

# God Chose a Father for His Son

Matt 1:18-25; 2:13-15; 19-23

## Introduction:

1. Happy Father's Day to all our fathers today. One little boy, when asked to explain about Father's Day, said, "It's just like Mother's Day, only you don't spend as much on the present."
2. In 1909, Mrs. James Bruce Dodd thought of her father as she listened to a Mother's Day sermon in Spokane, Washington. She felt the need for a similar day to honor fathers, so she initiated the process. The mayor set aside the third Sunday in June as "Father's Day." The governor of Washington then made a statewide proclamation to celebrate fatherhood. In 1972, President Nixon made it permanent by signing a congressional resolution which called for the official recognition of Father's Day.
3. It was one bleak morning when a boy was helping his father build a fence on the rocky New Hampshire farm. That morning the boy learned that his great ambition would be fulfilled - he would get a chance to go to college. His father said, "Son, we intend to wear our old clothes for another year. We have taken out a second mortgage on this farm. I was denied a chance to a good education and I am determined that you will have a chance to be a scholar."  
That night the boy did not go to bed at all, so excited with joy was he. But neither did his father in the room below. That old, failing father turned his back on retirement and ease with a prayer of thankfulness that his son would have a chance in the world.  
It is no wonder that when Daniel Webster became one of the most famous men in America, he said, "The finest gentleman I have ever known and the most heroic soul was my father."
4. Today is Father's Day and I want to talk to you about a father who is often overlooked – Joseph – husband of Mary and adopted father of Jesus
5. It is significant that even as God chose Mary to be the one who would give birth to the Son of God, even so God chose Joseph to be a FATHER to Jesus and to raise Him into manhood.
6. Joseph would not be needed for the physical act of conceiving the child (since Jesus was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit, but he would be needed to help in raising the child.
7. Joseph was chosen – God looked for a godly woman and He looked for a godly man to be the father of Jesus
8. Let's look at some things that the Bible tells us about this man, Joseph

## I. Joseph Was a Loving Man

- The Scriptures draw the picture for us of a wonderfully caring and affectionate man
- We see this in his relationship toward Mary

### A. Loving Mary

**Mt 1:19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.**

1. We meet Joseph in the midst of a personal crisis - Joseph finds out that Mary is pregnant
  - a) *They are not married yet*
  - b) *What would you guys think?*
  - c) *He has fallen in love with this pretty girl*
  - d) *He did all the right things in the right way*
  - e) *He didn't know who the father was, but he knew one person that it was not*
  - f) *Was he angry? Disappointed? Betrayed?*
2. The penalty for adultery in the OT was death by stoning
  - a) *This penalty applied to infidelity during betrothal as well*
  - b) *In Joseph's day the things had changed somewhat but the matter was still a grave offence*
3. Once he found out that Mary was pregnant, Joseph was obliged to divorce her
  - a) *Divorce was required to break the betrothal agreement*
  - b) *He could divorce her loudly and publicly and shame her/ family*
  - c) *But Joseph chose to divorce her quietly*
  - d) *Even before God spoke to Joseph in a dream, he did not have vengeance or bitterness in his heart*
4. He would put her away quietly
  - a) *He loved Mary and would not purposely shame her*
  - b) *Then, God spoke to Joseph and revealed His plan*
5. We husbands need to love our wives
  - a) *Sacrificially – Eph 5:25*

**25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**

    - (1) This involves putting her needs above yours
    - (2) This involves putting her happiness before yours
    - (3) You will never be an effective leader in your family as long as you approach your marriage for what you can get out of it
  - b) *Fathers, the best thing you can do for your children is to love their mother.*

## **B. Loving Jesus**

1. Joseph loved Jesus even though he was not His actual father
  - a) *There was no resentment or indifference toward Jesus*
  - b) *There was no lack of love*
  - c) *“He isn’t my flesh and blood.”*
2. Joseph adopted Jesus as his own son
  - a) *He protected Jesus from Herod*
  - b) *Herod would kill all babies in Bethlehem under 2 yrs*
  - c) *He would take care of Mary and Jesus – keep them safe*
3. Joseph cared for a nurtured Jesus as his own
4. He taught Jesus the trade of carpentry
5. Joseph adopted the one, whom the Jews would later reject and crucify
6. Father, let’s be involved in the raising of our children
  - a) *Don’t abdicate your role as leader of the house*
  - b) *Father, you set an example for your children*
7. Joseph had the important job of caring for Mary and Jesus

## **II. Joseph Was a Devout Man**

### **A. He Was Obedient**

1. Joseph was willing to follow God’s plan – Matt 1:24-25  
**24** Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: **25** And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.
  - a) *He no doubt had his own ideas of what he wanted for his life*
  - b) *When it came right down to it, he followed God’s plan for his life*
2. When God told him to marry Mary he obeyed. – Matt 1:18
3. When God said to leave for Egypt, Joseph closed down his carpentry shop and left – he obeyed  
**Mt 2:13** And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.  
**14** When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:
  - a) *When God said “leave” – Joseph left*
  - b) *When God said, “return” – Joseph returned*
4. We see Joseph listening and obeying, but never speaking.

