

Dec 13, 2020



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
God came to live with us so we could live with Him

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel. —Wesley

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”
(Matt 1:23 NKJV)
(from "Our Daily Bread", Dec 14, 2003)

Series: Call in the New Testament

UNIT: The Beginning of a Call

NEXT WEEK
Called to Worship
(Matt 2:1-2, 7-15)

Called to be Immanuel Matt 1:18-25

Lesson Background and Introduction

Today’s lesson focuses on the unlikely hero Joseph of Nazareth. Joseph’s background was unremarkable in a number of ways. Joseph may have spent most of his life working on the new and elegant Roman colony at Sepphoris. While he is mentioned as the father of the adult Jesus in John 6:42, he last appears in the Gospels in Luke 2:41-50, a story that took place when Jesus was 12 years old. Joseph stood out among his peers in at least two respects. First, Joseph was a descendant of King David (see Matthew 1:1-16), and thus a member of Israel’s royal line. This fact explains why Joseph took his pregnant wife from Galilee to Bethlehem (a Judean village about six miles from Jerusalem) to register for the Roman tax census (Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:1-4). Bethlehem was David’s hometown (1 Samuel 16:1). David was widely understood to be the ancestor of the coming Messiah, who would rule Israel on David’s restored throne (2 Samuel 7; Jeremiah 23:5-6). The second way Joseph stood out among his peers is part of today’s lesson. Matthew’s account of Jesus’ birth is a classic “Yes, you” story. Throughout the Bible, we see people who were surprised when God called them to do something, and who responded to the call with a “Who, me?” Consider Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 17:17; 18:12), Moses (Exodus 4:13), Isaiah (Isaiah 6:5), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:6), and Peter (Luke 5:1-10). All these people went on to play key roles in the story of salvation. But first they had to get over the “Who, me?” barrier. Joseph and Mary lived out the classic “Who me?/Yes, you” storyline in a unique way. Neither was particularly outstanding as the world judges such things. But when called, they did what they were asked. How tragic when God has a task but finds no one to respond (example: Ezekiel 22:30)! When we say “Who, me?” God typically responds, “Yes, you.”

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Mary Agreed with the Father - As a young girl, Mary the mother of Jesus surrendered to God’s plans. Naturally, she had questions and fears. However, Mary exemplifies for Christians what it means to put apprehensions and hesitations aside, listen to the Father’s voice, and follow His instructions. God sent a messenger to Mary, possibly the angel Gabriel. The angel announced that she had been chosen to give birth to the Messiah. Mary initially responded in fright, but eventually, she humbly agreed to God’s plan. This astounding conception took place by the power of the Holy Spirit. Mary and Joseph were betrothed at the time this pregnancy occurred. In the Jewish custom, the yearlong betrothal period had binding legal ramifications, even though the official marriage had not occurred. A divorce had to terminate the commitment. Mary attempted to explain the supernatural mystery surrounding her pregnancy to her fiancé. Joseph incorrectly assumed that Mary had been unfaithful. Being a merciful, upstanding, godly man, he decided to protect Mary from the penalty for adultery, which could be stoning (Deut. 22:22-24). Instead of dragging her into the public eye to be shamed and killed, he decided to break off the engagement quietly.

Joseph Obeyed the Father - While Joseph pondered his plans concerning Mary, an angel visited him in a dream, telling him not to be afraid to carry through with the marriage. The angel said to name the child Jesus, for He is the Savior of all people. Joseph obeyed. He became the husband of Mary and the earthly father of Jesus but not His natural father. The unique events surrounding the birth of Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the coming Messiah given by Isaiah: Immanuel, "God with us" would be born to a virgin (Isa 7:14). Mary and Joseph stand out as courageous and obedient followers of God. Their hearts, no doubt, were filled with fear. However, having courage does not mean an absence of fear but rather moving forward in spite of inner anxieties. Their actions should encourage Christians today. Just remember, God is in control He is our shield and our protector.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Immanuel With Us Even in Times of Indecision (Matt 1:18-19)

Solving indecision through the indwelling Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is with us to teach us what to say (Luke 12:12)

The Holy Spirit is with us to teach and remind us of all things (John 14:26)

The Holy Spirit is with us to warn us (Acts 20:22-23)

The Holy Spirit is with us to help us understand (1 Cor 2:12-14)

The Holy Spirit is with us to lead us into the truth (John 16:13-15)

Solving indecision through justice and righteousness

With us in justice and righteousness to make us part of the Kingdom of God (Rom 14:17)

With us in justice and righteousness to make our lights shine before others (Matt 5:16)

With us in justice and righteousness to free us from sin at work within us (Rom 7:21-25)

With us in justice and righteousness to make us instruments of righteousness (Rom 6:13)

With us in justice and righteousness to make our spirits alive (Rom 8:10)

Solving indecision through conviction of God

With us to convict us through God's Word (James 2:8-10)

With us to convict us through judgment and conscience (1 Cor 4:4)

With us to convict us about the truth (1 John 3:19-20)

With us to convict us to clear ourselves of wrongdoing (2 Cor 7:11)

Immanuel With Us Providing Promises (Matt 1:20-23)

Promises and laws through messengers

Promises through messages spoken by angels (Heb 2:2)

Laws put into effect by angels (Acts 7:53)

Laws put into effect through the Mediator (Gal 3:19)

Promises through the prophets (Rom 1:2)

Promises of service performed by angels (Heb 1:14)

Promises through the Holy Spirit

Promises sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13)

Promises guarded by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim 1:14)

Promises testified by the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Heb 2:4)

Promises through preaching given by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:12)

Promises spoken by men carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21)

Promises of salvation

Salvation promised through the gospel (Rom 1:16)

Salvation hoped for through faith (1 Thess 5:8)

Salvation promised and made wise through the Bible (2 Tim 3:15)

Salvation promised at the second coming of Jesus (Heb 9:27-28)

Salvation promised as an inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-5)

Promises through the Bible

Promised through the Bible as spoken to Abraham (Gal 3:16)

Promises through the Bible that were fulfilled through Jesus (Matt 5:17)

Promises through the Bible that all will be blessed through Jesus (Gen 12:3)

Promises through the Bible that Jesus will eternally rule (Gen 49:10)

Promises through the Bible that Jesus is God's salvation (Luke 3:6)

Promises through the Bible concerning Jesus (Luke 24:27)

Promises through the Bible that Jesus will be rejected (Matt 21:42)

Promises through the Bible that state that all promises of God are yes through Jesus (2 Cor 1:20)

Immanuel With Us To Guide Us Into Obedience (Matt 1:24-25)

Guidance in obedience of what to do

With us to guide us into obedience through example (John 13:15)

With us to guide us into obedience through imitation (Eph 5:1-2)

With us to guide us into obedience through suffering (1 Peter 2:21)

With us to guide us into obedience through walking like Jesus (1 John 2:6)

With us to guide us into obedience through love (Gal 5:14)

With us to guide us into obedience through setting the right attitude (Phil 2:5)

Guidance in obedience of what not to do

With us to guide what not to do by the Holy Spirit's leadership (Acts 16:6-7)

With us to guide what not to do by speaking to us (Isa 30:21)

With us to guide what not to do through asking us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1-2)

With us to guide what not to do through the Bible (2 Tim 3:16)

With us to guide what not to do through hiding His Word in our hearts (Ps 119:11)