

0Remnant Life Church
November 30, 2025
Joseph – The Quiet Hero
Matthew 1:18-25

This morning, I want to look briefly at the man who was the focus of our Advent reading

- In biblical times your family history was of great importance
- Because it served to identify and confirm who you were
- Regarding Jesus' earthly identity, His full name was not Jesus Christ
 - Christ is not a name it is a title
 - From the Greek *Christos* meaning Messiah or Savior
 - In His time on earth He was called – in the English translation - Jesus of Nazareth or Jesus son of Joseph
 - In the Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, His name is Yeshua
 - It was later, after His resurrection and ascension to heaven, He is called the Christ
- Full names always included the father's name
 - Yeshua bar Joseph
 - Bar is translated as *son of*
- The importance of His heritage is why Jesus' family history is reported in 2 of the first 3 gospels

The two lineages of Jesus given in Matthew and Luke trace both Joseph and Mary's line

- Matthew's account, to be read by a primarily Jewish audience, begins with Abraham (the father of the Jewish nation) and comes down to Jesus through David's son Solomon – that is the line of Joseph's family history
 - It is also an unusual one in that it contains the names of 4 women
 - Mid-eastern genealogical lists rarely ever did this
 - And strangely enough, they were all women with less-than reputable backgrounds
 - Tamar and Rahab were both former prostitutes (**Matt 1:3,5**)
 - Ruth was a former pagan (**Matt 1:5**)
 - Bathsheba was a former adulteress (**Matt 1:6**)
 - But that is who those women used to be before the encountered the redemptive power of God's grace
 - And before they became a part of God's plan of salvation for all of humanity
 - Tamar, Ruth, and Rahab became the grandmothers (several times over) of a shepherd boy who would make Israel great, King David
 - And Bathsheba became the mother of perhaps Israel's most revered king, because he was the one who would build the great temple of God, Solomon
- The genealogy presented by Luke, written for a more Gentile audience, traces Jesus' line back to Adam through David's son Nathan

- In doing this Luke presents 74 names
- It is the line of Mary through her father, Hali
- The importance of both Joseph and Mary being of the Davidic line is to defend the prophesy of Jesus as the heir of David
- **Jer. 23:5** – 600 years before the birth of Jesus

We know little about the life of Joseph:

- A man very likely in his late 20's or early 30's
- He was honorable, kind, and obedient to the leading and direction of God

But Joseph had to deal with something no one else had ever dealt with before, nor would ever deal with again

- And it was all on the word of an angel in a dream

READ - Matt 1:18-25

1. We see in this account that Joseph was confronted with the impossible – his young wife-to-be is pregnant, but it is not through a man but through the Holy Spirit (**Mat 1:20-21**)
 2. Following Jesus' birth, he then has to deal with a difficult and hazardous journey
 - a. This is an 80-mile trek taking 7 to 10 days fleeing to Egypt with his new wife and infant son (**Mat 2:13-15**)
 - b. All of this under the stress of knowing that Herod has proclaimed an edict that every male child under the age of 2 was to be put to death (**Matt 2:16**)
 3. And all of this required great courage
 - a. Remarkable courage that could only be provided by God
 - b. It is not a spoken or declared courage
 - c. Not one word spoken by Joseph is recorded in the Scriptures
 - d. It is a courage of action born of and supported by faith
- What do we learn of courage from the story of Joseph?
 1. God gives courage to ordinary people
 - a. I look at the people of the Bible as superheroes of faith
 - i. Never making a mistake
 - ii. Always prepared and ready to serve God no matter the situation
 - b. The fact is they were normal, flawed, ordinary people until God entered the picture
 - i. Moses and David were shepherds
 1. Moses was guilty of murder and David of adultery
 - ii. Abraham and his family made idols
 - iii. Elisha was a farmer
 - iv. Andrew, Peter, James, and John were fishermen
 - v. Paul was a tent-maker and bounty hunter
 - vi. Adam was just a pile of dirt
 - c. God was not seeking a superhuman man to care for His Son
 - i. He simply needed to be a man of integrity, kindness, and willing to obey God no matter the circumstances or what others may say or think

ii. But that is a man of unusual courage

2. God does extraordinary things through ordinary people

- a. **I Cor 1:26-29** - *Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.*
- b. How did God, maker and ruler of the Universe, bring His one and only Son into the world?
 - i. On billowing clouds with thunder and lightning accompanied by legions of angels blowing trumpets and shouting His arrival?
 - ii. No – it was on a quiet spring evening in a backwater town in Nazareth which itself was not a place of notoriety
 - 1. Remember what happened when Phillip told his brother Nathaniel that Jesus was from Nazareth?
 - 2. Nathaniel said, “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” **John 1:46**)
 - iii. God uses the simplest ways to proclaim the most profound truths because He wants everyone to understand His mercy, grace, and love
- c. Take advantage of this time of year to share the love of Jesus with someone in your life
- d. People will listen to this simple message of love more this time of year and are even more likely to come to church (invite for the 14th!)

