

Wednesday, February 17

Ash Wednesday

Today's Reading: Matthew Chapter 1

Today's Devotional Message is by Pastor David Rispoli

*"A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:
2Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, 3Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram..."* Matthew 1:1-3

I remember as a young boy picking up the Bible and beginning to read the above verses. We had a King James Version of the scriptures in our home. The King James Version of the Bible says the exact same thing as the above version only in Old English language. The version that I read said, Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, Jacob begat Judah and so on and so on. I had no clue what begat meant. I remember asking my Mom and she did not know either. And why was God starting the first book of the New Testament with this long list of boring names? Right from the start I was confused by my reading of the scriptures. Subsequently, I put them down and did not return to them for several years.

I eventually learned what begat means and I also learned that there were more readable versions of the scriptures. I learned that this long list of "boring" names were actually Jesus' relatives. The reason that God included them was to let us know that Jesus was born into a real family at a certain time in history. Each one of the names in this list carries a story of brokenness and redemption. Not perfect people, but chosen people. Just like you and me.

I am so glad that God brought me back to the scriptures. Today, God has brought you to the scriptures. Make a commitment that you are going to read them every day during this Lenten journey. Don't get discouraged if you read something that you do not totally understand. Lent has traditionally been a season of spiritual renewal and repentance. It is our hope that these daily devotions, the daily reading of scripture, and your commitment may produce one of the most spiritually significant seasons of your life.

Prayer: Dear God, Thank you for your Word and the opportunity to draw close to you this Lenten Season. Please use these devotions and this Matthew reading plan to stir up a passion for you and your word in my life. Thank you that your story begins with broken and ordinary people, just like me. In Jesus Name, Amen.