



[ 4 : 06 ] She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. And all of this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet.

But behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. And when Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.

And he took his wife, but knew her not, until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus. Let's pray together. Lord, help us tonight as once again we look to your word for instruction on this topic of anxiety and worry.

And thank you that you've given us so many examples in the scripture to help us on our path, on our way, as we face the challenges and difficulties of life where we get worried and we get afraid. Thank you that you've invited us in to this conversation, to this study, to understand and discover where peace is found. Because you do not want us to be anxious about anything.

[ 5 : 19 ] So talk to us tonight as you have each and every week. Do this for the glory of Jesus, we pray. And I pray this in his name that God's people said, amen. You can be seated.

It was described as 38 minutes of terror. I'm not talking about one of my sermons. I'm talking about what took place in Hawaii at 8.07 a.m. on January the 13th, 2018.

Residents and vacationers alike woke up that Saturday morning to shock and horror as they received an emergency alert on their cell phone.

The emergency alert read as follows. Ballistic missile threat inbound to Hawaii. Seek immediate shelter. This is not a drill.

And for the next 38 minutes, there was panic and confusion all over the island. In fact, everyone that I read about or heard from was fearing for their lives.

[ 6 : 27 ] They were running for shelter. Many of them were trying to contact as much as they could their loved ones to make sure it was okay. In fact, I know of at least two of our people at Faith Family that went through this.

Pat and Wendy LeVore were there on the island. They can speak to this. Was anybody else there when this happened? All right, well, Pat has verified this for me, so I ain't lying.

And I've read up. And it was a time of complete chaos. In fact, I read one story about a man, I assume this wasn't you, Pat, who was standing in line at a breakfast buffet.

The cell phones go off, and everybody just runs out of the breakfast buffet, screaming and crying.

The man sits down, eats his breakfast alone, having no idea what's going on.

38 minutes later, everybody starts to come back into the breakfast buffet, shaking and eyes filled with tears. Of course, you realize there was no missile.

[ 7 : 28 ] The alert was accidentally triggered when an emergency worker meant to send the message, quote, test missile alert, but he forgot the word test.

And instead, he sent the message, missile alert, and the rest is issued. Now, I share that because here's what happened one year later.

A year later, after that event in Hawaii, researchers at the University of California, Irvine, conducted a study on several that experienced that moment of crisis in Hawaii.

And what they found was that the fear and anxiety that those individuals experienced for 38 minutes actually lingered for days.

Even though they knew it was a false alert. In fact, here's what the study quotes, quote, When people believe that there is an imminent crisis, they often experience anxiety.

[ 8 : 34 ] You know that. Especially as they await its arrival. A crisis can be an anxiety-provoking event which can have consequences over time, including post-traumatic stress.

Just look at this little, close to me. You know that. But you know that crisis can produce anxiety, right? In fact, my guess is every single person in this place, every one of you knows that to some degree.

That might not have actually been an inbound missile, but it sure felt like your life was blowing up. You know what I'm talking about. That fear and that anxiety that surfaces in the heart, surfaces in the mind, gets expressed in your body when you perceive or are actually going through a crisis.

In fact, I want you to take a moment right now, and I want you to think about one of the greatest or most difficult crises you ever went through in your life.

What was it? You don't have to shout it out loud. I want you to get there in your mind. Someone did shout it out. 9-11. What was that? What was the crisis that you went through?

[ 9 : 51 ] Maybe for you, it was receiving the call about the accident. Maybe it was receiving the news from the doctor of the diagnosis. Maybe it was when you were let go from your job.

Maybe it was when the cops showed up unexpectedly. Maybe it was when she left you. Maybe it was when you knew the conversation was going to be really intense.

Maybe it's when your child moved away. And on and on, I could give many examples, but whatever it was, the fear and anxiety of that moment was because you were experiencing it.

Experiencing the crisis of life. Amen? Do you feel that? Are you there in your mind? Can you go back to those moments and what it felt like?

Maybe for many of you, it's still very, very fresh. And here's why I'm asking you to tap into that emotion. Because that's exactly what's going on in the life of Joseph in Matthew chapter 1.

[ 11 : 02 ] In Matthew chapter 1, Joseph has been living life, going on as normal, looking forward to a future with Mary, likely had big plans for his carpentry business.

And all of a sudden, from out of nowhere, he receives a life-altering message that sends him into a total crisis.

Except the message does not appear on his cell phone. The message appears from an angel of the Lord. Look at verse 20. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, say these words with me, Do not fear.

