

FAITHFUL PARENTING
Home for Christmas #3
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Woodland Church
Sunday, December 13, 2020

Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet: "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.' " When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. (Matthew 1:19–25a)

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. (Luke 2:1-5, NLT)

And Joseph named him Jesus. (Matthew 1:25b)

1. TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO LISTEN TO THE LORD.

"So the LORD called a third time, and once more Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am. Did you call me?" Then Eli realized it was the LORD who was calling the boy. So he said to Samuel, "Go and lie down again, and if someone calls again, say, 'Speak, LORD, your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went back to bed." (1 Samuel 3:8-9)

2. BUILD ONE ANOTHER UP.

“Christ died for us so that, whether we are dead or alive when he returns, we can live with him forever. So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:10–11)

3. LEARN TO TALK TO ONE ANOTHER.

“Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.” (Colossians 4:6)

4. BE BIBLICAL BUT BE FLEXIBLE.

*“I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn’t take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I’ve become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life.”
(1 Corinthians 9:19–22, Message)*

5. PROTECT, GUIDE AND STEP ASIDE.

“The LORD your God is going ahead of you. He will fight for you, just as you saw him do in Egypt. And you saw how the LORD your God cared for you all along the way as you traveled through the wilderness, just as a father cares for his child. Now he has brought you to this place.” (Deuteronomy 1:30–31)

6. BE WILLING TO MAKE PAINFUL DECISIONS.

“After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,” the angel said. “Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”” (Matthew 2:13, NLT)

GROWTHWORK

1. If you're dreaming of the day you become a father or mother, prepare and seek counsel.
2. If you're parenting days are over be a mentor.
3. Be diligent about being a father or mother.
4. Be a father or mother who listens to the Word of the LORD.