## **B. He Was Faithful – Matt 1:18-21**

1. It takes faith to pack your bags and go to a foreign country with no prospects and no planning – God said so
2. He had faith and obeyed
3. He could have made excuses and stayed
4. Fathers – your faith will speak to your children
  - a) *Farmer illustration across the page*
  - b) *Father, don't just talk about faith, let your kids see your faith.*

## **C. He Was Spiritual**

1. He obeyed the law of God – Lu 2:21

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.
2. Joseph took his family to the temple regularly

Lu 2:41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.
3. Dads – your kids are watching your faithfulness
4. Illustration - A farmer had toiled over his crops all year. This was a badly needed crop of grain that would pay off many creditors and secure the family for another year. Just a few days before the crop was due to be harvested a freak wind and hail storm destroyed the fields of grain. The father stood on the porch after the storm surveying the damage. The son went out to the porch expecting to hear words of despair and anger. He listened as his father quietly sang, “Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.” Years later that boy, grown into manhood said, “That was the greatest sermon I ever heard!” His father had shown him faith when it really mattered.

Joseph was a loving man  
Joseph was a devout man

### **III. Joseph was a Wise Man**

#### **A. He Made the Best Use of His Time on Earth**

1. The last we hear of Joseph was the time when Jesus was 12 yrs old and the family went up to the temple
2. After that incident we do not hear of Joseph
3. Most Bible scholars believe that he was quite a bit older than Mary and died sometime before Jesus began His public ministry.
4. While Jesus was on the cross, he charged John with the duty of caring for his mother – Joseph was gone
5. Joseph provided for his family, he cared for and nurtured them
6. He set an example that would be remembered

#### **B. James and Jude**

1. After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph had several other children
2. James and Jude did not trust Jesus as Savior when He was alive
3. After the resurrection, James and Jude became believers
4. They were greatly used by God and wrote books of the Bible
5. James was leader of the church at Jerusalem

Conclusion –

1. We do not know how much time we have left with our children
2. Are we redeeming the time as Joseph did?
  - a. Encouraging our family at every opportunity?
  - b. Setting an example of faith and obedience?
3. Fathers, are you providing for your family?
  - a. “Yes, I bring home a pretty good pay check!”
  - b. OK, are you providing the other things that are needed...
    1. affection?
    2. example?
    3. godly counsel?
    4. laughter and warmth?
    5. loving concern?

When my son was a small boy playing with his buddies in the back yard, I overheard them talking. The conversation was amusing- it was one of those "my dad can whip your dad" kind of conversations. One little boy said proudly, "My dad knows the mayor of the town!" Then I heard another boy answer, "So what! My dad knows the governor of the state!" I wondered what was coming next in the progression of bragging and I heard the voice of my son. "That's nothing! My dad knows God!"

I swiftly slipped away from my place of eavesdropping with tears running down my cheeks. I dropped to my knees in my room and prayed earnestly and gratefully, "Oh God, I pray that my boy will always be able to say, "My dad knows God."

I hope and pray that on this Father's Day, as we men gather to worship, our kids and all the kids of the church family will be able to say, "They know God."

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

In 1993, workers made an interesting discovery while doing some renovations at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Tucked away under a display case was an old photograph of a baseball player who had never been formally inducted into the famous museum. The picture reveals a man with a bat on his shoulder and a baseball uniform that has "Sinclair Oil" printed across the chest. Stapled to the picture was a handwritten note. It read, "You were never too tired to play ball. On your days off, you helped build the Little League Field. You always came to watch me play. You were a Hall-of-Fame Dad. I wish I could share this moment with you. Your son, Peter." Many well-known figures grace the walls of baseball's greatest shrine, but this one anonymous father made an impression far more significant than a place in Cooperstown; he made it into his son's heart.

## The Millionaire

While driving home from work one day  
My total wealth I did survey.  
My mortgaged home and ancient car  
A bank account not up to par  
Furniture from which I fear  
We may not get another year  
The TV set with stamp-sized screen  
Carpets with that well-worn sheen.  
Two suits of clothes not quite threadbare  
“All-purpose” shoes that need repair.  
Sadly then I saw my plight  
After twenty years of toil and flight  
My treasure chest was somewhat small  
With house and car and clothes and all.  
On I drove trance-like I fear  
When suddenly my house was near  
“Your daddy’s home! I heard her cry.  
As four pairs of feet went rushing by  
And smothered in arms and curly hair  
I knew that I was a millionaire!