



CHRISTMAS FOR THE VALLEY

THROUGH THE EYES OF JOSEPH

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As we continue in our Christmas FOR The Valley series, we are looking at the Christmas Story through the eyes of the main characters. This week we met Joseph. Joseph is often an overlooked character despite the fact that his character and humility is so evident when he faces UNMET EXPECTATIONS.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- We all have expectations. How do you respond to UNMET expectations?

READ Matthew 1:18. What kind of man was Joseph? What was Joseph's UNMET expectation upon learning that Mary is pregnant?

How should we respond to UNMET expectations?

1. KINDNESS

READ Matthew 1:19. What do we learn about Joseph in this verse?

READ Romans 2:4. God often holds back His judgment in order to give people time to repent. Although, It's easy to mistake His patience for approval. Why do you think the kindness of God is what leads us to repentance?

2. OBEDIENCE

READ Matthew 1:20-21. Perhaps Joseph thought he had only 2 options: divorce her quietly or have her stoned. God had a third option - marry her. God often lets us wrestle through discomfort in order to develop our character. Do you think Joseph was struggling with what to do? Why?

READ Matthew 1:22-25. What did Joseph do? Do you think others may have disapproved of what he chose to do? Do you ever struggle with being obedient to God because you are afraid of what others may think?

READ Matthew 2:13-14 & 21. Our obedience to God will often require sacrifice. Joseph knew he wasn't the Father of Jesus, but he was responsible for his safety. What were some of the sacrifices that Joseph was asked to make?

3. FAITHFULNESS

READ Luke 2:22-24. Obedience is important when God calls us to follow His instruction, even when it is difficult. Faithfulness is what we consistently do as a follower of Jesus Christ. How is Joseph being faithful in these passages?.

READ Leviticus 12:8. Based on Joseph and Mary's sacrifice, were they wealthy or poor?

READ 1 Timothy 6:17-20. How did Joseph and Mary demonstrate faithfulness?

THIS WEEK:

With the story of Joseph in mind, commit to doing some spiritual self-evaluation with regards to being KIND, OBEDIENT and FAITHFUL. Which of these areas do you need the group to pray with you?

PRAY ABOUT IT:

Spend time praying and asking God to show you the places in your life where you've been avoiding the pain of sacrifice and withholding your obedience from God. Thank God individually in prayer for His willingness to go to great lengths to help you grow spiritually even when you're resistant or don't like it. Finally, thank Jesus for His willingness to sacrifice His life for us so that we could know God and experience freedom from sin.