

## Matthew's Scandalous Christmas

What's with the women in Jesus' family tree (Matthew 1)? There are the incestuous Tamar, Rahab the Canaanite harlot, Ruth the scheming Moabite, and the adulterous Bathsheba, all with not quite kosher sexual habits. However they lead us to Matthew's first "Christmas" and yet another scandal of an unmarried pregnant Jewish girl.

Today this would hardly be scandalous, but in a culture where chastity was a virtue rather than a social stigma, Mary's pregnancy would more than raise eye brows. But Matthew is quick to reveal the truth about this godly maiden, as incredible as it is. However, the questions surrounding Jesus' other female ancestors are left dangling. Why? Maybe it is because Matthew wants us to remember that God works through our failings. It is our flawed nature that causes his mercy and grace to shine so clearly. The scandals of our lives are what made Christmas necessary.