 Kings 21:1-18
- 4) Some of the people in the genealogy really loved God. One such person was King David, who committed some terrible sins, but turned around and followed God by repenting. **Read** Psalm 51, which he wrote after committing adultery and murder. How is David different from Manasseh and Ahaz? How can this passage be an encouragement to you?

## How Does This Apply?

- 5) We all have sin in our past, and we all will have sinful mistakes in our future. God still wants to use us. In what ways do you think God can still use you despite your past?



- 6) Think of someone that you know who has given up on ever being useful for Jesus. How can you encourage them this week to not give up?
  
- 7) All the passages we've looked at in this study show that, ultimately, Jesus is the only good guy in the Bible. He's the One who causes everything to work out for His glory and for Christians' good. How does this free you to live a life of purpose, instead of one filled with guilt and shame?

### **Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own**

- 8) Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell the story of Jesus to different audiences—and from different perspectives. Matthew's audience was primarily Jewish, and one of his greatest emphases was Jesus as King. This connects to a big theme in the New Testament referred to as the "already but not yet." This views Jesus as King of the Kingdom of God—and that's still in progress. In other words, Jesus' kingdom has been "inaugurated, but not consummated." His kingdom was begun at His resurrection, and He will one day rule uncontested over the new heavens and new earth. How do the following passages illustrate this? What can Christians enjoy *now* because His reign has begun? What do we still have to look forward to?

Matthew 6:10  
Matthew 13:1-52  
Luke 17:20-21  
Ephesians 1:13-14

Matthew 12:28  
Matthew 24-25  
John 5:24-25  
Hebrews 2:5-9

For more commentary on the significance of the genealogy of Jesus, I recommend a commentary from Bible Gateway. Find it here: <http://tiny.cc/genealogyofJesus>