



Matthew 1:18-25 - “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. 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.” (NIV)

We look to the Christmas season to be a time of perfect peace, harmony, and joy. But the first Christmas was not that way. It was an interruption. For your information, interruptions can happen at any good time. If we are not careful, our response to an interruption can send us down the wrong path.

Consider the timing of Joseph and Mary's interruption. They were engaged to be married. Like Christmas, an engagement is supposed to be a wondrous time. But it was during this time that an angel appeared to Mary and told her that she would miraculously, as a virgin, conceive and give birth to the Son of God. It's joyful news! Yet, it's an interruption! How would Mary explain her pregnancy to her fiancé Joseph? Would he believe her? Would he be willing to take on that responsibility? This was not in their plans. And yet, she accepted it. We know how Joseph responded. He didn't believe her. How could he? His plans for a happy home with the woman he loved were gone with the wind. His life, as well as hers, had been powerfully interrupted.

Joseph nearly went down the wrong path. Often an interruption brings on a knee-jerk reaction. We make decisions that, if we were better informed, we would not make. We must be careful that when we face an interruption, we don't just react according to our own fears and feelings. The key to handling an interruption is involve God in the interruption.

Matthew 1:20b-25 - “²⁰...“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”).

Joseph awoke with a changed mind. He would not divorce Mary. He would take her as his wife and help raise this miraculous child. He had gotten God's perspective of his interruption. When you encounter an interruption, whatever it may be, don't react according to your own feelings and thoughts. For life's interruptions, seek God's direction. Remember Proverbs 3:5-6, “⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (NIV).”

THREE WORDS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER LIFE'S INTERRUPTION:

Prayer

The first thing to do when your life is interrupted is stop and pray. Pray for guidance. Pray for courage. Pray for help. When you look up to God, He will look down to help you. I believed Joseph prayed before going to sleep. God talked to him in his dreams this is why he accepted to continue marrying Mary.

Perspective

Put life's interruption in the proper perspective. How bad is it really? How long will it affect you? What difference will it make in eternity? Keep in mind: Some life's disappointments are God's appointments. Joseph was hurt not realizing it was God's appointment for him to become the earthly father of the Savior people are waiting for.

Providence

Bear in mind that God, in His providence, is still in control of your life. Nothing can happen in your life without the knowledge of our Heavenly Father. He still has all of the hairs on your head numbered.

Whatever interruption you may be enduring right now, why not look at it in a different light, and ask, "God, are you using this to do something great in my life?" Then begin to look for the marvelous things He will do.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.) What are the interruptions in your life lately?
 - 2.) What is your usual reaction to interruptions in your life?
 - 3.) share a time in your life when interruptions became a wonderful story?
- Pray for each other in your group.*