

CHRISTMAS CHARACTERS

Joseph & Mary

Luke 1:26-38

Matthew 1:18-25

One word summarizes the Christmas story when it comes to Joseph & Mary. That word is

SUBMIT

To submit is . . . to choose to sacrificially serve the best interests of another for the glory of God.

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled."

Luke 1:38

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Matthew 1:24

KEY TRUTHS ABOUT THE WORD SUBMIT:

- WE ALL SUBMIT
- SUBMIT AND BE BLESSED
- SUBMIT OR SUFFER

We don't really break God's laws as much as we break ourselves against those laws.

- SUBMIT AND SUFFER

"And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Luke 2:35

- SUBMIT AND SUFFER AND BE BLESSED
- SUBMIT AND SUFFER AND BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING

While Mary and Joseph's submission to God involved different circumstances, it was no different at its core from the submission God invites us to embrace. We are all called to SUBMIT.

FOR JOSEPH:

There are three stages to a marriage at this time and in this context

1. THE ARRANGEMENT: parents would formally settle that their children would marry each other
2. THE ENGAGEMENT/BETROTHAL: This is a formal ceremony by the consenting couple at the home of the bride. They made promises to each other at this event. The bride received presents from the groom. This could only be broken by death or divorce. They were called husband and wife. They did not live together. No sexual activity. This stage lasted one year.
3. MARRIAGE: This would happen one year after the engagement/betrothal ceremony. The groom would bring the bride to his home. There would be a feast and the couple would physically consummate their marriage.

FOR MARY:

Pregnancy outside of marriage was a violation of the law with severe punishment. Who knew if Joseph would stay with her when he found out? Would the community reject her?

**"Greetings you who are highly favoured!
The Lord is with you."**

Luke 1:28

Highly favoured comes from a single Greek word *charitoo* that is found twice in the New Testament. Once here and once in Ephesians 1:6 where it is translated **glorious grace** and is applied to every follower of Jesus. Which means that every follower of Jesus is **highly favoured**.

The Lord is with you is also true of every believer.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:21

Ephesians 5:22-33 . . . Wives and Husbands

Ephesians 6:1-4 . . . Parents and Children

Ephesians 6:5-9 . . . Slaves and Masters (employers and employees?)

QUESTIONS:

1. Is there an area in your life you find difficult to submit to God?
2. What is it you fear most that is stopping you from submitting?
3. Can you trust God with this area of your life?