



Sermon Series: The Visitors

Sermon Title: Obedience in the Darkness

Date: 12/10/2023

Matthew 1:18-25

Many of us want to see God use us for the impossible. For Moses, it was to go up against a world power; for Noah, it was to Build an ark without evidence of the coming flood. For David, it was to approach a man, as a boy, that struck his whole nation with fear. What made these men capable of achieving such a legacy was their faith that God would fulfill the vision he had given them.

Big Idea: Strive to make Radical Obedience Normal.

If we want to see Radical Obedience normal Obedience then we need to be willing to **Obey no matter the circumstances.**

Matthew 1:18

Joseph felt betrayed and believed Mary to have been unfaithful. You see, part of the one-year waiting period included a stipulation that if someone had been unfaithful, then the marriage could be annulled.

Consider the fragile heart of Joseph during this time. Likely going home after hearing this news, hurt, angry, and confused. And yet, despite having every right to make a scene of the moment by going to the judges of the City Gates, which could have led to Mary being stoned to death, he decided to show her compassion. Whether Joseph knew it or not, he was already acting in obedience to the likeness of his Son.

Understand that **Radical Obedience is fueled through our understanding and belief in Gods word**

Matthew 1: 20

Now, we can add this to the fact that Joseph's circumstance is only getting crazier, but by God's grace, it's also getting clearer. There's so much in this passage rooted in Joseph's familiarity with the Word of God. When God calls us toward something, one way to know if it's from him is to see if it's in accordance with his word.

That came to Joseph in the form of an angel appearing to him in a dream. Reminding Joseph of his lineage and the words of the prophet Isaiah. Sometimes, the catalyst between obedience to God and complacency is knowing God's word.

Hebrews 11:1

Fuel the Radically Ordinary Obedience within your life by understanding and believing God's word.

Realize that obedience can come at the Cost of Self-interest.

Matthew 1: 24

When Joseph made this decision to get up and take his wife. He didn't just go and pick her up. He fulfilled the tradition of his time. Joseph would have gone to Mary's parent's house and in a grand processional march that led his bride back to his home. Proudly stating to the whole community, "This is my bride."

Although there would have been a lot of misunderstanding in the community and gossip surrounding their betrothal, Joseph knew this was the will of God, and he obeyed.

I can't imagine that this is how he saw his life unfolding. Receiving a child, he didn't ask for at a time he wasn't ready for in a way he couldn't have imagined. But for one reason or another, God chose him. He saw Joseph and knew that Joseph loved Mary; even more than that, God knew that Joseph loved him.

D.L Moody once said, "Faith makes all things possible... love makes all things easy."

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **God spoke to Joseph in a dream. How does God speak to people today? Why is it important to know God's voice?**
- **Are there areas of your life where God is calling you to radical obedience? Explain**
- **Have you ever trusted God with radical obedience? What was the result?**
- **Describe an instance where you witnessed a person be obedient to God despite their circumstances. Explain**