

# Joseph

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[ 0 : 00 ] Again, the suspense of what's going to happen next for you.

Listen, if you've got your Bible, go ahead and get it out because you're going to need it because I didn't make no slides. And so we're going to try to go through a lot of Scripture here this morning. And so I'd like for you to be able to follow.

We're going to be in Luke and in Matthew. And so if you'll find, go to the first part of Luke, first chapter to Luke, and then the first couple chapters maybe in Matthew. Put your finger in each one of those places, kind of mark it, that's where we're going to be at and everything.

So you go ahead and find that. Now, as you're looking for that, I don't know about y'all, but you know, I've always had a kind of imagination and everything.

And I've often wondered, I always love these shows where people travel back in time or something like that. And I've often wondered what would it be like if I could have traveled back and seen the, if I could choose any place to go.

[ 1 : 08 ] And I always thought I would love to have been there at some point in Christ's life. To see something, to see either at his birth or during his ministry. I don't think, I don't know if I could take the crucifixion or anything, but I, the idea of going and seeing that.

So this morning, I want to ask that you guys kind of travel with me back to that time. You know, we're celebrating Advent, and that's celebrating the coming of Christ.

And it is a joyous time. And last week, our sister Sherry brought to us about the idea, brought to us about Mary. Well, you know what? Before she did that, I had been thinking about Joseph.

I've often thought about that. I was a young man when I got married, terrified half the time, especially because we had a young one very soon.

I was terrified by all that too. And so I'd say probably until they left home, I was scared most of the time. But this morning, we're going to look at Joseph.

[ 2 : 07 ] Now, we've talked a bunch about flickering lamp and church. We've talked about God's plan. So I want you to be thinking about that also. And so, how is God inviting you to courageously join Him in faith and work?

This week, we focus on Joseph's walk as he becomes part of God's plan to save the world. We will see Joseph is required to demonstrate a strength in character and obedience of supernatural encounters, a willingness to take risks to the unknown, and to be faithful even when life is unfolding beyond his imagination.

Joseph will say yes to the revelation of God's will for his life as God puts him in the middle of the greatest story ever told. We all know God's plan.

Because who has not heard John 3, 16, and has received the outline straight from God's own mouth? For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God's plan will be bringing the word to the earth and flesh. God with us. Say that with me. God with us. God with us.

[ 3 : 28 ] Amen. And we're going to hear that all through here. It is only natural, or should I say supernatural, that God would take great care in selecting the parents in the family to whom His son would be entrusted.

He's not just going to give them to anybody. He's going to handpick these. God's plan was to bring the word to the earth. The family requirements were created and prepared for God long before, and they're documented in the prophecies.

The family would be of the tribe of Judah. The child would be born in Bethlehem, then raised in Nazareth. The family would have to be grounded and devoted in their worship of Him, God.

The parents of this family would need to be of high moral character. So Mary and Joseph were selected. Joseph and Mary are both descendants of David, fulfilling the prophecy.

They enter our story in the scripture as betrothed. Now, as we heard last week, betrothed is a little bit different from our engagement. It's a lot more serious. It's a more serious institution.

[ 4 : 37 ] So Luke chapter 1, if you want to go ahead and get there, Luke chapter 1, we're going to read just a couple of verses, 26 through 27, and this is about Jesus' birth being foretold.

Luke 1, 26 through 27, and I happen to use the New American Standard, so it might be a little bit different in yours. Now, in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to be married to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

Engaged. Now, remember, it's also said as betrothed. This is the first stage of marriage in the Jewish culture, and it usually lasts around a year before the wedding, the actual wedding night, and it's a legal engagement.

It is like a legal document. In the Hebrew culture of this time, a betrothed couple's commitment was deeper and more serious than our present-day engagement.

It was a two-part kind of contract, absolutely binding and would last a year. For the first year, the couple were denoted as husband and wife, without the physical relationship rights of husband and wife.

[ 5 : 53 ] Then, when all the preparations had been completed in that first year, the husband would take the wife into his home, and they would consummate the relationship. So, any decision to not proceed in this marriage would have to be terminated through divorce.

So, that's how serious it was taken. And again, these are descendants of David, that provides Jesus' genealogy as spoken in the Scripture. It was actually prophesied, and you don't have to look this up, Ezekiel 34, 23, and 24.

It says, Then I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will feed them. He will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

And I, the Lord, will be their God. And my servant David will be prince among them. And I, the Lord, have spoken. And this is speaking of the genealogy of this. So now, go to Matthew chapter 1.

