

the TAKE HOME 12.14.14

Sermon Notes

Matthew 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"--which means, "God with us." ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Questions for review and reflection

- This is the only account of this event in the Bible. Why was it important for God to record it for us?
- How did "betrothal" in the first century compare to "engagement" today?
- What does "Jesus" mean?
- What other names are given to Jesus in this passage? What is their significance?
- What is your view of God speaking through dreams?
- How is Joseph a model for us? He was a "righteous man." In what ways?
- Has God forgiven your sins?

Prayer prompts

- **Adoration:** Sovereign Lord, you have taken the initiative to save us from our sins. You are a fountain of grace overflowing and we are the recipients of your blessing.
- **Confession:** Forgive me for my unrighteousness. In some ways, I am not like Joseph, a "righteous man."
- **Thanksgiving:** thank you for sending Jesus to live a perfect life which we should have lived, and to die a sinner's death which we should have died.
- **Supplication:** help me to tell others the good news that a savior has been born; help me to worship you this Christmas and not be materialistic; help me to rest in joy and not frantically race around during the "celebration" of Advent.

List some things you are learning about the culture of the day.

When this story is told through the perspective of Joseph, what emotions do you feel? Put yourself in his place.

Why was it important that Joseph name Jesus?

What is the main teaching of this rich passage? How do we know?