

I Never Saw That Coming

Christmas is a time of great expectations and great disappointments as well.

- Have you ever gotten something for Christmas that was a wonderful surprise?
- Have you ever gotten something for Christmas that was unexpected and unwanted?

Some Christmases are so predictable and normal. Other Christmases may be so unforeseen they leave you shaking your head and saying, “I never saw that coming.”

I am a planner and I like things to go according to my plans. I like to know what to expect. I’m not that fond of plans changing suddenly and I don’t like to be caught off guard by something that I didn’t see coming. Maybe some of you are that way too, or you may be the type of person who just goes with the flow. But no matter which one you are, I am sure that in your life good times, bad times, blessings, joy, love, as well as tragedies, loss, hurt, problems, and trials, have often left you bewildered. Shaking your head in disbelief and thinking, “Wow, I never saw that one coming.”

As a believer in Christ Jesus and submitting to His leadership in my life, I have learned the hard way that that God is not limited to Scott’s plans or Scott’s way of doing things. Often the goodness of God overtakes me when I didn’t see that coming either. Many times, God’s moving in my life has been totally UNFORESEEN. Good or bad even though it was unforeseen to me, God knew what He was doing, and God had a plan for my life.

It took me a while to realize that life happens in the interruptions, the unexpected and the unforeseen.

“The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one’s ‘own,’ or ‘real’ life. The truth is of course that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one’s real life — the life God is sending one day by day.”
C.S. Lewis

This is what I love about the Christmas story. It’s the story of God doing things his way and according to his plan, even if it wasn’t how others saw it going.

In real time the events that transpired on that first Christmas were totally unforeseen by those involved.

- Did God know what He was doing? Yes.
- Did he foretell of the Christmas story and the coming of the Messiah in His word and prophecies? Sure.
- Did some wise men from the east follow sign in the heavens to the new born King? Yes, they did. But the average person was, at least at first, taken a bit off guard with God’s unforeseen way of bringing a savior into the world. For most of them it was an... Unforeseen Christmas.

Unforeseen Christmas

- The forerunner of the Messiah was John the Baptist, born to a barren couple, Zacharia and Elizabeth in the later years of their lives, in a long-awaited answer to their prayers. *Didn’t see that coming.*

In week 4 we’ll be encouraged looking at this story in more detail, as we prepare to 2019. We will see how your perspective changes **“When Your Hope is Renewed”**.

- Israel was looking for a man of war and a conquering king Messiah to save them. God didn’t send a warrior or an army, He sent a one person, His son instead. *Didn’t see that coming.*
- Jesus didn’t show up as a powerful ruler, earthly King, or political leader, but as a new born baby. *Didn’t see that coming.*

So, what do we do **“When Your King Looks Like a Child”**. We’ll talk about that in week 3.

- Well if Jesus was coming as a baby, he should at least be born in a palace under the finest of care, protected by a powerful family, parents of clout and influence. No, He was born to a 16-year-old girl, a virgin with a pure heart. *Didn’t see that coming.*

God’s plan totally interrupted Mary’s plans for her life. Full of hope, with an upcoming marriage, she finds herself pregnant, and her only explanation is that it was a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit of God.

Not only that but an angel told her the child was the son of God and savior of the world that she would be responsible for. to raise and care for. *Didn’t see that coming.* What do you do **“When Your Assignment is Beyond Your Ability”**? We’ll see week.

- Not only was Jesus not born in a palace, it wasn’t even a house. Even the local Inns had no room for Him, Jesus was born in a barn, dirty, smelly, and full of animal activity. *Didn’t see that coming.*
- His birth was not heralded to the elite and important people in the world, but Angels announced His birth to lowly and probably lonely Shepherds. *Didn’t see that coming.*
- Wise men followed a star from the east to bring gifts and worship Him. *Didn’t see that coming.*

- What about Joseph? How do you think he felt when his fiancée told him she was pregnant, and he knew it wasn't his?
Didn't see that coming.

Let's talk about this more in week 5, in what to do **"When Your World Suddenly Falls Apart."**

Next Life Transformation Step: This Christmas season as I hear and see the Christmas story, I will pay attention and be more aware of all the unforeseen moments within the story.

Today I want to talk to you about the unforeseen events prior to the first Christmas that you would think would have caused Christmas to never come about. Things that could have actually prevented Jesus' birth.

The Unforeseen Lineage of Christ Jesus

Most people begin reading the Christmas story in *Matthew 1:18- This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.*

But Matthew 1 actually begins with the genealogy of Jesus.

Matthew 1:1 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Matthew list the people who the seed line of Jesus passed through from Abraham to Jesus the Messiah.

Matthew 1:17 Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

You would think that the ancestors of Christ Jesus, the Royal Line of King David were all upright and fine citizens, godly in every way. But Jesus' family tree has about as many broken and damaged limbs on it as does mine and yours.