Remember I told you we might be going back and forth a little bit. We're going to stay in Matthew for a little bit here. Matthew 1, 1 says, The record of genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

[ 7 : 00 ] So it lets us know this is his genealogy. This is fulfilling the prophecy. Now, we're going to go to verse 18 of chapter 1. And we're going to talk about the conception and birth of Jesus.

Now, the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

And Joseph, her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Now, all this took place and to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophets.

Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. And Joseph awoke from the sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife, but keeping her a virgin until she gave birth to a son.

[ 8 : 21 ] And he called his name Jesus. Now, there's that word betrothed again. Now, Mary was found with child. Wow, what a surprise that had to be to Joseph and everything when that happened.

And probably to the community too. We do not know how Joseph found out Mary was pregnant, but he did. And if Mary told him she was with child, did she get an opportunity to tell him the whole story?

I mean, Joseph may have been a little bit like me. I kind of can fly off the handle first thing. She may not have got a chance to tell him much anything else except that she was pregnant. That's just a possibility.

Joseph knew the child was not his because they had not had a physical relationship yet. They were still in their betrothed and engagement period. I imagine he was at loss at what to do.

He probably was wrestling with all kinds of emotions. Anger, betrayal, hurt, confusion. Now, Joseph, as it says, as a righteous man, had not wanted to disgrace him.

[ 9 : 24 ] Here, Joseph shows his extreme character, his exemplary character. Even with all that he was struggling with in his heart, Joseph didn't want to disgrace Mary.

So he struggled with what to do and he decided he'd send her away secretly to divorce Mary. But wait, God had another plan.

He sent an angel, an angel of the Lord, in a dream to intercede and to give instructions to this man that he had chosen to raise his son, Jesus. Well, if Joseph had not been kind of freaked out by now, he definitely was shaken now because the child that Mary carried was not an ordinary child.

This son, as the scripture says, conceived in the Holy Spirit, he will save his people from their sins. His name, Emmanuel, God with us.

Say that with me again. God with us. God with us. Amen. And you know, Joseph being a Jew and a righteous man had to know the implications of this.

[ 10 : 28 ] Could it really be the Messiah? If so, was God telling him, an ordinary man, to raise an extraordinary child? His God's son.

But look at Joseph's response. No words. Ain't that just like a man who don't say much? Joseph awoke from the sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until they gave birth to a son.

Amen. What? No questions? No more instructions? Joseph just did it. It tells you what kind of man he was. I guess we can see why God chose such an ordinary man to do such an extraordinary task. Raise the Messiah. Let us note also a couple other things here. Joseph did not consummate his marriage to Mary until after Jesus' birth too.

But as the scripture says, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a son. And if we look further in the scripture, we see that Joseph and Mary continued to grow their family. And they had some sons and daughters.

[ 11 : 37 ] We don't get the names of the daughters, but we get the names of the sons. His brothers were James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. Now, what do you think it was like?

You know what I mean. By the time Mary and Joseph's betrothal comes, starts to get towards completion, Mary is probably starting to show. The marriage ceremony would have been a big event too in the community with the groom bringing the bride to the home and there's all kinds of celebration that he had prepared.

But we don't see this. Family on both sides were probably kind of standoffish. It was shame of what it appeared to be Mary and Joseph having inappropriate relationships.

I even wonder if they lived with any of their relatives at all. Still, in all these times of trouble, Joseph continued remembering God with us.

Say that with me again. God with us. Amen. Well, you may say, Glenn, that's not in the Bible. See, sometimes what we don't necessarily see in the Bible can be kind of revealing too.

[ 12 : 48 ] And so, let's read some more Scripture in Luke chapter 2. So, get into Luke chapter 2 and we're going to look at verses 1 through 7. Luke chapter 2, 1 through 7.

Now, in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that a census be taken of the inhabitants of the earth. And this was the first census taken while Cornelius was governor of Syria. And everyone was on his way to register for his census each to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee from the city of Nazareth to Judea to the city of David which is called Bethlehem because he was of the house and family of David in order to register along with Mary who was engaged to him and was with child.

While they were there the days were completed for her to give birth and she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in cloths and laid him in the manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

What stands out to you when we read these verses? Well, what I see is Joseph taking a very pregnant Mary and with him to go to Bethlehem. Joseph, and the scripture said, Joseph also went up from Galilee from the city of Nazareth to Judea to the city of David which is in Bethlehem because he was of the house and family of David in order to register along with Mary who was engaged to him and was with child.

[ 14 : 19 ] And I think Sherry told us that's about 87 miles or something like that last time. Now, there's no record of them traveling with family or friends. Where's the families?

I would submit that their engagement in marriage was not a popular event. So Joseph, obeying God is on his own. Being a husband, a protector, a provider, and soon to be a father.

