

ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY

MEET ME AT THE MANGER PART 1

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Wednesday, November 28, 2018

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. 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. And Joseph named him Jesus.
(Matthew 1:18-25, NLT)

1. Joseph was chosen.

... “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.”
(Matthew 1:20-21, NLT)

“This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham.” (Matthew 1:1, NLT)

A. We are children of God.

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs...” (Romans 8:14-17, NLT)

“...for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9, NLT)

God has chosen us with a purpose.

So that “you can show others the goodness of God”

As children of God, we are to be imitators of God.

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.” (Ephesians 5:1, NLT)

“Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.” (Philippians 2:14-15, NLT)

2. Joseph was righteous.

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” (1 Peter 14-16, NLT)

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother.” (Ephesians 6:1-2, NLT)

3. Joseph was obedient.

1. Joseph was obedient to the angel in his first dream by marrying Mary and naming Jesus.
2. Joseph was obedient to the Roman decree by traveling to Bethlehem, his birthplace, for the census, even with Mary being as pregnant as she was.
3. Joseph was obedient to the angel in his second dream telling him to flee to Egypt when Herod sought to kill Jesus; in a third dream to return to Israel; and finally in a fourth dream to not to go back to Judea but rather to Galilee in a town called Nazareth, which fulfilled what the prophets had said: “He will be called a Nazarene.”
4. Joseph was also obedient to the Law of Moses having Jesus circumcised and presented to the temple as a baby with the required offerings.

“When Jesus’ parents had fulfilled all the requirements of the law of the Lord, they returned home to Nazareth in Galilee.” (Luke 2:39, NLT)

“Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival.” (Luke 2:41, NLT)

Joseph was more than a believer, he was a doer. It was one thing to know to go to Jerusalem. It was quite another to make the five-day walk of around 78 miles through the wilderness.

James is clear on this.

“But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.” (James 1:22, NLT)

“Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.” (James 4:17, NLT)

After all, if God has chosen us (and He has), called us to a purpose (and He has), shouldn’t He expect that we be obedient?

And it is good to know that to whom God calls, He also equips. Each of us has been given spiritual gifts as Christians to fulfill the ministry to which God has called us.

“If you’re not making mistakes, you’re not trying.”

“The best way to be, is to do.”

-Wynton Marsalis

An object at rest is said to have potential energy.

An object in motion is said to have kinetic energy.

An object at rest tends to *stay* at rest

An object in motion tends to *stay* in motion.

4. Joseph was remembered.

Though no words of Joseph are mentioned in scripture, he still referenced outside of the Christmas narrative.

“He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?” Then they scoffed, “He’s just the carpenter’s son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?”

(Matthew 13:54-56, NLT)

John calls Jesus “Son of God” in his gospel to emphasize His divinity. Luke calls Jesus “Son of Man” to refer to His humanity. But unlike other men in the bible, Jesus is not called “Son of Joseph”. In fact, when Luke begins his genealogy of Jesus, he is careful in chapter 3:23 to write:

“Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph,…” (Luke 3:23, NLT)

GROWTHWORK

1. Recognize that you are chosen by God for a purpose.
2. Live a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled life.
3. Be a doer of God's Word and not a hearer only.
4. Remember that God has equipped you to do everything He asks with excellence.
5. Make Jesus known by being known as a follower of Jesus.