

Michael Apostol: The Forgotten Man of Christmas (7/12/19)

In the Bible there is not a lot written about Joseph (the Father of Jesus). Yet it was Joseph who, along with Mary, cradled the baby Jesus in his arms after his birth. And it was Joseph who taught Jesus the carpentry trade.

Matthew 1:18-21

Most of what we know about Joseph is contained in these four verses. The other place that we learn about Joseph is in Luke - when they were looking for Jesus.

Luke 1:30

When Joseph had found out about the pregnancy, he thought to put her away secretly. When Mary found out, she was afraid. But the angel told her that this was happening because she had found favour with God.

Matthew 1:19

Joseph was a just man. He is among only four others who the Bible describes as "just." Because He was a 'just' man, he decided, after much thought and turmoil, to do what was best for Mary.

Why did God allow him the time to think about this before revealing the truth? God was testing the character of this 'just' man.

Lessons from Joseph:

- In spite of her apparent unfaithfulness, Joseph showed kindness and love. He had this godly balance of righteousness and tenderness toward Mary.
- Though he was 'just,' Joseph did not put himself above Mary. He recognised that he too was a sinner.
- Joseph's obedience was unbiased. In obedience to the law he had planned to put her away secretly. Then, when the angel commanded him to marry her, Joseph obeyed in spite of what society may have thought of them.
- There are going to be things in our lives that we don't understand. We have to be like Joseph - uncompromising in our obedience to Him. God will take care of the unknowns if we obey. "If it's God's will, it is God's bill."
- Delayed obedience is disobedience. "Now is the day of salvation!" If Joseph had delayed to obey when God asked Him to leave Egypt, it could have cost him his wife and son (Jesus).