

Do Not Be Afraid!

Purpose: to encourage the listeners follow the example of Joseph, who was not afraid to do God's will, even in difficult circumstances.

Whenever we have a baptism I often wonder why so many are afraid to take this step. Is it because:

I'm not ready

I'm not good enough

What if I mess up/sin again?

What will my friends/family think?

Last week I spoke about Mary; today we are going to see what we can gain from her eventual husband, Joseph

Read Matthew 1:18-25

What do we know about him?

- He was a just man
- He did not want to make her a public example

Deu 22: 23 *"If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her,*

***Deu 22: 24** - then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you.*

Gen 38:24 - *And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry." So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"*

- He loved her enough to deal with her secretly
 - **1Pe 4:8** And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "LOVE WILL COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS."
 - **Pro 10:12** Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.
 - **Pro 17:9** He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates friends.

What did the angel say to him? Do not be afraid!

Mat 1:20 *But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*

What could have made him afraid?

Mary's virtue/purity – is she really a good person?

Reproach, scandal, public opinion – what about my reputation?

Peer pressure – should I do what everyone else would do in this situation?

What did he do? He did what the angel told him to do

- He married Mary
 - Mat 1:24** *Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,*
 - Mat 1:25** *and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.*
- He took the young Child to Egypt
 - Mat 2:13** *Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."*
 - Mat 2:14** *When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,*
- He took the Child back to the land of Israel
 - Mat 2:20** *saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead."*
- He took the child to Nazareth
- **Mat 2:22** But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.
- **Mat 2:23** And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

I think that we can learn something from Joseph:

- He was a just man
- He was willing to show mercy to Mary, even when she thought that she had sinned, because he loved her
- When God gave him instructions he obeyed, even under difficult circumstances
- This is why he was chosen to be the earthly father of the Messiah (Jesus)
- Don't ever be afraid to do whatever God requires of you! If He said it, He will perform it!