

Not so LITTLE WOMEN



Week 11: TAMAR Today's Verses:

GENESIS 38:25-26
GENESIS 38
MATTHEW 1:1-3

Read: GENESIS 38:25-26

Ask/Discuss:

- What did you learn about God in this passage/message?
- What did you learn about yourself/humanity in this passage/message?
- How can we better reflect Jesus together as we live in diverse community?
- How do you feel led to foster healthy, Gospel-centered community this week?

Sermon Recap: TAMAR

We often prefer to learn lessons from people we like or have an affinity toward. We do not often think that we can learn lessons from those whose lives or choices are “questionable.” All too often, we want to write off the ugly parts of the Bible and only focus on the happy places...or reframe the narratives so people do not look as bad as they actually are. The Bible is not a book that shows us superhuman heroes; it shows us the failures of all humankind and how we, as modern readers, are complicit because we do the exact same things. The Bible’s thrust is to show us that it is only Jesus who can save us, because only He is truly good.

- **Who is Tamar?** – Tamar is an ancestor in the lineage of Jesus.
- **What is Tamar’s story?** – Tamar’s story is convoluted with heartache, pain, deception, and redemption.

Judah, a descendant of Abraham, has a son named Er. Er marries Tamar, but he is so wicked that God removes him soon after. Judah’s second son, Onan, then takes Tamar in, but God also removes Onan because he is also wicked. While Judah should have given Tamar to his third son, Shela, he sent Tamar (childless) back to live with her father, as he was worried about what might befall his son. Judah makes promises to Tamar to not leave her as a widow, but most likely, those are lies.

When Tamar realizes her position, she hatches a plan to ensure her own survival. Her plan is not a godly one, but in her desperation, she dresses up like a prostitute and becomes pregnant by her father-in-law, Judah. When Judah finds out she is pregnant (not realizing he is the father), he nearly has her killed...until Tamar reveals the truth. In that harrowing moment, God uses the truth to bring about repentance. You see Judah confess his sin, take responsibility, and repent.

1. **Tamar teaches us to take hold of justice.**

Tamar forces Judah to consider, “On whose side is justice?” After Judah looks at what he has done to Tamar and hears her demands, he says, “*She has justice on her side.*” Judah does not say she *is* righteous (like she is guiltless); he instead says, “She is more righteous than me.” He essentially means, “She is guilty, but I am more guilty”; he doesn’t mitigate her sin.

2. **Tamar points us to Jesus** – This story shows that there is room in God’s family for the worst of us, and that no mistake is irredeemable. Tamar will ultimately give birth to twin sons, one of whom (Perez) will be the ancestor to King David and Jesus. Tamar’s story is not an example of morality; rather, it is about acknowledging our own sin before God and receiving His saving grace. We are made righteous through the precious blood of Jesus and not our own.