That is a tough enough responsibility with family support but without it, it could probably be pretty lonely. Still, Joseph remembered God with us.

Say that with me. God with us. Amen. You may say, Glenn, you're reading a lot into this right now. Well, let me ask you, mom, dad, grandpa, grandma, would you let your son and his pregnant wife travel along on a four-day journey?

Would you let your soon-to-be grandchild be put in danger in traveling that distance? And remember, they are in the house of David. So you know what?

[15:30] I got thinking about this. There should have been relatives traveling in the same direction. To Bethlehem. Still, Joseph remembered God with us.

Next, look at the birth of Jesus. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in cloth, laid him in a manger, and because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hmm. Joseph had to be feeling stressed, especially when he found he couldn't find the proper lodging form. That's kind of hard. You go on a trip, a vacation, you got family, and you're supposed to be finding a place and you don't have it?

That can be hard. I wonder what he was thinking when he went to Mary and told her that they couldn't get a room. They were going to have to stay in a stable. Which was probably nothing more than a cave.

I imagine he was asking, he was probably saying to himself, God be with us during this time. And then, men, let me ask you this.

[16:29] do you think Joseph may have thought he was really letting Mary down? Possibly letting God down too because he couldn't find proper lodging? That he was kind of failing?

Okay, ladies, let me ask you a question now. How many of you would want your husband to be the one who's going to deliver your baby? Think about it.

Husbands, let me ask you this. How many of you would want to deliver your child? Well, I can answer that right quick for me. Well, it appears that is what Joseph did.

Because I imagine at that time he was saying, God be with me. Because it doesn't tell us there's anybody else there. They're in a cave. They're in a stable. And he, it's not like he says, I'm going out here to outside.

When you get done, let me know. He probably had to be there to help deliver that child. Then, to top things off, having proper lot, not having proper lodging, not having a midwife, they have visitors.

[17:29] Go with me to Luke chapter 2 verses 16 through 19. Luke chapter 2 verses 16 through 19. So they came in a hurry.

They found their way to marry Joseph and the baby as he laid in the manger. When they had seen this, they made known the statements which they had been told, had been told to them about this child.

And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary treasured these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

First thing, look there. So they came in a hurry and found their way to marry Joseph and the baby. The they are those shepherds. Now they're not high class people.

And Joseph was probably shocked at their appearance and went into his kind of protective mode at that moment for his family wanting to make sure nothing happened. But then he hears their story and looks in their eyes and then he looks into the eyes of his baby who's tiny, whose little hand reaches out grabbing Joseph's finger and Joseph thinks, God with us.

[18:47] Say that again with me. God with us. Amen. So, can you imagine? He's just probably, they probably got things settled down and all of a sudden now we got a bunch of shepherds coming in, a working class kind of group of guys coming in and everything.

They probably all look gruff and rough, kind of like, probably like Stephen Garrett and everything coming running in there and all excited and you're thinking, oh my, what's going on? Well now let's continue in Luke chapter 2 verses 21 through 24.

And when eight days had passed before his circumcision, his name was then called Jesus and the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

And when the days of their purification, oh I'm sorry, and when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses was completed, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord as it is written in the law of the Lord.

Every firstborn male that opens the womb and shall be called holy to the Lord and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the law of the Lord.

[ 19 : 55 ] A pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Now, we see Mary and Joseph, they show that they're grounded and devoted in their worship of God. They demonstrate their high moral character of obeying the law of the Lord by making their offering.

a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Now, I got thinking about this for Joseph. You know, Joseph is a working man but he was unable to provide a lamb.

See, a lamb is what you would normally provide. Unless you didn't have, you couldn't afford that. And so, he provided a pair of turtle doves and two pigeons. And I wonder if he was disappointed because he had to, he couldn't give Mary any more than that.

Don't be, don't we as husbands always want to provide the best for our family, for our wife? Yet, Joseph did the best he could and remembered God with us.

Say it again for me. God with us. Amen. Now, let's go on and look a little bit more at what happened that day. This is Luke chapter 2 verses 25 through 38. And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Sion.

[ 21 : 05 ] And this man was righteous and devout looking for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's, seen the Lord Christ.

And he came in the Spirit and entered to the temple. And when the parents brought in the child, Jesus, the child Jesus to carry out for him the custom of the law, then he took him in his arms and blessed God and said, Now Lord, you are releasing your bondservant to depart in peace according to your word.

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all people, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.

And his father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, Behold, this child appointed for the fall and the rise in Israel and for a sign to be opposed and a sword will pierce your own soul to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.

Now also in that scripture it follows on with a prophetess named Anna that she came up and also said something to him. But what do you notice here? Look at what Simeon does.