Don't fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. So, while Joseph receives that message from the angel of the Lord, he is absolutely terrified.

That's why the angel tells him, Do not be afraid. Do not fear, because he's afraid. He's horrified. He was just informed that Mary is pregnant.

[ 12 : 14 ] And the very moment that Mary tells him that she is pregnant, it's like a nuclear missile. This is actual footage of Joseph's life. His life blows up.

It is like an inbound missile into his life. And he is terrified and afraid. And we will see why in just a moment. But what I want us to see from this passage that sadly we kind of only look at once a year, what we see from this passage in Matthew 1 is something that's important for us, namely that in our anxiety of crisis, notice this, that faith in God can overcome the fears of life.

Do you believe that? That faith in God can actually overcome the fears that you're experiencing in life. Now, please don't misunderstand what I'm saying.

I'm not suggesting that if you're afraid, somehow your faith is weak, or you just have like second class faith. I don't believe that, and I'm not suggesting that. What I'm saying is this.

In fear, faith works. When you are afraid, faith in God can help you overcome the fear you're experiencing.

[ 13 : 30 ] And let's be honest, we don't often think of Joseph as a man of faith. He's not mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11. Joseph has certainly not received the attention that Mary has throughout the history of the church.

In fact, it seems as though the only thing we like to emphasize about Joseph is what was emphasized back in the 1990s presidential scandal. All we want to make sure everybody knows is he did not have sexual relations with that woman.

That is all we say about Joseph. And it is true, some of you are too young to get that reference. It's probably a good thing. It is true, listen to me, there is not a single strand of Joseph's DNA at the blood of Calvary.

But instead of focusing on what Joseph did not do, it would do us well to imitate what the Father of Jesus did do. When crisis happened, he was afraid, and anxiety surfaced in his life.

He was able to be anxious for nothing. How? Well, let me invite you in for just a few moments into the fears that Joseph is going through.

[ 14 : 49 ] Look back at verse 19. Verse 19 says, And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

Now, keep in mind that I went to seminary for this, so listen up. In verse 19, verse 20 hasn't happened yet. See how smart I am?

Like, just so intelligent. In verse 19, verse 20 hasn't happened. What I mean by this is in verse 19, he hasn't received the angelic message yet.

In verse 19, Joseph does not know the plan of God to bring Jesus into the world. All he knows in verse 19 is two things.

Mary's pregnant, and he's not the father. That's all he knows is those two realities. And upon hearing this news that Mary is pregnant, Joseph's response is not, Well, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

[ 15 : 49 ] This is awesome. Bust out the gifts. Let's have some hot cocoa. It's Christmas time. That is not at all the response of Joseph. He is terrified.

And why is he terrified? Because his life is blowing up right before him. The text tells us here that Joseph is a just man.

That is, he's known for doing the right thing. He's devoted to the Jewish law. Joseph's the kind of man whose pants are always pressed. His taxes are always filed. He changes the oil in the camel every 3,000 miles.

He's that kind of guy. So I want you to put these two things together. Right? He's hearing from Mary that she's pregnant and all that's coming with that. And he's a just man wanting to follow the law. Meaning, these two things are colliding. And you can begin to feel the knots in his stomach building. You can begin to feel the anxiety of his life. What am I going to do?

[ 16 : 49 ] How am I going to handle this situation? What am I going to do? How am I going to respond? Joseph finds himself here in the midst of a relational crisis.

Before he receives the vision from the angel, he has no other option but to believe that Mary has broken the betrothal. We don't really deal with betrothals in our culture.

We deal with more engagements. A betrothal was a lot more serious than an engagement. In fact, a betrothal was a legally binding engagement that lasted for a year.

And there were many things. I'm not going to unpack the betrothal this evening. But one of the things during that time is it was a time of purity. And so Joseph has to assume that Mary has not been pure.

And not only that, their future plans of being together are over. Joseph is going to go back to being alone. And what about Mary? What's going to happen to her?

[ 17 : 53 ] And what's going to happen to this child that she has? Joseph is very well aware that in the ancient Near Eastern society, to be in a situation like Mary's in, and the child that's going to come from her, they are likely going to be isolated in society and live a life of poverty.

And this is the woman that he wanted to be with. And so relationally, his life has blown up. Everything he thought was going to be the case has now exploded before him.

And not only is he in a relational crisis, he is in a social crisis. Mary is now, at least in the eyes of the religious people, a disdained and disgraced woman.

