

FAMILY HISTORY DISCUSSION GROUP

Where Do We Begin?

Start Small, Think Big

Matt Tolman

matttolman.com

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It's More Than Research

Research

Gathering evidence, deciphering historical records, and building accuracy step-by-step.

Preservation

Safeguarding family photographs, physical documents, diaries, and precious heirlooms.

Storytelling

Weaving names and dry dates into vivid narratives that reflect real lived experiences.

DNA

Mapping biological connections, solving brick walls, and verifying brick-and-mortar archives.

Connecting

Locating living relatives and long-lost cousins you never knew existed until now.

Sharing

Synthesizing research to leave a secure and tangible legacy for your future descendants.

*You don't have to do it all at once. **Start Small, Think Big.***

A REAL-LIFE STORY

DNA Changed Everything

Through simple DNA matching on Ancestry, Matt located the biological parents of his wife, Brenda. Adopted at birth, Brenda had spent decades wondering about her biological family and origins.

"A simple DNA test can answer questions a lifetime of traditional searching couldn't."

Two Tools. One Mission.

Feature	FamilySearch	Ancestry
Cost	Free • Completely free forever	Paid standard subscription (Free LDS access)
Tree Type	Collaborative (One single global world tree)	Private & Personalized (Individual trees)
Record Depth	Deep international records, full-text engine	Heavy newspapers, direct DNA matching catalog
Ease of Use	Moderate (Steeper learning curve for edits)	Highly intuitive (Excellent for beginners)
DNA Tool	No native test or DNA match service	Industry-leading database (Add-on kit)
Best For	Connecting to collaborative global research	Building your own private, customized stories



Free Access Benefit: As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, you have free premium access to Ancestry's standard features—a massive built-in cost benefit that most beginners don't realize they have!

Start Here: Pick Your Level

LEVEL 1

Write It Down

Note full names, birth dates, and locations for parents and grandparents. Leave gaps where you aren't sure.

LEVEL 2

Go Digital

Set up a free digital profile on FamilySearch.org and input your basic generational names from Level 1.

LEVEL 3

Explore Connections

Look at your digital tree. See if other researchers or distant cousins have already populated branches.

LEVEL 4

Identify Objective

Define your primary goal. What's the one most critical story or mystery you want to resolve or preserve?

Where We're Headed



 *Reminder: Class schedules are shaped entirely by your questions. Reach out to Matt anytime to make requests!*

A Few Places to Start

FamilySearch.org

familysearch.org 

Completely free, massive global collaborative tree backed by historical microfilm digitization. Always free.

Ancestry.com

ancestry.com 

Premium personal tree builder with industry-leading DNA database. (Free account access details coming next session).

MattTolman.com

matttolman.com 

Central class hub. Digital presentation handouts, notes, and session guides will be posted regularly.

MyFamilyQuest.com

myfamilyquest.com 

Matt's custom family site. Built as an dynamic example of what's possible when we apply "Start Small, Think Big" principles.

See You Next Month

 3rd Thursday at 6:00 PM (Same link!)

 Session video link shared soon

 Have ideas? Message me anytime!

Start Small,
Think Big.

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