

Pastor Jim Jackson, 12/7/25
Where Do You Find Love?
Matt. 1:16-25

Joseph found love from godly people AROUND him

Joseph likely grew up in Nazareth, where he met Mary. As a first-century Jewish man, to be a godly, responsible husband meant learning a trade or occupation—likely the same as his father—to support a wife and family. *One of the ways men show love is through occupational pursuits.* As God is love and our ability to love comes from Him, the love we experience is a reflection of Him. While their relationship isn't known, Joseph may have developed a love for his heavenly Father from his love for his earthly father, Jacob. *God often uses earthly examples of love to teach about heavenly realities of love* (1 John 4:7)! Though we don't know what kind of man Jacob was, we do know it was customary in Jewish culture for the father to find or approve a wife for his son. While Mary was probably a teenager, Jacob likely saw her devotion to God and approved of their marriage (Luke 1:38, 46-49). Get godly people around you who love God and you, to speak into your life. *Marks of loving God are submission to the authority over you and incorporating godly counsel into your decisions* (Prov. 12:15; 1 Cor. 15:33; Eph. 6:1-3).

Joseph found love from the God WITHIN him

After agreeing to the terms of marriage, Joseph and Mary would enter into a betrothal where they were legally married but not cohabitating or sexually active. Finding out Mary was 'unfaithful' (and *before* he heard from the angel) Joseph didn't bring her out to be stoned to death for adultery but wanted to divorce her quietly to not bring her shame (Deut. 22:23, 24). *Even in pain, believers should take their disappointment and hurt to God knowing He will give them strength to act in love and not bitterness.* Once the angel revealed Mary was still a virgin *and* pregnant, he took the public shame *on himself* as everyone would assume it was his. *Maturity isn't measured by what you believe, but how you behave* (Eph. 4:32; James 1:22-26). Additionally, he didn't have intercourse with his wife for at least nine months showing tremendous self-discipline to honor God's word. Joseph disappears from the biblical record after Jesus is 12 years old. However, from Jesus' birth through his adolescent years, Joseph led his family in love and godliness and protected them when people wanted to kill his son (Matt. 1:25; 2:14, 21; Luke 2:22, 41). *Love for God will show in obedience to God!*