3. God gives us courage to overcome our fears and doubts

- a. Do you think Joseph experienced some doubt after Mary broke the news to him?
- b. His first response would have likely been something like, “What in the world is going on here?”
 - i. He would have been filled with uncertainty
 - ii. In fact the only thing he did know for certain was that Mary was pregnant with a child that was not his
 - iii. Emotions would have been running wild
 - iv. But his character obviously reined his emotions in and did not allow them to dictate his response
 - v. Emotions are not bad; they were created in us by God
 - vi. But they were never intended to dominate and rule over us
- c. Joseph had many options he could have used and all of them would have been justified
- d. But only one was the right, best way to respond
 - i. Paul later wrote about how Joseph came to act in the way he did
 - ii. **Gal. 5:22-23** - *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.*

- e. This is the path that Joseph took and why he was called a righteous man

And so, like Joseph, God gives us courage to face the future

- Joseph was given a dream with very specific instructions (**Matt 1:20**)
- God does not always do this
 - i. Most often He speaks to our hearts through prayer
 - ii. He will speak through other people through wise counsel
 - iii. He will simply guide you through the circumstances
- In whatever way God chooses to speak to you your obedience is required just as it was of Joseph (**Matt 1:24**)
- Because no matter the circumstances we ALL have the same promises
 - **Heb 13:5** – *I will never leave you or forsake (abandon) you*
 - **Rom 8:31** – *If God is for us, who can be against us?*
 - That is why, Like Joseph, we should never fear the future!

Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, was a remarkable man who participated briefly, but powerfully in the birth of Jesus

- He demonstrated courage and integrity by how kindly and lovingly he treated Mary
- He demonstrated his obedience by doing what the angel told him to do and not do (divorce her)
- He demonstrated his godly resolve and love for Mary by doing what was necessary to care for and protect her

In Biblical times, the name Joseph was not an uncommon one

- In fact, there was another Joseph of note in the Bible
- The NT Joseph of Matthew and Luke can be compared to his OT namesake whose story you can read in the last 13 chapters of Genesis
- Because there were many similarities between these two men although they were separated by 1600 years
 - Both men had fathers named Jacob
 - Both demonstrated amazing maturity and faith in God
 - Both received and obeyed dreams given to them by God
 - Both found themselves in Egypt through circumstances outside of their control
 - One, the Joseph of Genesis, was a type or foreshadowing of Jesus who was yet to come
 - The Joseph of the NT, was selected to become the legal, earthly guardian of the Son of God

The Joseph we read of earlier this morning is only mentioned two other times in the Bible

- The first was when Jesus was 8 days old and, in accordance with the Mosaic law, was taken to be circumcised and presented to God in the temple (**Luke 2:21-24**)
- The second time when Jesus was a 12-year-old boy, the family had traveled to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover, and Jesus remained at the temple talking with the teachers when his family left to go back home (**Luke 2:41-50**)
- While we do not have a biblical record of it, Joseph likely never lived to see Jesus begin or fulfill His earthly ministry

- He certainly would have been with Mary as she traveled with Jesus
- He would have been noted in John's gospel account as being present at the crucifixion
- And if he had been still living, Jesus would not have asked John to care for his mother following His death. (John 19:26)
- And she certainly would not have lived with John for the remainder of her life (John 19:27)

Joseph was without question one of the heroes of the Bible – but he was a quiet one

- He didn't try and take the easy way out of a seemingly impossible situation
- He didn't try and use his position as Jesus' father for gain
- He didn't fall into sin
- He simply obeyed God and thought of his life, as demonstrated by his actions, in much the same way Mary did when she responded to Gabriel after he told her what would be happening,
- She said, *I am the Lord's servant, be it unto me as you have said.* (Luke 1:38)

As we enter into the Christmas season of 2025, may that be the prayer and the desire of each of our hearts, to live with the same heart as Joseph and Mary – *I am the Lord's servant, be it unto me as you have said.*