

Jesus The Messiah

Matthew 1:18-25

1. His Purpose: Salvation for Humanity vs. 18-21

With Joseph struggling with the right response towards Mary, the one he was betrothed to, the angel brought clarity to God's purpose. Why the struggle? Joseph was faithful to the betrothal customs of abstaining from sexual relations until the formal marriage ceremony took place and yet Mary was around four months pregnant.

Through the virgin birth, God has come to be with his people to fulfill the deepest meaning of the covenant (Lev. 26:12). In Jesus, God is now with his people personally as their Savior; paying the price so that people can be redeemed from their sin.

Reflection:

Joy is not joy unless it is connected to someone who is glad to see you, who accepts you, who loves you. "I experience absolute joy in your presence; you always give me sheer delight." (Psalm 16:11) When God's face shines on the believer, he or she experiences absolute Joy that pushes out all the fear, and hopelessness, and troubles. What aspects of the relationship that you have with God that allows you to choose to live out joy?

2. His Confirmation: Jesus is the Promised One vs. 22-23

The angel brought clarity to Joseph that what was happening to Mary is the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies (Isaiah 7:14); revealing that this virgin birth confirms that Jesus is the promised one.

Reflection:

The virgin birth signals Jesus' true humanity without inherited sin:

As Jesus being fully human, he can empathize deeply with our human experiences and temptations (Heb. 4:15-16) and can provide an example of how to overcome temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). With Jesus being fully God, he lives a life of sinlessness, and His divine nature is so powerful that He could not be overcome by any temptation to his human nature (1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21; Hebrews 4:15). As a result, Jesus is enabled to be the unique, human, sinless sacrifice for our sin. *Think about these truths and how God becoming one of us has transformed our lives.*

3. Our Response: Trust Him vs. 24-25

Joseph chose to trust God's message given by the angel through obeying God's commands and did everything he could to reveal that this was truly the Messiah; he remained abstinent until after the child was born and chose to be the father by naming him Jesus. Why? Because God's plan saves.

What is our response to Jesus? Placing our trust in Him through living lives of obedience. Why? Because of God's grace, Jesus came into this world to save us from our sin, to reconcile us to Himself, so that we can live a new life with Him.

Reflection:

This special revelation of God, at this paramount crossroad of history, gives Joseph the guidance and stability that enables him to help carry out God's plan of salvation; even when he will become subject to ridicule and false accusations of moral failure. *We too will face times of difficulty when living God's way. What truths from God's Word do we need to focus on so that we will persevere and live for the Lord when ridicule becomes a challenge?*