



CALL IN
The
NEW TESTAMENT

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THE ORDER OF SERVICE

- I. Bell tap or organ voluntary as a signal for silence
- II. Singing
- III. The Apostles' Creed
- IV. Prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert
- V. Singing
- VI. Calling roll of officers and teachers
- VII. Responsive reading of the lesson text by school
- VIII. The Decalogue

THE LESSON

- I. Organ interlude while the classes are being arranged
- II. Class study of the lesson
- III. Warning bell — 5 minutes
- IV. Closing bell — silence

THE CLOSING

- I. Singing
- II. Review and application of the lesson
- III. Secretary's report
- IV. The Church School Creed
- V. Singing
- VI. Benediction

EDITORIAL STAFF

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

I believe my A.M.E. Church School must grow and grow; and that I must make it a top priority to make it so. Every member a Christian, every Christian a worker, every worker trained so that a worker need not be ashamed. This we ask in Jesus' name.

A.M.E. Discipline



LESSON 1: DECEMBER 6, 2020

CALLED THROUGH HERITAGE

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 1:1 – 17; Hebrews 1

Focus Scripture: Hebrews 1:1 – 5, Matthew 1:1 – 6, 16 – 17

KEY VERSES: *Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. Hebrews 1:1 – 2a*

WORDS TO KNOW

- **HEIR** - one who inherits
- **GENEALOGY** - an account of the history of a family, showing parents and their children and so on
- **IMPRINT** - impression that reflects inner character; a distinguishing effect or influence
- **MESSIAH** - the anointed one
- **BEGOTTEN** - produced offspring

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 1:1-5; MATTHEW 1:1-6, 16-17

- 1** Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,
- 2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.
- 3** He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
- 4** having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.
- 5** For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?
-
- 1** An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
- 2** Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,
- 3** and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram,
- 4** and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon,
- 5** and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse,
- 6** and Jesse the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,....
-
- 16** ...and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.
- 17** So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 has shown us something similar to our focal verse for today, and that is, God is no longer speaking through the old prophets but speaking through God's son, Jesus Christ. As we navigated through this year, we have seen so much occur: the death of a legendary basketball player, Kobe Bryant; a global pandemic, COVID-19, that shut the entire world down for many months; protests around the globe about systematic racism faced by African Americans, and much more.

Sometimes people will discredit what you have to say because of your age; but, allow Jesus to be your example. Jesus was in the temple at the age of 12 answering some tough questions that many older folks could not answer. Never allow anyone to discredit what you have to say or do because of your age! As we have seen with protests, many youths have allowed their voices to be heard. If you ever get into a situation that you don't know how to navigate, remember the phrase "WWJD?" or "What Would Jesus Do?" When you face a problem and don't know what to do, just ask, "What would Jesus do?" and, then do that.

BIBLE STORY

Jesus was a part of a long line of women and men who frequently heard from God. God called out Abraham and told him he would be the father of nations. God placed it on Boaz's heart to choose Ruth as his wife, giving birth to Obed the great-grandfather of David. David was anointed to be the next king after Saul, beginning the long line of descendants on the throne. During the Babylonian exile, after the split of Israel, David's descendants remained on the throne in the land of Judah until they were overthrown. David's lineage continued with the birth of Jechoniah, Salathiel, Zerubbabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, and Jacob who became the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, Jesus' mother.

Given Jesus' lineage, it is no surprise Jesus operated the way he did, and was ultimately chosen to save humanity. Jesus came from a long line of saviors and warriors, women and men who put themselves on the line to follow the commands of God. From Jesus, we learn the importance of knowing our heritage.

SANKOFA

There is great wisdom and power in knowing our familial and spiritual

history, knowing it offers us the opportunity to connect with the voices and lives of our ancestors in ways that empower us to “carry the baton.” Reaching back into the narratives of family members or church members who have made it beyond the river, enriches our own story and lets us know that we’re not the first nor the last in our strivings.