[ 22 : 41 ] The scripture says, And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, Behold, this child appointed for full fall and rise of many in Israel and for a sign to be opposed and a sword will pierce even your own soul to the end to end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.

Simeon blesses them but he speaks to Mary and not Joseph. Do you think Joseph was wondering why a sword is piercing her soul but not his own?

With all this, Joseph probably thought God with us not knowing that these words were a foreshadowing of Joseph's own absence in Jesus' adult life and his ministry and his crucifixion.

Let us continue. Matthew chapter 2. Chapter 2 verses 1 and 2. Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying, Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?

For we saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. We've all heard this story before. Based on the events and the timeline that Jesus, and we know that Jesus was probably around two, maybe possibly three years of age.

[ 24 : 07 ] So this event shows that Joseph and Mary and Jesus have remained in Bethlehem. I believe it gives us a possible insight too as to their extended family situation.

Notice Joseph has not returned to Nazareth yet with his family. And he's taken up residence in Bethlehem. Listen to what's happening in the following verse.

In verse 11, chapter 2 of Matthew, verse 11. After coming into the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they fell on the ground and worshipped him.

Then opening their treasures, they presented to him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Can you imagine Joseph and Mary are at home, not in the stable now, but they've settled in, when all of a sudden there's a commotion outside.

Joseph goes to the door and to his wonder, there's foreigners asking about his son. And it's this idea, he who has been born king of the Jews, then allowing them in, Joseph allowing them in, they fell to the ground and worshipped him.

[ 25 : 12 ] Then opening their treasures, they presented him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. I wonder, I imagine he wondered about the strange gifts too. Oh, how Joseph must have thought, surely, God is with us.

Say it for me. God is with us. Now that's not the end of that story. Continuing on in verse 13 through 23, it says, Now when they had gone, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.

So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother while it was still night and left for Egypt. He remained there until the death of Herod.

This was to fulfill what was to be spoken by the Lord through the prophet out of Egypt. I called my son. Now, what does Joseph do? He's obedient.

No questions. No instructions. Joseph just does it, what God tells him to do. Again, we see why God has chosen an ordinary man to do extraordinary tasks.

[ 26 : 28 ] And he's going to be raising the Messiah and he protects God's son. All of this is following God's plan and fulfilling God's prophecy.

Out of Egypt, I call my son. Oh, then, imagine the burden Joseph and Mary had. They must have felt, too, that later on, after they left, they heard the tragedy of what happened in Bethlehem. Because in verse 19 or verse 16, it says, And then Herod saw that he was tricked by the Magi. He became very enraged and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all in the vicinity from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the Magi.

Then what had been spoken through the Jeremiah, the prophet, was fulfilled. A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping in great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and she refused to be comforted because they were no more.

Old Joseph must have thought, God with us. When he learned of the faith of these families that had been left behind, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, watching in horror as Herod went through committing this most terrible crime and killing innocent children.

[ 27 : 49 ] Let us continue. Verse 19, it says, But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. Get up, take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.

So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelias was reigning over Judea in the place of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go there.

Then, after being warned by God in a dream, he left the region of Galilee and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. And this was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets.

He shall be called a Nazarene. Again, twice, an angel of the Lord appears in a dream to Joseph. So what does Joseph do? He's obedient.

No questions, no instructions, Joseph just does it. Seeing God, seeing God chose an ordinary man to be extraordinarily obedient.

[ 28 : 58 ] To raise the Messiah, to protect his son, fulfilling the prophecy, he shall be a Nazarene. And in Luke, go to Luke chapter 2, in Luke we see Jesus is growing up, being cared for by Mary, and reared by his earthly father, Joseph.

In Luke chapter 2, verses 39 through 40, it says, when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

And the child continued to grow and become strong. Increasing in wisdom and grace of God was upon them. Now imagine, God with us, and the Father is raising Him.

Joseph, how do you raise the God, the Messiah? As a father, I struggle raising the two I had. I can't say I did that great of a job either, but I can't imagine what Joseph was dealing with.

And so let's do a quick review. Joseph is the earthly father of the Messiah. He's taken a virgin wife who's never had physical relationships with a man, but was pregnant because an angel of the Lord told him to.

[ 30 : 10 ] He and his pregnant wife travel far to and far off town. There, oh and don't forget, Joseph had to deliver his own son in a stable. He has a bunch of hysterical but joyful shepherds coming to the stable to see his new son babbling on about some angels and a wonderful announcement.

And then, when Joseph thinks things are starting to settle down, some magi visit his home, bringing him gifts for a new king. Then, a second time, an angel in a dream tells him to get up and leave his home.