We all have those certain relatives that did things that were questionable and those that broke the rules and got into trouble. The family of Jesus provides us with several unforeseen moments!

Matthew 1:2-3 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, 3 Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Abraham, 91 years old, and his wife Sarah, 66, were promised a son. At 100 and 91 Isaac was born.

Isaac had no wife. God brought him a Mesopotamian wife, named Rebekah. (she watered 10 Camels.)

Jacob and Esau – Time doesn't permit to go into their deceit, lies, cover ups, and birthright feuding's.

Jacob Loved Rachel but after seven years of working for her hand in marriage, Laban gave him Leah. Then you have "The Great Maternity Race" resulting in 12 sons, the twelve tribes of Israel.

Judah is the Seed line of Christ! Leah was his mother not Rachel.

Judah and Tamar

Genesis 38:25 -26 As she was being brought out, she sent a message to her father-in-law. "I am pregnant by the man who owns these," she said. And she added, "See if you recognize whose seal and cord and staff these are." ²⁶ Judah recognized them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I wouldn't give her to my son Shelah." And he did not sleep with her again.

Matthew 1:3 Judah the father of Perez and Zerah (twins), whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron,

The Unforeseen Saving of God's People

- **Joseph (Rachel's son) saved Judah and his entire family.**
*Genesis 50:19-20 But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?
²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (The twelve tribes of Israel including Judah).*
- **Noah – Genesis 5** (Speaking of saving a seed line, we must give a shout out to Noah obeying God to build the ark and save his family from the flood. Abraham descended from Noah's son Shem.)
- **Moses – (Exodus)** God uses Moses a descendant of the tribe of Levi to deliver the children of Israel from bondage Egypt and bring the back the promised land.

Boaz and Ruth *Matthew 1:5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab (Rahab was the harlot described in the book of Joshua as protecting and rescuing the Israelite spies in the city of Jericho. She acted upon faith, repented and changed her lifestyle), Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, 6a and Jesse the father of King David...*

But Boaz had no wife. God sent a Moabite woman, Ruth, via Naomi. Obed was their son.

King David Jesse's sons. David was chosen by Samuel. Later Saul would try to kill David.

We don't even have time to talk about all the trouble David got into!

Solomon The seed line of Christ passed from David to Solomon. His mother was referred to as the wife of Uriah – Bathsheba!

Joseph of Nazareth was Jesus' legal right to the throne of David. *Matthew 1:16 ...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.*

But Joseph was a descendant of Jeconiah and Jeconiah (**Matthew 1:12**) was cursed, because of his wickedness, so that none of his descendants would prosper sitting on the throne of David.

Jeremiah 22:30 This is what the Lord says: "Record this man (Jeconiah) as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah.

- If Jesus has been Joseph's natural son, he would have been cursed.
- But Mary's, Jesus' only human parent, lineage was not affected by the curse.

The genealogy of Jesus was definitely full of "Didn't see that coming!" moments.

Unforeseen things happened that would have made many of us give up on the whole process.

Next Life Transformation Step: Consider which of the above stories best reflect your story. Consider if you have thought, "I'm disqualified from being used by God". Don't believe that lie, walk forgiven and restored in Christ.

This Unforeseen Christmas Story Gives Me Hope

1. Hope in the Word of God and the story of our Savior Jesus the Messiah.

If you were making a story up, it would be much prettier than this. If you were fabricating the Christmas story, you would have never come up with such a mess.

"That is one of the reasons I believe in Christianity. It is a religion you could not have guessed." –C. S. Lewis in "Mere Christianity"

2. Hope because God uses broken and imperfect people.

No matter how broken my life is, no matter how broken your life is God always accomplished his purpose through us. We don't always walk a straight path from point A to point B. Sometimes our path is a very torturous path, as result of things we have done, or things done to us, but if we keep trying, keep following the leadership of Jesus we will get there.

Aren't the people described in this genealogy the type of people Jesus came to save?

Matthew 9:11-13 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

3. Hope for when the unforeseen hits my life, your life, we can always trust God to see us through. I may not like sudden or unexpected changes, but I can always trust God's plan.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

4. Hope as the Unforeseen Christmas story reminds us that Christianity is not as much about what we do as it is about what has been done for us.

That's the difference in religion and Christianity. Religion is about what we do, to attempt to find our way to God. Christianity is about what Jesus did for us on the cross to allow us access to God.

The coming of Jesus was unforeseen, but many recognized Him and followed Him. Others did not.

John 1:10-12 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Now that you have seen... and believed the Christmas story, won't you receive Christ Jesus today?

Life App Group and Family Devotional Application

1. Give an example if a good unforeseen Christmas of moment in your life.
2. Give an example of a bad unforeseen Christmas of moment in your life.
3. After looking at Jesus' family tree, do you not feel so bad about yours or your own life?
4. Why did Jesus come to the Earth? Did Jesus come for these types of broken people?
5. Does the lineage of Jesus give you hope for your life? Why?