She will be made to wear the scarlet letter everywhere she goes. Joseph knows this. He's got two options. He can either take the easy road and divorce her quietly, vindicate himself, keep his reputation intact, and everybody's going to understand and support Joseph, or he can take the hard road.

He can identify with a disgraced woman, an untimely child, and what is, you know, good and well, an impossible explanation. Nobody's going to believe what Joseph has to say.

[ 19 : 15 ] No one is. And so my point is, all of this is resulting in a total and complete social humiliation. His social and public life looks like this.

It is just blown up. But we ain't done. It isn't just a relational crisis or a social crisis. He's in the midst of a personal crisis.

As if the first two weren't enough, Joseph will be stripped of all his authority. All of his rights.

Everything he thinks he's in control of, he's going to realize he's not in control at all. Look at what the angel tells Joseph in verse 20. Look at it.

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, don't fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

[ 20 : 12 ] She will bear a son, and you should underline this, you shall or you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Okay? Now, the angel tells Joseph what Joseph is going to name the child. How many of you have ever been around people that suggested what you should name your kid?

You know what I'm talking about? I really think you should just name her Gertrude or whatever. You know, I just really think that Bill would be a great name. And you just want to say, that's great.

Shut up. I didn't ask your opinion. I don't need your opinion as to what I'm supposed to name my kid because we all know, even in our own culture, that parents have the right to name their kid whatever you want to name their kid.

Listen, if you want to name your child Donald Duck, go ahead and name your kid Donald Duck. If you want to name your kid Chris, middle initial P, last name Bacon, as delicious as that sounds, you should go ahead and name your kid that.

[ 21 : 17 ] If you want to name your daughter Tara Dactyl, that is entirely up to you, right? You can name your kid whatever you want to name your kid.

Now you're like, why are you making such a big deal out of these names? Do you know your Old Testament? What was Adam given the authority to do in Genesis?

Name things. Adam is the one given the right and the authority to name the animals. And so important was that in Hebraic tradition in the ancient Near East, it was the father's right.

And only the father's right, sorry moms, only the father's right to name the child. What's going down here? The angel is saying this, Joseph, in the crisis that you're in, guess what?

You don't have any authority at all. You don't have any rights whatsoever. You will call His name Jesus.

[ 22 : 28 ] In other words, in every possible way, Joseph is being told that he is not in control. And we all know that that's one of the reasons for our anxiety. Be honest, one of the leading reasons why you get anxious is when life feels out of control.

Amen? It's like we hate the passenger seat of life. We want the steering wheel. We want to be in control. And when life feels out of control, we go into crisis mode and we feel anxious and afraid. Joseph's personal life looks like this. It is blowing up in front of him and we're not done. He's also facing a stability crisis. As if dealing with the issues with Mary is not enough and managing this public relations nightmare that he's got to deal with and now having all of his authority stripped from him as a man.

On top of all of that, look at chapter 2 and verse 13. Now when they departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, Rise, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you.

For Herod is about to search for the child, yeah, that child that's with you, to destroy him. That's just wonderful.

[ 23 : 47 ] Like this whole thing just gets better and better and better, right? Now, I've got to leave my homeland. And that doesn't seem like a very big deal to most of us because most of us have traveled enough that this seems like it's easy to do.

I mean, many of you have relocated different times. If you want to go see your kids in Texas, if you want to go down and see your parents in Tennessee, you just go. Like relocating or whatever is not a big deal, but faith family, this is not 21st century America.

This is ancient Palestine. To leave your homeland and move to Egypt is to leave everything stable in your life.

All your network, all your relationships, your job, everything. And oh, by the way, while you're relocating to Egypt, you might want to look over your shoulder because you're being hunted by the king.

How's that for anxiety and stress? Is it any wonder to realize why Joseph feels like this? Probably a lot worse than that. Like this man's life has just exploded.

[ 24 : 56 ] Everything he thought was secure is now insecure. Relationally, socially, personally, and with his stability. That is, in a matter of a short time, Joseph goes from planning a wedding, building a business, dreaming of a future, to perceived personal hurt, public humiliation, losing all authority of his life, and living on the run in a strange and foreign land.

And you thought you were in chaos. You thought you were going through crisis. Is there anybody, you don't need to shout this out loud, is there anybody here tonight that can relate to Joseph?

And I certainly don't mean the exact details. There's not a father here that's been asked to father Jesus, no matter how precious you think your little sweetheart is, right?

We've not been called to that, but my guess is we can relate to Joseph when it comes to his anxiety. How many of you, again, don't shout it out loud or don't raise your hand, but how many of you maybe right now are going through a relational crisis?