There's a crazy king wanting to kill his son. Oh, and by the way, go to Egypt, the nation that held your ancestors as slaves. Then, starts Joseph's family adventure to escape him to Egypt, living there for a while.

Then, a third time, an angel comes in a dream to tell Joseph, return home because the crazy king is dead. Then, Joseph and the family return back to their home, their home country.

And finally, a fourth time, an angel of the Lord comes in a dream and tells Joseph to go back to his hometown, Nazareth, and to raise his son because this new king, the new king, is not bad.

[ 31 : 24 ] is as bad. It's not worse than the previous king, so Bethlehem's not going to be safe though. Now, finally, things are starting to be quiet, to quiet down for Joseph and Mary and they're raising their family.

Their son, Jesus, is growing. He's learning. He's showing wisdom. As his father, Joseph, he must have been very proud of him and things are going great because God's with us.

Say that with me. God with us. God with us. Amen. Now, things are really going good. Then they take a trip and you know what?

He loses the Son of God. So if you look at Luke chapter 2 verses 41 through 51, now his parents were in Jerusalem every year at the Feast of Passover when he became 12, they went up there according to the custom of the feast and as they were returning after spending a full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem but his parents were unaware of it but supposed him to be in the caravan and went a day's journey and they began looking for him among their relatives and acquaintances.

When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for him. Then after three days, they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.

[ 32 : 58 ] And all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When they saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, Son, why have you treated us this way?

Behold, your father and I have been anxiously looking for you. And he said, and he, Jesus, said to them, why is that, why is it that you were looking for me?

Did you not know that I had to be in my father's house? But they did not understand the statement which he had made to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and he continued in subjection to them.

And his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God. Amen. So Joseph's story kind of appears to end right here.

Joseph's returning to Nazareth with his family. Then the story, in the Scriptures, it jumps to Jesus as an adult beginning his ministry continuing with God's plan and with only one parent, his mother Mary.

[ 34 : 07 ] So what do you think happened to Joseph? Well, if you'll permit me just for a moment here, I would like to share with you a kind of fictional conclusion in Joseph's story.

This is Glenn's thought if he was thinking putting this together. Joseph with Mary and Jesus returned to Nazareth to raise their family. There he worked hard to provide for his family and to train his sons in his trade.

He raised his children in the way of Jewish faith, teaching them the Scriptures and observing the laws of God. He was especially attentive to his oldest son, Jesus, because of all the extraordinary circumstances of his early life.

Joseph knew that he had been told that this was God with us. And as it occurs in life, Joseph's health began to decline.

It may have been from disease or just age, but Joseph and his family knew that his time was short. So as he laid on his bed, his breathing becoming more shallow with each breath, Mary holds his hand and his oldest son, Jesus, holds the other hand.

[ 35 : 18 ] Then looking up at Jesus, he remembers his birth. And looking into his eyes, the man once who, looking into the eyes of the man who once, as a baby, reached out his tiny hand and grabbed Joseph's finger, Joseph thinks, God with us.

Jesus leans over, smiling with tears in his eyes and whispers, I am. Joseph experienced so much. And here are things that I see in Joseph.

When God told Joseph to do something, he did it. There does not seem to be any hesitation there. Joseph just did it. He remembered, God with us.

Do we hesitate when God wants us to do things or do we have a tendency to ignore it? Second, I want you to think, Joseph doesn't seem to question God or to ask questions and come up with excuses or try to wiggle out whatever God's plan is or tells him to do.

He humbly accepts the direction that he's been given. A man of action. God with us. Do we want all the answers a lot of times to our questions before we start something that God wants us to do?

[ 36 : 34 ] Even making excuses to avoid them sometimes. Third, Joseph trusted God and God's plan with great faith and assurance.

God with us. Do we trust God's plan even when we don't understand or even comprehend it? So here, we are celebrating the advent of the first coming of Christ.

Acknowledging God's great plan for His creation. But, the plan isn't complete. See, there's a second advent coming. And this is the second coming of Christ.

So, I'm going to ask the music folks to come on up. As they're doing this, I want to ask you some questions. Are you looking forward to His coming? To that second advent?

Are you ready for His coming? And do the words God with us give you a sense of assurance and joy? As I think it must have given Joseph.

[ 37 : 33 ] If your answer is no to any of these questions, then I invite you to use this opportunity to say yes to them. And to become part of God's plan. And to come forward.

And, I'm going to ask Pastor Matt and Pastor John if they would just, you can either sit or just come up here. And if anybody has any kind of decision they'd like to make or anything, they wouldn't have prayer.

Come up and speak to our pastors and we also have others that would come up here and pray with you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.