This is also a great opportunity to see the hand of God working in our own history. Reaching back into the archives of our own family history can at times bring about difficult conversations, or reveal things we would have rather not known. However, it is in acknowledging these parts and names within our history that we can see God’s mercy and saving grace, and possibly even do things differently during our own lifetime.

REAL TALK-FAITH WALK

Who’s in Your Family?

In 1996, Ancestry Publishing launched its first online platform used to connect family history. Then, in 2012, the United States launched its first Ancestry DNA test. Both these platforms were created as a way to connect people with their family history. A lot of people had questions about who they were, the family they came from, etc., and platforms like these two gave people the freedom to dig deeper to discover more about their family’s history, and the culture that is in their veins.

Thankfully, there is a recording of Jesus’ lineage in the book of Matthew which is today’s printed text. However, some of us may not be so lucky to have a full record of our family’s lineage. Today, you will build your own family tree. Our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and beyond tell us so much about ourselves. Jesus’ lineage shows Jesus came from a family of strong people. Though not physical, they were people who did not just stand around and take what was.

SUMMARY

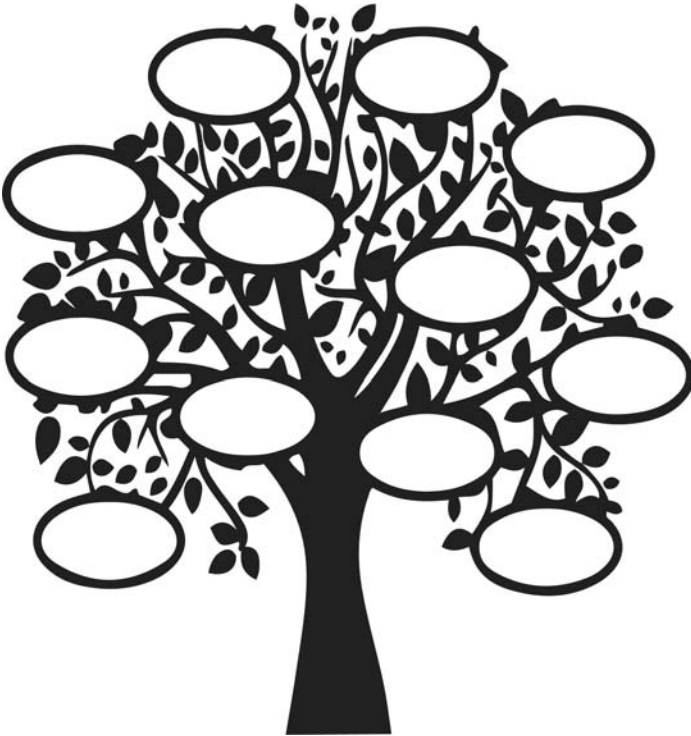
Family trees are not always pretty. Sometimes, they are filled with some dark secrets and even darker realities. Look at Jesus’ lineage. There were children out of wedlock, half siblings, marriage, death, second marriages, cheating, secret babies, conspiracy, murder, sibling rivalries, splitting of a kingdom, and teenage pregnancy. BUT... there was also obedience, increase, salvation, joining of families, giving of new names, defeat of lions, tigers, and giants, the victory of many

wars, elevation to new positions (including king and queen), and the birth of the savior! Our family tree instills certain characteristics into us. But, WE decide how to use those characteristics.

1. What does your family tree say about you?
2. What can your family tree teach you about you?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

God, I thank you for my family. They may not be perfect, but they are mine, and their strengths are my strengths. Help me to embody their strengths and live in the legacies they left behind. In Jesus' name. AMEN!



