
Matthew Chapter 1

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. How many generations back do you know your ancestors? Talk about or write down something you know about your parents, grandparents, great grandparents and great, great grandparents.

- b. Tell your favorite story about something that happened to your parents or grandparents when they were your age.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: Matthew begins his gospel by going through all the ancestors of Jesus. Most people today think this is really boring but it was important for Matthew to do this because it was important to the people he was writing to. Back then people were very proud of who their ancestors were—especially if they were descendants of someone important. And it was especially important for people reading the book of Matthew back then to know that Jesus was the descendant of King David. This was especially important because well known prophecies said that the Messiah would be from the “House of David.”

Have you ever seen any of the Chronicles of Narnia or The Lord of the Rings movies? The epic battle scenes just where I live in California, I have friends that are from Filipino, African, Chinese, Mexican and other cultures. Do you have any friends that are from a different culture than you are? Have a discussion with some friends or in your small group about things that one culture values more than another. Things like music, types of food and entertainment. What do you think makes different cultures value different things?

What are some things that you value more or less than your parents?

What are some things that you value more or less than your friends?

What can you do to help you get along better with people who value things differently than you do?

How can the things you are learning from these discussions help you to understand and value the Bible more?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Watch one of the Chronicles of Narnia movies or another Bible movie with epic battle scenes to try and a. Do some research on a culture that you have tended to be judgmental of in the past and try to understand it better. If possible sit down with someone from that culture and ask them to tell you about their world and what it is like to be a part of that culture.
- b. Ask someone from your parents or grandparents generation to tell you stories from when they were a child. Ask them what the world was like and how things are different now.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Spend a few minutes praying for peace in the middle east and other places where there is frequent racial conflict. Pray for people to be more understanding and accepting of each other. Pray for God to give you a greater love and understanding of those who are different from you.