Like you're going through relational things that are very difficult and causing much anxiety. Maybe some of you are dealing with something publicly at work or publicly within your family.

[ 26 : 15 ] How many of you are in a situation where you just feel like you have no authority? Life has lost control. It just seems like that you have no authority whatsoever over your life.

Or maybe there's some of you, you look into your future and it's all unknown. There's a whole lot more questions than you've got answers. You see, we can relate to Joseph more than we think. The fear, the anxiety, the worry, the crisis that he knew is something many of us have and maybe even are facing.

So here's my question. How are we in those moments to be anxious for nothing? How was Joseph able to face those fears?

Let's look at it in verse 20. But as he considered these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

[ 27 : 14 ] She will bear a son and you'll call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. And all of this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us.

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and he took his wife and knew her not until she had given birth to a son, and he called his name Jesus.

So, what gets Joseph through here? There's something very, very important here that Joseph is able to get through his fears, and it's actually something that we see throughout Scripture.

Now, it's not enough to say faith. Okay? That's true. There's no doubt it is Joseph's faith that gets him through these fears, but I want to ask more specifically, faith in what?

What specifically does Joseph have faith in, and what specifically should we have faith in that helps us in our moment of fear?

[ 28 : 26 ] fear? And the key is this context surrounding a quote from Isaiah chapter 7. We're going to go back just for a moment to Isaiah 7 where Matthew 1 comes from, and I want to give you the context that's going down here so you'll understand what gets Joseph through his fear.

If you go back to Isaiah chapter 7 in verse 2, here's what you'll find. Now, this is during the reign of King Ahaz, and here's what's happening to the southern kingdom Judah.

When the house of David was told, so the house of David is Judah, the southern kingdom, that Syria is in league with Ephraim.

Ephraim is the northern kingdom. So when Ahaz hears that Syria and the northern kingdom as the king of the southern kingdom are coming together and joining a league, here's the response.

The heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

[ 29 : 40 ] He's terrified. He's afraid. And so is the southern kingdom Judah. And why are they terrified and afraid? Because the missiles could arrive at any moment.

They are afraid for their nation. What if they wipe us out? What if they destroy us? What if they take us over? What if we are no more?

What if this is it? And in that moment of crisis, in that moment of chaos, here's what the Lord says in Isaiah 7 verse 14.

It's what gets quoted in Matthew chapter 1. Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Somebody say, preach, preacher. I can feel the excitement building up.

I'm going to give you a sign. Here's your sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call his name Emmanuel.

[ 30 : 46 ] Now, don't amen that yet because if you put yourself in that situation, let's be honest, you would have preferred a different sign. If you're Ahaz, this is how you want the verse to read.

I'm going to give you a sign. Here's the sign. A hundred thousand troops are coming your way to help you fight against that army.

Yes! Here's the sign. We're going to build a wall all the way around the southern kingdom of Judah that no one can penetrate. So that way, if they come after you, there is absolutely no way they could capture you.

Wouldn't that, wouldn't the sign of military security be what you'd think Ahaz would need when he's afraid that an army might come and take over the southern kingdom and instead Yahweh gives Ahaz and the people of Judah something greater than military security.

He gives them a virgin and a promised child. What?

[ 32 : 02 ] How does a virgin and a promised child help me when I'm afraid? Let me put it in the context of Ahaz of Isaiah chapter 7.

What does the promise of the virgin mean for the southern kingdom Judah and this child that's going to come from the virgin?

It means this. Are you ready? Are you listening? Jesus came through Judah through the lineage of David which means what?

You're going to survive. Nobody's going to wipe you out. Do you know why no one's going to wipe you out? Because in the future there's going to come a virgin from your tribe from your kingdom. You will not be defeated. this child is coming through you which means what?

[ 33 : 08 ] I know you're terrified in the present but I promise you that you have a future. A virgin will give birth to a child.

