

Because He Will Save His People

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[0 : 00] Matthew 1, 18-25. This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about.! His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph,! but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, which means God with us. When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son and he gave him the name Jesus. Can you imagine how Joseph must have felt?

[1 : 29] What do you mean you're pregnant? Joseph, I'm telling you, I haven't been with another man.

I'm telling the truth. You haven't been with another man and yet you're pregnant? Am I missing something? Did someone do this to you?

No, Joseph. I told you I had a visitor a few months back. He was an angel sent from God. He told me that I would become pregnant by the Spirit of God and that this child, are you kidding me, Mary? Do you expect me to believe that an angel appeared to you sent from God? That you're pregnant by the Spirit of God? God, how could you do this to me?

I don't even know what to say to you. We can only imagine how that conversation went. We get a little bit of a hint.

[2 : 50] Joseph was going to break off the engagement, which was the equivalent of a divorce back in their culture and time. He obviously didn't believe Mary.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have even been thinking about getting a divorce. But he also truly loved Mary. Even though he didn't believe her, he didn't want to expose her to public disgrace.

He didn't want to ruin her life, even though she had just broken his heart. And so he was looking at getting a quiet divorce, keeping it on the down low.

It was an honorable thing to do. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins.

[4 : 07] Wow. What an emotional roller coaster that must have been. First, he finds out that the young lady that he has chosen is pregnant. Then, he gets this news from the angel.

The last thing that he would have ever expected to happen. She's telling the truth. He really is conceived by the Holy Spirit of God.

Can you imagine Joseph's reaction? Like, I can't believe this. She's telling the truth. Who can I tell this to?

If I tell anybody this news, they're going to think I'm crazy. A son conceived from the Holy Spirit of God. That's amazing.

But what's even more amazing is this one thing that the angel from God said about this child to Joseph. You are to give him the name Jesus.

[5 : 21] Jesus, which in the Greek of Matthew's day, Iesous. But Iesous was the equivalent of the Hebrew name, Yeshua. Yeshua. Which literally means, Yahweh saves.

God saves. You are to give him the name Jesus. God saves. Because he will save his people from their sins.

I'm going to guess that Joseph was maybe a little surprised at that last part. Perhaps like many of the other Jewish people of his day, he would have expected the angel to say, because he will save his people from their enemies.

Like the Romans. The angel had said to Mary that the child to be born would be a great king. That he would take up the throne of his father, David, their ancestor, King David.

It had been centuries since the Jewish people enjoyed true freedom as a sovereign nation. Like back in the days of King David. The Romans had conquered the land of Israel and they ruled over it with an iron fist.

[6 : 39] It was from the Roman Empire that the Jewish people longed for deliverance. This is not what the angel said to Joseph.

You are to call him Jesus. You are to give him the name Jesus. God saves. Because he will deliver his people from their sins. According to God and the words that he spoke through the prophets long before Joseph was born, there was a greater enemy than the Romans.

A bigger problem than national sovereignty. According to God, the sins of his people are an even greater threat.

An even bigger problem. Sin is not a word that we use much today outside of the church. But in this context, it refers to the countless ways that people have turned away from God.

To the many ways that we intentionally ignore God or disobey his commands. Sin generally refers to the things that we think or say or do that are contrary to the good ways that God has made us for.

[8 : 04] Things like selfishness. pride, pride, hatred, deceit, rebelling against authority, immoral behavior, and the list goes on.

But the overarching problem of sin is not just the ugliness of it or how it wrecks our relationships with each other. The overarching problem of sin is what we deserve for it as people who have turned our backs on the God who created us.

we have essentially spit in the face of our maker. We were under his authority at the beginning.

He made us and therefore he has the rights to us but we rebelled and humanity continues to rebel. the overarching problem with our sins is that they put us in a dangerous position before God.

He is good. He is just. God has been saying it throughout his book. A day is coming when he will take the seat of justice and once for all put everything right.

[9 : 23] He will ensure that no one gets away with the wrongs that they have done whether that be great evil or the smallest of selfish acts.

The ugliness of sin will be eradicated from his world and that's a problem for us because we are all guilty of sin against him and against one another.

Sin is our greatest problem. It is our greatest enemy and it's not just some disease that we innocently caught. We ourselves are responsible for every sin we have committed.

This is what half the Bible is about. We're in deep trouble with God and it's our fault because we have sinned against him. But now listen to these words of the angel again.

She, Mary, will give birth to a son and you are to name him Jesus. God saves because he will save his people from their sins.

[10 : 33] This child in Mary's womb is going to rescue his people from the guilt that they have because of their sins. Salvation will come through the child born of Mary.

Amazing. Jesus, the son of God came into our world on a rescue mission. It was a rescue mission that would cost him his life.

He would die on a Roman cross and there receive upon himself the justice of God for the sins committed by all who would believe in him so that we could be forgiven completely and let off the hook completely for every sin we've ever committed.

Why would God make a deal like this? His own son's death for our deliverance. God's answer from the pages of the Bible is that no matter how far from home we've run, ignoring him, doing what we know is wrong, God's answer is this, I love you and I want you to come home.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life for God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but to

save the world through him whoever believes in him is not condemned but whoever does not believe stands condemned already.

[12 : 32] if you're here this morning and you haven't believed in Jesus I want to encourage you it's not too late to make peace with God it's not too late to open your heart to the most wonderful and fulfilling relationship that we can have our relationship with God if you're looking for help on how to do this or guidance you can feel free to talk to me after the service or anyone else here that you know and trust we'd love to sit with you and pray with you but for those of us who have this hope and this faith in Jesus and who know him Christmas is a special time it's an occasion for sober reflection because we needed a savior we needed salvation but it's also an occasion for great celebration because long ago in Bethlehem a child was born and he wasn't just any child he was a child who would grow up to do what no one else could to save his people from their sins let's pray father in heaven we thank you for sending your son

Jesus the ultimate gift a gift we could never repay you don't even want us to try to repay because it cannot be repaid a gift of grace a gift of your kindness and mercy to us and I pray Lord that you would just enable us this week to celebrate deeply and fully your son our salvation your desire to be with us our Christ and our king the one who will come and reign forever someday what a wonderful thing that you have done we just thank you and we praise you for your awesome goodness and sending Jesus to us in his name amen I'll invite the music team to come up and lead us in one more song up and up