

Luke 1:26-56, Mathew 1:18-21, Luke 2:1-5: Joseph And Mary.

It is said that the Christmas narrative is the greatest story ever told – after 400 silent and chaotic years, a little known carpenter and an ordinary teenage girl going through their normal day, in the least expected village are chosen to be God’s earthly parents.

I. Luke 1:26-28, 30 – Christmas Is The Outpouring Of God’s Favour And Blessing.

Engagement: This happened when the bride and groom to be were quite young, and was often arranged by the parents.

- **Betrothal:** This made the previous engagement official and binding. During the time of betrothal the couple were known as husband and wife, and a betrothal could only be broken by divorce. Betrothal typically lasted a year.

- **Marriage:** This took place after the wedding, after the year of betrothal.

In expectation of the virgin birth of the Messiah, every Jewish girl expected to be the mother of the Messiah and so they kept themselves sexually pure. Historically, Mary lived near a Roman Military Barracks which was surrounded by prostitution and amidst that evil she kept pure.

The privilege bestowed upon her was not a reward for her purity or righteousness. It was a gift of God's grace.

As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?" The child stared at him open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: "Didn't you get my E-mail?"

John 1:16 - *And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.*

1 Corinthians 15:10 - *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

Titus 2:11 - *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,*

II. Luke 29-38, 45 – Mathew 1:18-21 And Luke 2:1-5 – The Christmas Narrative is One of Faith Leading to Obedience.

Both Joseph and Mary’s natural response was fear; there was the fear of the message/messenger, the fear of human impossibility and the fear of taking Mary as a wife. Faith is the opposite of fear. Soon after, she responded by faith. “*Let it be to me according to your Word*” and Elizabeth said to her. “*Blessed is she who believed.*”

Acts 6:8 - *And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.*

Hebrews 11:6 - *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Proverbs 3:5 - *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

Part of our Christian struggle is not that we are ignorant of God's will and Word, but we are stubborn with excuses. When Mary and Joseph's fears and confusion were cleared, they obeyed God all the way. Mary accepted to mother Jesus, Joseph didn't divorce her, they named Christ according to instruction and later on would flee to safety and return as God would communicate.

Leviticus 22:31 - *"Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: I am the LORD.*

John 14:15 - *"If you love Me, keep My commandments.*

John 15:10 - *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.*

III. Luke 1: 35, 41 – Christmas Is A Time Of Being Filled With Power Of The Holy Spirit.

In our day Christmas is just materialistic; food, drink, decorations, holidays, gifts...

A guy bought his wife a beautiful diamond ring for Christmas. After hearing about this extravagant gift, a friend of his said, "I thought she wanted one of those sporty four-wheel-drive vehicles." "She did," he replied. "But where was I going to find a fake Jeep?"

However, Christmas started with the empowering of God's Spirit, who's available to us if we simply ask.

Acts 4:8 - *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit....*

Ephesians 5:18 - *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

May we enjoy God's favors and blessing this Christmas, may our faith in Him lead us to obedience and may He fill us with His Spirit.