LESSON 2: DECEMBER 13, 2020

CALLED BEFORE BIRTH

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 1:18 – 25

Focus Scripture: Matthew 1:18 – 25

KEY VERSES: *“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:20b – 21*

WORDS TO KNOW

- **RIGHTEOUS** - approved by God
- **DISMISS** - release from engagement
- **DISGRACE** - expose, bring shame

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 1:18-25

- 18** Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.
- 19** Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.
- 20** But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.
- 21** She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."
- 22** All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
- 23** "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."
- 24** When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,
- 25** but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

INTRODUCTION

“Care for us and accept us – we are all human beings. We are normal. We have hands. We have feet. We can walk, we can talk, we have needs just like everyone else – don’t be afraid of us – we are all the same!”
– Nkosi Johnson

Who knew that when Nkosi Johnson was born, he was born with a purpose that would help so many? Who knew that this little baby boy, born HIV-positive, would be adopted by a woman who saw the value in his life despite his condition, and wanted to help him reach his greatness? Who knew that his attempts to go to school would be the catalyst to changing a system that told him his medical status prevented him from being educated? Who knew that Nkosi being born with a purpose, and raised by a willing parent who did not naturally give birth to him, would be the recipe for creating Nkosi’s Haven, a safe space for HIV positive mothers and their children? Who knew that one little boy’s condition and familial status would connect him to a space where thousands would listen to Nkosi talk about his daily struggles, and how to help and provide for others? Who knew?

BIBLE STORY

This was the case with baby Jesus. Before even being born, God already had a plan for Jesus. But, unfortunately, there was a little complication with the plan. Mary and Joseph were not yet married. They were only engaged. And now, miraculously, Mary is pregnant. Poor Joseph. How would Joseph explain this to his family? What would the community say? This was not how this relationship was supposed to go down. What was Joseph to do?

Being the respectable man he was, Joseph only knew one thing to do. Leave Mary. This doesn’t seem like a respectable decision. In fact, it seems like a cowardly one. But, during that time, it was shameful for a woman to be pregnant and not married, an abomination almost. The woman would be shunned from the community and would have nowhere to go if something happened to Joseph. At least by letting Mary go, she would be protected and cared for by her family. And, that is what Joseph wanted.

But an angel visited Joseph, explained to him what was going on, and told him to go back and get Mary and raise the son as his own, for that little baby was special. And, maybe, that’s what happened with Nkosi’s

adopted mom. An angel visited her and told her to go and get that little baby and raise him as her own, for he was special.

SANKOFA

It takes a strong and loving person to raise someone else's child. In the history of many families, individuals have often taken on the role of parenting other relatives' children due to a number of circumstances. Whatever the case may be, these individuals stepped up to the plate and took on the role of parent to ensure that the child was raised in a stable environment.

This often is kept a secret but from our biblical narrative we can see how this is what Joseph did. As such, it should encourage us to acknowledge our history, our story, and not seek to hide it. It's okay to have hesitation around acknowledging it, but this is where angels and the Holy Spirit's comfort give us the courage necessary for that moment.

REAL TALK-FAITH WALK

Has there ever been a time where someone withheld important information from you? Information so important that it altered your life?

1. How did you find out?
2. How did that feel?
3. How did you react once you found out the truth?

The way you felt is probably the same way Joseph felt when he found out Mary was pregnant. He felt duped, like someone was pranking him. Joseph probably felt lied to, like the family withheld a big secret from him. Do you think it would have been better for Mary to lie and pretend the baby was Joseph's since they were already engaged and soon to be married?

1. Should Gail Johnson, Nkosi's adopted mom, have kept his HIV-positive status a secret, so he could attend school?
2. What was the outcome of both these women (Mary and Ms. Gail) being honest?
3. What was the benefit of Joseph sticking around?

SUMMARY

Sometimes in life, we do not always understand the decisions adults make for and about us. Perhaps, their decision to walk away is because they feel you would be better without them. Perhaps adults send or take you to live with someone else, because this other home may have the resources you need to help you achieve your greatness. No matter what the circumstances, God has called you before you were born to make a difference in the world, even if the difference is only in your family. So, cut adults some slack! They are doing the best they can.

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Dear God, thank you. Thank you for making ways and providing resources. Thank you for the adults you have placed in my life to help me achieve my greatness. God, I ask that you continue to help them do the best they can to raise me, take care of me, and nurture my gifts. And even if I don't like the situation, keep me safe and protected, so I can still come out on top. This is my prayer in Jesus' name. AMEN!