

## Not Your Average Joe

Dear Friends:

I sometimes wonder if Jesus' father, Joseph, gets a little overlooked in the whole Christmas picture. Babies, especially baby boys, were a bigger deal to the first century A.D. Jew than the 21<sup>st</sup> century American. Maybe we pay little attention to Joseph because after the age of 12 Joseph is mentioned no more! It is assumed that somewhere in Jesus' life (likely closer to age 12 than age 33) Joseph died.

Let's give Joseph the honor he is due. Let's look at a few character traits and try to possess them ourselves.

First, Joseph was a righteous man (see Matthew 1:19). Mary is pregnant and Joseph knew he was not the father. Interestingly the word righteous, in reference to a person, was used only 4 times in the New Testament. Joseph planned to quietly break-off their engagement (betrothal) but God said no, so he did not and he followed the will of God. How is your righteousness looking these days? Second character trait: Joseph was a humble man. A minute ago, I used the word engagement. There was no such thing as engagement in the Jewish culture. However, there was betrothal. Once a couple was betrothed, they were legally married, but they had to live apart during the first year and there could be no sexual activity between them. So, Mary tells Joseph she's pregnant and he knows he is not the father. He could have had a public hearing, found her guilty of adultery and she would have never been allowed to get married, ever. After Joseph's angel encounter, he humbles himself and decides to marry Mary, knowing he would be accused of having sex before marriage. Third character trait flows out of his humbleness: Joseph was an obedient man. He was obedient to God, to the angel, and his obedience was instant! How often do we hesitate on our obedience toward God?

Ponder this, look at Joseph's character traits: righteous, humble, and obedient. Which one do you need to improve the most?

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Events: Bells rehearsal right after church

Prayers: Dick & Joy Fisher, Debbie Williams (cancer), someone you know who needs Jesus.