That's the first part. And the second part is not just that you have a future that Judah is going to survive because it's from Judah that Christ is going to come but what specifically is the name of this child say it out loud Emmanuel Emmanuel and what does Emmanuel mean God with us I'm about to just scream the roof off this place you don't need military security because I am with you you don't need a hundred thousand troops you don't need missiles you don't need a wall around your southern kingdom you have me and I am with my people so let's let's take Isaiah chapter seven and bring it into Matthew chapter one what's going down Joseph is shaking like a leaf on a tree he's terrified and afraid just like

Ahaz and what is the very promise he believes in it's the very promise God prophesied through Isaiah and Isaiah seven that your God is with you Joseph you're going to go to Egypt but let me just tell you you're going to be okay I'm going to protect you no one's going to harm you Herod's not going to win why you don't need an army to go with you you don't need military protection why because I am with you faith in the promise of Emmanuel got him through his fear got him through the moments of shaking like a leaf on a tree because he knew no matter what he knew no matter the crisis God wouldn't abandon him in his darkest moment and this faith family is the promise that God has given many of his people throughout their times of crisis let me just give you a few and we'll close Moses in his time of crisis Deuteronomy chapter 31 verse 6 be strong and courageous say it do not fear or be of dread why why for the Lord your God goes with you and he will not leave you or forsake you says the same thing to Joshua and Joshua 1 verse 5 no man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life just as I said with Moses so I will be with you to the Hebrews in Hebrews chapter 13 verse 5 for God has said I will never leave you nor forsake you to the disciples to us as the church in Matthew chapter 28 to go and make disciples and look at the last phrase for lo I am with you always even to the end of the age to

Paul in Acts chapter 18 when he was discouraged the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision do not be afraid are you noticing the pattern God's people get scared a lot they get afraid a lot don't feel second class if the crisis of life makes you afraid but fight that fear with this with faith in this look what he says go on speaking and do not be silent why for I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you for I have many in this city or my people and isn't this I'm almost done hang with me is this not how we started this whole series off go back to the passage we spent three weeks on at the beginning of this series Philippians chapter 4 and verse 4 says rejoice in the Lord always again I will say rejoice let your reasonableness be known to everyone say it with me the

[ 37 : 34 ] Lord is at hand do not be anxious about anything can I can I just take all of this can I just take of all like Joseph's anxiety and fear and the crisis he was going through and all those examples that I just rattled off and all of King Ahaz in Isaiah chapter 7 let's bring all that together in this sentence notice it on the screen here's the point there's nothing more important in your moment of fear!

than that God is near let's say that again there is nothing nothing I mean nothing more important nothing more important in your moment of fear than the blessed assurance that your God is near there's no greater comfort in crisis than knowing that God is with you and faith in that it wasn't some generic faith that got Joseph through his fear it was faith specifically in Emmanuel God is with me that got him through his fear think of it this way I close with this think of it this way the answer to Joseph's fear was found in the very child he was called to father think about that the answer to Joseph's fear was actually in the very child he was called to father for in

Jesus the promise of Emmanuel God with us would be forever with his people and how would that come to be it would come to be because Jesus would face all the fears that Joseph faced think about it Jesus knows what it's like to go through a relational crisis a feeling the personal betrayal from the very people he loved and served as they turned on him in a moment Jesus knew social crisis as he would identify with a disdained and disgraced bride and because of his love for her he would face public humiliation mocking and shame Jesus would know personal crisis as he would not exercise his own authority or will but he was willing to do whatever the father said to do and Jesus would face a stability crisis Jesus would enter into the unknown of laying his life in the father's hands and he actually would be killed by a different herod and through every single one of those moments of crisis what did Jesus come to know and experience on the third day his father was with him his father was with him every moment of the way listen I'm done if you have Jesus if you have Jesus Emmanuel what can you believe and know in the moment of crisis God is with you too and if he's with you you really can be anxious for nothing and God's people said amen amen let's pray together Lord thank you for this time tonight to look at a father who faced his fear I know I can speak for the dads in this room as fathers there's a lot that makes us anxious there's a lot that can make us afraid as we think about our kids as we think about life as we deal with different pressures us but in those moments we can persevere and be anxious for nothing and not let fear ultimately win it doesn't come through just some generic faith it comes through faith in the actual promise that you have given us

[ 42 : 29 ] God and that promise is that you are with us and we need you more than we need military security financial security even social security we have all that we need in you if God is for us who can be against us so what I hope tonight will happen is for those of us that resonate with Joseph it may not be to the scale of which we discussed or that of King Ahaz but that we tonight would breathe the promise of Emmanuel and that we would continue to move forward in faith even though we're afraid until faith gets us through our fears help us now as we enter a time of remembrance as we think about how Jesus faced the fear of the cross so intense that he sweat drops of blood in

Gethsemane at the very idea of going to the cross and I pray that we would in remembering and meditating on the cross remember that that purchased for us forever God is with us Spirit of God guide us now as we remember the cross in Jesus name Amen God!

He! He goes Ass Ass Ass Ass