

JOSEPH, THE FORGOTTEN FIGURE?

Dear Friends,

What are some of the pictures in your mind when you envision the first Christmas? Angels in the sky? Gabriel delivering the message: "Peace on Earth."? A manger, a cave, a mother (Mary) looking at her newborn infant in swaddling clothes? If you are like most people – this is your vision of the first Christmas. Guess who is absent from all of this? The one who I call "The forgotten figure". Sure, he is in every painting you see and any manger scene you buy, but certainly he is seen mostly as the background and not the foreground.

We do the role of Joseph a great disservice if we forget about the kind of character Joseph had and a message he received from God in Matthew 1:18-25. God's message was basically: "Mary became pregnant supernaturally through the Holy Spirit – she will give birth to a son, name him Jesus, he will save his people from their sin AND do not divorce her. Joseph demonstrated three character traits through all that took place surrounding the birth of Jesus.

First, Joseph was a righteous man. Even before his visit from God, Joseph believed Mary and that belief kept him from divorcing her. He could have disbelieved her and divorced her and any Jewish court would have sided with him. Second, Joseph was a humble man. He knew that through the rest of his life there would always be people who believed Joseph "got her" pregnant before their formal marriage or that Mary DID get pregnant by another man. In verses 24-25, it said that when Joseph woke-up from his dream he did what the Lord told him to do. You get a sense that there were no question asked – he just obliged.

Here we are 2,000 years later and we all could learn to model our character after Joseph. Who of us does not need to become more righteous, walk more humbly, and live more obediently? As you and I move closer to Christmas, let's not forget the forgotten figure – Joseph.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayers: The Ratliff Family (Ron's death), Sandra Stribick (cancer/hospice), Kidnapped Haiti Missionaries

Events:

- Women's Ministry Meetings: Thursday, December 16th at 11AM and 6PM at the church.
- Coming up - December 19th : Christmas Program!