
Searching for Hope

12/17 - 12/23/23

S.O.A.P. :

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. Matthew 1:19 NIV

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). 24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25, NIV

1. How does the story of Joseph searching for answers in the midst of life's problems resonate with your own journey of faith and the deeper searches in your heart during this Christmas season?
2. Considering Joseph's initial plan to divorce Mary quietly, what does his eventual obedience to God's instruction teach us about trusting in God's plan even when we don't fully understand it? How can we apply this principle of immediate obedience in our own lives?
3. In the face of fear and societal expectations, Joseph displayed consistent courage in following God's guidance. How can we cultivate a similar courage in our lives, particularly when it comes to making decisions that might bring ridicule or require giving up our rights for the sake of God's plan?
4. Looking at the theme of courage in Joseph's journey, how can we draw inspiration from Joseph's example to overcome fear and trust God's plan in our own lives? What specific steps can we take to exhibit courage in our obedience to God, especially when facing challenging circumstances or societal pressure?