



THE THREAD

weaving Sunday's message through the week

Date: December 9, 2018

Passage: Matthew 1:18-25

Theme: Title: "Gripped by Glory: Joseph"

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Summary: God initiated, in his love and by his grace, to extend mercy to humanity through Christ in order to redeem us, but his means of salvation involved real, normal people. The proclamation of Christ's birth wrecked the "normalcy" of their lives and required tremendous faith, but through these humble and faithful ones, God lavished the glory of his grace on humanity. Join us this week as we look at Joseph's response to Christ's coming.

Outline:

- I. Joseph's Dilemma (v. 18)
 - a. The significance of betrothal
 - b. The problem of a pregnancy
- II. Joseph's Plan (v. 19)
 - a. Joseph is Righteous
 - b. Joseph is Kind
- III. Joseph's Dream and God's Plan (vv. 20-21)
 - a. A supernatural conception
 - b. A relentless zeal for redemption
 - c. An ordinary man
- IV. Prophecy Fulfilled (vv. 22-23)
 - a. The faithfulness of God to keep his promises
 - b. The precision with which God works
- V. Joseph's Response (vv. 24-25)
 - a. Humble faith
 - b. Bold obedience

POINT: Obedience is the evidence that our hearts are gripped by God's glory. God chooses to make his glory known through the humble who will trust him. His salvation comes through the most extraordinary act, carried out through the least extraordinary of circumstances and people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How seriously do you take God's commands? Is there an expectation of aligning your life to what God says?
2. How is your desire for what pleases God? Are you living righteously?
3. Does your righteousness make you kind? Do you delight to shame others or spare them with compassion? (Your spouse, children, coworkers, neighbors, people online, etc.)
4. What do you base your obedience to God's word on? Is it Human logic, rationality, convenience, consequences, or faith?
5. Obedience is the evidence that your heart is gripped by God's glory and is replacing the glory of lesser things. What areas do you struggle to obey God? Make these areas points of prayer and confession, and ask God to displace their glory with his own in your heart.

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