**WHY JOSEPH?**

**How God Uses Ordinary People to Accomplish Extraordinary Things**

**Matthew 1:18-25**

**JOSEPH’S DISCOVERY OF MARY’S BABY**

* *“The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit.”* (Matthew 1:18)

**JOSEPH’S DILEMMA OVER MARY’S BABY**

* *“So her husband, Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.”* (Matthew 1:19)
* **To be obedient to God, Joseph was willing to give up the woman he so dearly loved.**
* **What are you willing to give up to be obedient to the Lord?**

**JOSEPH’S DREAM ABOUT MARY’S BABY**

* *“But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’”* (Matthew 1:20)
* **Though Joseph was not Jesus’ physical father, by his marriage to Mary, he would give Jesus the true legal status because “he was of the house and lineage of David.” (Luke 2:4).**
* *“She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”* (Matthew 1:21)
* *“And [Joseph] named him Jesus.”* (Matthew 1:25)
* *“See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel, which is translated ‘God is with us.’”* (Matthew 1:23).

**JOSEPH’S DECISION ABOUT MARY’S BABY**

* *“When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord’s angel had commanded him. He married her 25 but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. And he named him Jesus.”* (Matthew 1:24-25)
* **“Joseph didn’t let his confusion disrupt his obedience. He didn’t know everything. But he did what he knew.” – Max Lucado**
* **Jesus was the Child of Almighty God, conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit.**
* **One of the lessons that comes from the life of Joseph is this: that “the most important thing in the whole world can happen to the least important people in the world; that the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords can take up residence in the most ordinary of lives; that the greatest Somebody who ever lived can come to nobodies like Joseph [and] Mary [and] like you [and] like me.”** -Howard Edington (The Forgotten Christmas: The Story of Joseph)
* *“I delight to do your will, my God, and your instruction is deep within me.”* (Psalm 40:8; see also Hebrews 10:7).
* *“’See, I am the Lord’s servant,’ said Mary. ‘May it happen to me as you have said.’”* (Luke 1:38)
* **Are you willing to say, “Lord, I will serve You anywhere, anytime, at any cost”?**
* **It’s a happy day when we recognize that we don’t have to completely understand everything that God is doing in order to obey.**
* **God reserves the right to give us what we need to know, as we need to know it, and reveal the rest in due time.**
* *“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!”* (2 Corinthians 9:15)

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Ice Breaker: What is the most unique thing you have ever experienced?**

**Start Thinking:**

* **What do you learn about God/Jesus from Matthew 1:18-25?**
* **From a cultural and religious standpoint, why would Joseph have felt compelled to divorce Mary?**
* **Why dis Joseph decide to stay with Mary and raise Jesus as His stepfather?**

**Digging Deeper:**

* **How do we know that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and not through Joseph and Mary being intimate?**
* **How have you been challenged in your walk with Christ to give up something to be obedient to God?**
* **Is there anything you would not give up to follow Jesus in complete obedience? Explain your answer.**
* **Have you ever been caught between what God says and what makes sense? How did/do you respond?**
* **How are you doing at embracing the mindset, “Lord, I will serve You anywhere, anytime, at any cost”?**
* **What’s your big takeaway from this study?**