

Matthew 1-2, "Christmas: Silent Joseph"

↳ We started last time in our study of God's Great ADVENTure by taking a look at Mary and, today, we are going to move on from Mary to her husband, Joseph. The first word on Joseph is that he is silent in the Scriptures! What does he do besides stand silently behind Mary in the manger scene? In some ways, it's like he's the fifth wheel of the Christmas Story.

1. What do we know about Joe?

- ✓ We know he worked with his hands, blue collar guy. "Tekton" is what the Greek calls him, the word implies more than being a carpenter, it just simply means he built stuff from raw materials. The average raw material in the Middle East is not wood it was rock. So, Joseph could be called a stone mason as easily as he could be called a carpenter. We can know he was from Nazareth and was poor, just like Mary. We can also know that his lineage was under a curse, see Jeremiah 36:29-31. Given all that was against him spiritually, we can also know that Joe did pretty good for himself. He spends most of his life being a husband, father, manual laborer because that is what God called him to do, nothing at all wrong with it, it's just not spectacular. Not spectacular but consider the results.
- 1) He may have been low class financially, but he falls within the top 1% spiritually: He marries the virgin Mary.
- 2) He's the adopted father of Jesus.
- 3) Two of his other sons were spiritual heavy hitters. James becomes the first pastor of the first church ever and writes the New Testament book of James, his younger brother, Judas son of Joseph, authors the book of Jude.
- ✓ While Joe gets no speaking parts, his role has a lot of influence over us by way of his descendants.

2. Before all of this, Joe was faced with some hard decisions.

- ✓ "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit," Matthew 1:18. "Found," in other words it was obvious that she was pregnant. Almost equally unbelievable was her explanation for all of it: She said that she hadn't cheated on Joseph, but that God had miraculously impregnated her. There are two possibilities in his opinion number 1: She's an adulterer or number 2 she's crazy. So, Joe plans to treat her like she is crazy, "And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly," Matthew 1:19, she's a little touched in the head and he feels sorry for her.

3. Actions speak louder than words, what can we learn from Joseph's actions?

- 1) He was quick to think and pray and slow speak and react. This is Guaranteed to improve your holiday experience! He considered all that was before him, he slept on it, a lot better than a lot of us would have done! Your fiancé is found to be unfaithful, and you handle it with a cool head? He took what knew to God and God made his path straight for him. How great a difference it would make in our lives if we all could be like Joe!
- 2) He was quick to forgive. Mary's condition is humiliating, infuriating, extremely hurtful: his reaction to it is all but superhuman. Many a man would have subjected her to public disgrace. Joseph forgave and loved despite his pain, in place of feeling sorry for himself, he felt sorry for Mary, that's a real man. Whatever someone's done to you may not be fair, but forgiving is the only way to be fair to yourself. Getting even is a loser's game because it leaves you with more hurt than you had in the first place. Forgiving fixes, the only thing that can be fixed: we can't go back in time and fix what already has been done, we can't make the other person make it right. We can fix our relationship with God who says that we are to forgive whatever grievances we have against each other.
- 3) Joe was quick to obey in "And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus," Matthew 1:24-25. He wakes up and goes straight to Mary with flowers and a ring! Mary is out in the cold until now. Parents don't believe her, Joseph doesn't believe her, No one else believes her, now her shame becomes his.

From here on, Joe is a man of action, see Matthew 2:14; 2:21; and 2:23. No words, there's just not much to talk about when you know what you're supposed to do. Be like Joe! Quit talking and start doing what you know is right, quit worrying and mulling it over, the God who was with Joseph is the God who is with you.
