



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith and Our Imperfection!

Genesis 38:1-30

Message #39 of 50 – S942

Sermon given on April 25, 2021

@ Calvary Chapel French Valley, Murrieta, CA



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Faith and Our Imperfection!

Genesis 38:1-30

Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 38**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- Is there anyone who is perfect here?
- If yes, can you provide three witnesses who would testify to your perfection?
- None of us are perfect, right?
- And that's okay, right? God doesn't mind that we are not perfect, right? God knows we are only human, right?
- This is what Jesus said **Matthew 5:48**

Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

- Listen, as one imperfect person speaking to other imperfect people, I want this to mean something other than what it does – but it doesn't
- In this text we are going to look at an imperfect man and his imperfect family and the dysfunction that results
- But we are also going to see God's grace
- Main theme of this message:

God does not need perfection in humans to accomplish His perfect will.

- Let's pray and ask God to open our imperfect hearts with His perfect Word that we might be perfected, even if just a little this morning
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Faith and Our Imperfection!**
- Genesis 37 ended with Joseph being sold by his brothers into slavery in Egypt
- **Genesis 38:1**
- It was Judah who came up with the idea of selling Joseph into slavery rather than killing him
- Jacob, his father is distraught – may be why Judah moves away
- Develops a friendship with Hirah – Adullamite = Canaanite
- Hirah represents the pagan world around him

- We can't say with certainty how much influence he had on Judah, but he certainly did not encourage Judah to seek God
- The Bible is clear that we need to be careful about who we forge close relationships with **1 Corinthians 15:33**

Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

- If you think you are the exception to that rule – congratulations – you have been deceived

- **Genesis 38:2**

- While hanging out with Hirah, a Canaanite cutie catches Judah's eye
- Both Abraham and Isaac insisted that their sons not marry Canaanite women – seems Jacob broke with that tradition
- 'went in to her' is a euphemism for having sex with her
- Interestingly, she is never named – simply 'the daughter of Shua'

- **Genesis 38:3-6**

- Judah finds a Canaanite cutie for his oldest son
- Notice, she is named – important later

- **Genesis 38:7**

- This is the first reference to an individual person killed by God
- Depending on how 'woke' you are will determine how offensive that sounds to you
- Some question God's right to end someone's life
- The Bible describes Er as 'wicked' = morally evil
- It also describes God as perfectly just – He always does what is right

Deuteronomy 32:4

He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.

- The problem with the social justice movement that is popular with our culture is they want justice without God and His Word
- That means they believe you can achieve justice apart from truth
- The result of that mentality will be increasing injustice

- **Genesis 38:8**

- This might seem weird to us, but it was culturally normal and became a part of the laws Moses gave to the Hebrew people
- Onan was to take Tamar as wife and give her at least one son
- That son would be treated as if Er had fathered him
- He would receive his father's inheritance

- Unfortunately, Onan looked at things differently
 - With Er dead and Tamar childless, Onan was set to receive a much larger inheritance
 - **Genesis 38:9-10**
 - ‘he emitted on the ground. – not once or twice but every time.
 - Onan was taking advantage of Tamar for his own gratification while greedily disrespecting his father and despising his dead brother.
 - **Genesis 38:11**
 - It is hard to find anything nice to say about Judah’s parenting skills
 - Two of his sons are so bad that God kills them Himself
 - Judah seems to connect the death of his sons to Tamar – maybe she is the problem – She is a problem – but she is not the problem
 - **Genesis 38:12-16**
 - Culturally, there was nothing wrong with Judah hooking up with a harlot – female prostitute – his wife was dead
 - But, she wasn’t his wife – God calls that sexual immorality = sin
 - Just because 99% of our culture says something is okay, if God says it isn’t – it isn’t – period!
 - Even worse, she is his daughter-in-law – though he doesn’t know that
 - **Genesis 38:17-19**
 - She got pregnant – that was God’s providence – He is doing something
 - **Genesis 38:20-24**
 - That sounds a bit extreme
 - **Genesis 38:25-26**
 - Judah doesn’t deny it – takes responsibility
 - Because she is carrying his child, Judah takes her as his wife
 - But he never sleeps with her again
 - Judah made choices that led to these consequences **Preacher’s**
- Commentary**
- “Man is free to make his choices, but he is not free to determine the consequences of his choices.”**
- At least Judah appears to be owning his consequences

- Some people make poor choices and then do everything they can to escape the consequences including make more poor choices that lead to more consequences
- **Genesis 38:27-30**
- Judah was imperfect – about the only good thing he does in this chapter is take responsibility for getting Tamar pregnant
- Does anything good come out of this chapter?
- Turn to **Matthew 1**
- Surprisingly, yes! But not for quite some time
- The Gospel of Matthew begins with a genealogy
- **Matthew 1:2-4**
- It is interesting to note that there are five women mentioned in this genealogy
- Tamar who acted like a harlot to deceive Judah
- **Matthew 1:5-6a**
- Rahab was a harlot in the city of Jericho
- Ruth was the most noble of the first four – though she was from Moab – descendants of the incestuous relationship between Abraham’s nephew Lot and one of Lot’s daughters
- **Matthew 1:6b**
- Solomon’s mother is not named in this genealogy, but we know her as Bathsheba
- Had an adulterous relationship with King David
- Jump down to verse 16
- **Matthew 1:16**
- Mary was the mother of Jesus – though she probably never convinced everyone that she got pregnant without ever being with a man
- Jesus’ genealogy is filled with imperfect people – men and women
- Started this message saying:
God does not need perfection in humans to accomplish His perfect will.
- God brought the Savior of the world into this world through a long list of imperfect men and women
- Jesus is the only perfect man who has ever lived
- In an effort to keep this message a little shorter than last week’s – I want to close with two things

- First – **Never be satisfied with your own imperfection!**
- As humans with a sin nature, we are imperfect
- And before you rush up here to explain to me what the word ‘perfect’ means, ask yourself, ‘Am I living up to God’s definition of perfection?’
- The answer is probably, ‘no!’
- That can be frustrating and discouraging **Romans 8:1**
There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
- God does not condemn His people for being imperfect
- That doesn’t mean it is okay if you blow it – God expects you to be holy
- But if you are not, He has given us the gift of repentance **1 John 1:9**
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- When we make a bad choice, and come to Him humbly in repentance, He washes us off, sets us on our feet, and tells us to try again
- But our goal must always be perfection, nothing less, not ever
- If you set a goal lower than perfection, you may achieve that and stop trying - **Never be satisfied with your own imperfection!**
- Second – **Be patient with other people’s imperfections!**
- We have this belief, whether we say it or not – ‘My life would be perfect if people would stop being imperfect around me!’
- What is the problem with that belief – not possible
- God created us to be in community with other people – He commanded it **Hebrews 10:24-25**
And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.
- Being in community is one of the things God uses to perfect us
- If we are in Christ, we are all being perfected
- In different ways and at different rates
- God is amazingly patient with us in our imperfections
- He calls us to be patient with ones He is perfecting around us
- God is at work in us **Philippians 2:13**
...for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

- If you are in Christ, you are not perfect, but you are being perfected

Philippians 1:6

... being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ...

- And not just you, but everyone around you too
- And to that I say, 'Praise God!'
- Prayer!