



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

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MYTHS OF CHRISTMAS: MARY & JOSEPH Chosen by chance?

Message preached on Wednesday, December 21, 2022

TODAY we are going to bring in two of the main characters of the Christmas story into our myths. Mary and Joseph!

The basic myth that many believe is that God could have chosen ANYONE...

- * It could have been anyone, but Mary was a chance pick by the angel.
- * Joseph was a WEIRD by product to the story...not nearly as important as Mary.
- * Joseph could have married anyone...Mary could have married anyone, just a CHANCE that they married each other.

Mary

ABSOLUTELY there were many girls in the age group of Mary...every parent would have absolutely liked to have their daughter give birth to the Messiah (at least they thought it would be cool).

GIRLS were ready for engagement at the age of 12 in Israel...Mary would have been between 12 and 14 years old.

There were THOUSANDS of girls in that age range. **However...**

Luke 1:28-31

- 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.
- 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.
- 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
- 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Mary was CHOSEN...favored!

Jeremiah 1:5 - "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

Mary wasn't a chance situation...she was it! The one! She was purposely chosen before the foundation of the world for this assignment!

Mary's response to the ANGEL tells us a lot about her:...

Luke 1:34 - "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

BELOVED: That is legit question...without any doubt mixed in.

James 1:5 - "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

She did not say..."This can't be done!"..."This is stupid, impossible."
She did NOT argue...she needed information. She got information!

NOTE: What is God asking you to do? Big? Seem impossible?

BELOVED: It is okay to ask for wisdom! What is my first step! Not, "I can't do that!"

MARY had a legitimately open heart to do anything for God.

Luke 1:38 – "And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."

"Handmaid" – female servant

IN OTHER WORDS: "I am your servant and I am available for whatever assignment you have for me."

BELOVED: This assignment was a lifelong assignment. Not to be removed from her!

- * She was at the cross.
- * She saw Him after the resurrection.
- * She was in the upper room
- * When John moved to Ephesus to oversee the church...Mary moved with him...where she died!

Mary was just like all of us...chosen by God for assignments.

She was not someone to be worshipped or praised...she had to fulfill her assignment and ask Jesus into her heart also.

Romans 11:29 – "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

She was INDEED chosen...because SHE WAS READY for the assignment.

Raising Kids

QUESTION: Why was she ready?

Mary's parents were older and had no children. They prayed for a long time for a child...they made a vow that if they gave them a child that they would give that child to the Lord to use.

Mary was dedicated, by her parents, for God's service.

THEN...they raised her that way! To be used by God.

- * They instilled God and His Word into her from the time she was an infant.
- * She was raised to believe that she had a special purpose for God...she believed it.

She was raised in a home where the Word of God was a priority.

- * Mary's father was in full-time ministry...he was a Scroll Scholar.
- * His life was built around dedication to Scriptures.
- * He was constantly in the Synagogue (where the scrolls were kept).
- * He knew the HONOR of God through His Word.

THEREFORE: This mentality shaped Mary spiritually and made HER spiritually sensitive. She was raised to believe it was RIGHT and GOOD to obey God.

THEREFORE: When Gabriel appears to her...she was ready to accept her assignment...
WITHOUT DEEP STRUGGLE.

If someone had been confronted about this assignment who had NOT been raised the way Mary was raised, their questions would have been deep...

- * What about the man I love...Joseph! What will he say?
- * What about my family...mom and dad will disown me...so much shame?
- * What about society...I will not be able to go out in public...ever!?

BELOVED: How you raise your kids matters!

If your church attendance and Word intake and obedience is sporadic or seldom...you are indirectly telling your children it is not important.

When God is directing their hearts...you have shaped the way they will answer!

Joseph

Luke 1:27 – “To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.”

“Espoused” – they had made a public announcement of engagement and were in their year of preparation and purity.

NOTE: Thought and purpose was put into a marriage, not just a fleeting feeling!

It was during this time period that Mary was found without child. Not a good thing!

This guy that Mary was espoused to is AS IMPORTANT to this story as Mary.

He was going to be AS INVOLVED in raising Jesus as Mary was!

Joseph was AS SELECTED by God as Mary was!

YEP, we certainly don’t hear that too often!

Catholics aren’t saying too many “Hail, Joseph” prayers!

Joseph was a very godly man who had proven himself faithful and trustworthy in the things of God and in his business.

MYTH: We’ve been taught that Joseph was a poor carpenter...making a few shaky shelves and cabinet for is poor customers.

That is not the real story.

- * He actually was a wood craftsman...the kind of carpenter he was made exquisite furniture, jewelry, mosaics, stonework...possibly even a building supervisor.
- * He was a high level professional.
- * He lived in Nazareth, but worked in the city of Sepphoris (about 4 miles away)...same city that Mary and her parents lived.
- * **SEPPHORIS** – a highly affluent town...the ornament of Galilee, built by Herod Antipas. He poured money into building this city in order to develop the most beautiful city around.
- * It became the BANKING CENTER of the Middle East.
- * Many exceedingly wealthy people flocked to Sepphoris and took up residence there.
- * They would NOT buy rickety furniture...they would buy the FINEST furniture.

Mary’s parents would have come across Joseph and have been impressed by his traits...he was good man...hard working...trust worthy...inheritable!

THINK ON THIS: If God was going to give someone the greatest assignment that has ever been given to the human race...it would not be some poor person with bad work ethic and un successful. Trying to JUST get by.
Those things would be instilled into his son!

Luke 16:10,11

- 10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.
- 11 If therefore ye have not been ***faithful in the unrighteous mammon***, who will commit to your ***trust the true riches?***

BEING faithful matters in order to step into your assignment!

THINK ABOUT IT: If he hadn't been faithful and trustworthy...he would have definitely ditched Mary at first sign of her being pregnant.

YES...he was ready to divorce her quietly, so she would not be shamed or even stoned to death.

Matthew 1:20-24

- 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."
- 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.
- 22 ***Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,***
- 23 ***Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.***
- 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

What an HONOR for the Word (prophets).

BELOVED: If you are not honoring the written Word...don't expect to be responsible for greater things!

Joseph was CLEARLY spiritually sensitive!

In the middle of a very difficult situation he remained attentive and very obedient!

Matthew 2:13,14 – He was told to go to Egypt...he obeyed.

~ He had no business contacts or permit to work

~ He would be starting from scratch.

~ HE DIDN'T ARGUE...HE OBEYED!

BELOVED: What does your level of obedience say about you?

You want to know how important WHO YOU MARRY really is for a person?

Luke 2:4 – "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)"

Matthew 1:16 – “And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.”

How aware were Mary and Joseph about this lineage being so important...but it couldn't be any other bloodline...couldn't be another family location.

A man from Bethlehem working in Nazareth (Sepphoris).

God put him there for such a time as this!

Conclusion

AGAIN: I will say, “O, what a planner. O, what a plan!”

God has a plan set out for you. A big one...an interesting path...but one that will make impact for the Kingdom of God.

He has that same purpose for your children.