

A Faithful God Deserves A Faithful Response

Matthew 1:18-25; 2:13-15, 19-23 ▪ Sunday, November 10, 2024 ▪ Jeremy Winkelman

Faithfully Responding to the _____. (Matt 1:18-19)

Faithfully Responding to the _____. (Matt 1:20-25)

Faithfully Responding to the _____ _____. (Matt 2:13-15, 19-23)

Matthew 1:18-25; 2:13-15, 19-23

^{1:18} Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

^{2:13} Now when they had 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, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

^{2:19} But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are

dead.”²¹ And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee.²³ And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: Share about a time you had to change your plans drastically because of a new development.

Read & Discuss: Matthew 1:18-25

1. How might Joseph have felt when he heard the news that Mary was pregnant (v. 18)? What do we learn in verse 19 about Joseph in his decision to divorce Mary quietly? How does his response model for us an example of showing grace? How can we apply this kind of grace and compassion in our own relationships when we are faced with misunderstandings or accusations?
2. In verse 20, the angel tells Joseph, "Do not fear to take Mary home as your wife." What would fear have to do with Joseph's decision, and why do you think the angel addresses it? Can you think of a time when fear or uncertainty held you back from making a decision God was calling you to make?
3. Laced throughout the angel's message were references to Old Testament prophecies (*such as addressing Joseph as "Son of David" (v. 20), and "the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (v. 23)*) How were these references likely important to Joseph in his response in these circumstances? Why should these references be important to us?
4. Included in the angel's message were two names of Jesus: "Jesus" (v. 21) and "Immanuel" (v. 23). What do these names mean, and how should they shape our expectations of Jesus? What difference does it make knowing that Jesus is "with us"? How do you experience God's presence in your life?

Read & Discuss: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

5. What might Joseph have felt or thought when he heard the angel's instructions in Matthew 2:13? When he heard the angel's instructions in Matthew 2:20? Taking into account what Joseph might have envisioned for his life prior to his first dream with the angel back in chapter 1, how do these two passages model for us prioritizing God's plans for our lives above our own desires?
6. What might it have been like for Joseph to take on the responsibility of being Jesus' earthly father? (What would have been the emotional and spiritual challenges he faced?) Share about an experience where you felt unqualified for a responsibility, yet stepped out in faith because God called you.

Apply: Is there a particular area of your life where you need to step out in faith and trust God as Joseph did here? What should your first step be?

Pray: Ask God to help us walk in faithful obedience to His every call on our lives.