4 POINTS CHURCH

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

FAMILY TIES — WEEK 1

The Story Behind the Picture

Pastor Russ Chambers | November 15, 2026

Main Scripture: Matthew 1:1-17

Connect

ICEBREAKER

Think of a family photo, a school picture, or a holiday card from your past. What was really going on behind the camera that the picture doesn't show?

Message Snapshot

BIG IDEA

Behind the genealogy of Jesus is the true story of a God who made a promise, kept it through real and broken lives, and fulfilled it in Jesus.

STICKY BOTTOM LINE

God is not interested in the pictures you portray. He knows about, is present in, and wants you to be honest with Him about the reality you're living.

REMEMBER THIS

Matthew 1 is not an Olan Mills portrait or a Sears Christmas photo. True stories are truly messy, and God works right in the middle of them.

KEY TRUTHS FROM SUNDAY

- God made a promise before the story unfolded. Matthew opens with references to Abraham and David on purpose: through Abraham, God promised blessing for all the nations, and through David, God promised an eternal throne. Jesus is the promised King who brings that blessing into the world.
- God kept His promise through real and broken lives. Matthew doesn't edit out the scandal. He refers to the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba) and includes women whose stories carried injustice, outsider status, grief, and abuse of power.
- Some of us need forgiveness for the wrong we have done. Some of us need healing for the wrong done to us. Jesus meets us in both places, with mercy for our sin and compassion for our suffering.
- God's promise reaches its fulfillment in Jesus. Generations passed with little to show but waiting, yet God had not forgotten. Many times there is a wait that accompanies a work of God, and the wait provides us an opportunity for spiritual growth.

Scripture

Read together: Matthew 1:1-17

Don't rush past the names. As you read, listen for the 2 names Matthew starts with in verse 1, notice the women he includes, and watch for the 3 sets of 14 generations he counts up in verse 17.

Discuss

OBSERVE

1. Matthew calls Jesus 'the son of David, the son of Abraham' in verse 1. Read Genesis 12:2-3 together. What did God promise Abraham, and who was that blessing ultimately for?

2. Look at the women named in verses 3-6 (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and 'the wife of Uriah'). What do you already know about any of their stories?
3. Verse 17 sums up the list in 3 groups of 14 generations. What major events mark the turning points between those groups?

UNDERSTAND

4. Pastor Russ pointed out that Matthew calls Bathsheba 'the wife of Uriah,' keeping David's sin visible right beside his royal title. Why would a family record of the promised King leave the scandal in instead of editing it out?
5. Pastor Russ said some of us need forgiveness because we did the wrong, while others need healing because they carry the impact of wrong done to them. Why does it matter to tell the difference between the two?
6. Many of the generations in verses 12-16 are people we know almost nothing about, except that they waited. What does that tell you about how God works through seasons that feel ordinary or stuck?

APPLY

7. Where are you most tempted to show people 'the picture' instead of the real story? What makes it hard to be honest about what's actually going on?
8. Pastor Russ asked, 'What if the wait is going to grow you?' What are you waiting on God for right now, and what might He be growing in you while you wait?

Live It Out

Bring your actual story to Jesus this week. Name one burden honestly and pray about it every day. Then share it with one trustworthy believer who can pray with you and walk through it with you. You don't have to tell the whole room, but stop carrying it alone. Bonus: think of one person who seems unlikely to come to church and invite them to sit with you at a Christmas service.

Prayer

- Thank God that He made a promise long before we were born and kept it all the way to Jesus.
- Confess the places where you have whitewashed your story, and ask Jesus for forgiveness where you have done the wrong.
- Pray for healing and restoration for anyone in the group carrying the impact of wrong done to them.
- Ask God for hope and patience for anyone in a season of waiting.
- Pray by name for people you could invite this Christmas, and for 4 Points Church to keep making room for the least, the lost, and the lonely.

Father, thank You that You wrote this story long before we got here, and that You keep Your promises through real, messy people like us. We don't want to hide behind a polished picture. We bring You our actual stories: the wrong we've done and the wrong done to us. Meet us with mercy for our sin and compassion for our suffering, and help us make room for someone else to meet You this Christmas. In Jesus' name, amen.

HOST TIP Reading 17 verses of names out loud can feel like a chore, so have fun with it. Let a few people take turns and give grace on the pronunciations (Pastor Russ did). Over the next several weeks this series looks at the women in this list one at a time, starting with Tamar next week, so keep the Observe question about them light and save the deep dives for those weeks.