

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

MAY 2 - 6, 2022

COMMON
QUESTIONS
ABOUT JESUS APR 24 - MAY 29

MONDAY

Read [Luke 1:26-28](#); [Matthew 1:18-25](#), [2:13-23](#)

The Family of Jesus: Joseph, adoptive father of Jesus, the Child

Can you think of a prominent Bible character, a person who was intimately involved in the life of Jesus but for whom there is no record in Scripture of any word this person ever said? You guessed it. The person is Joseph, the earthly adoptive father of Jesus.

A descendant of David, Joseph lived in Nazareth in the region of Galilee, and he was betrothed to Mary (Luke 1:27), a virgin and eventual mother of Jesus. Scripture tells us that Mary became pregnant through the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18) and not through Joseph. The Bible doesn't tell us much about Joseph, but through the few verses that mention him, we might speculate that Joseph was a man of deep humility who was absolutely obedient to God. The pattern of an angel appearing to Joseph with an instruction (1) to marry Mary, (2) to flee to Egypt, and then later (3) to return to Israel required unwavering obedience to God.

The Bible also suggests that Joseph was a kind and caring person. Even though Joseph had the right to divorce Mary when learning she was pregnant, his immediate intention was to do so discreetly (Matthew 1:19). As a caring man, he would not want to bring any public shame or disgrace on Mary or her family.

Joseph's love for his "son," Jesus, is exemplified in the well-known story of the annual trip to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Remember how Jesus stayed behind at the temple in Jerusalem while His parents began making their way home? When Mary and Joseph realized Jesus wasn't with their caravan to Galilee, they searched "anxiously" for three days before finding Him sitting among some teachers of the law (Luke 2:48). Can you imagine this scenario in today's society, in 2022?

Adoptive parents are special. They take on the legal, societal, and loving role of raising a child with no biological connection. Joseph was in a unique class as an adoptive parent and earthly father of Jesus Christ the Messiah. (Have you ever thought about what it would be like to give a "time out" to Jesus as a toddler?) And yet Joseph was caring, loving, sacrificial, and absolutely obedient to the voice of God.

QUESTIONS

Like Joseph, are you listening for the voice of God as His child?
How can we be obedient without hesitation to the voice of God?
What characteristic of Joseph might you want to develop as a follower of Christ?

PRAYERS FOR PARS THEOLOGICAL CENTRE

Pars exists to equip and mobilize the Iranian church by training servant leaders to lead the Persian-speaking church. Pray for Pars' students in persecuted countries. Pray that God will cast a veil of protection over these pastors and churches and provide refuge for the students and their families.

TUESDAY

Read **Luke 2:21-52**

The Family of Jesus: Joseph, adoptive father of Jesus, the Rabbi

If you visit the City of Nazareth in Northern Israel, it is common to visit the Basilica of the Annunciation, a Catholic cathedral which is traditionally said to be where the house of Mary was when the angel Gabriel appeared and announced that Mary was to be the mother of Jesus. In its shadow (the Basilica is a large church), you would find the smaller Church of St Joseph, where, tradition suggests, Joseph had his carpentry shop. People in Scripture referred to Jesus as “*the carpenter’s son*” (Matthew 13:55), suggesting that Joseph worked as a carpenter or some other type of handyman. (The Greek word for “carpenter” could also be translated as “stonemason” or “metallurgist.”) Whatever Joseph’s particular vocation was, it is evident that he worked hard to provide for his family, doing what he could to help Jesus grow in “*wisdom and stature*” (Luke 2:52). He was a good, hard-working stepfather to the Son of Man.

Joseph isn’t mentioned in any of the stories of Jesus’ adult ministry while Mary, His mother, occasionally is (Mark 3:31; John 2:1; 19:25). The absence of Joseph in the stories of Jesus’ ministry has led many to believe that Joseph died sometime between when Jesus was a young boy (Luke 2:42) and when He launched His public ministry as an adult (Luke 3:23). The fact that Jesus committed the care of His

mother to John as He was dying gives strong indication that Joseph had indeed passed away by that time (John 19:26-27).

The father in a Jewish family is an important role. There is a passage in the *Talmud* that explains literally what a father should do for his child after birth, and it reads: "A father is obligated to do the following for his son: to circumcise him, to redeem him if he is a first-born, to teach him *Torah*, to find him a wife, and to teach him a trade." Jesus in His humanity was no different from any child or son in any Jewish family. Joseph quietly fulfilled this role with God-honoring obedience.

QUESTIONS

Has God ordained a special role for you to live as a child, parent, or sibling in your family? What could you do differently to show God's love in your family dynamics?

PRAYERS FOR PARS THEOLOGICAL CENTRE

Pray for Iran and their leadership as they offer temporary settlement to Afghans fleeing the Taliban. There are others who are looking for asylum in Turkmenistan. Pray that their escapes will be protected.

WEDNESDAY

Read **Mark 6:1-3; Acts 1:13-14; John 7:1-10**

The Family of Jesus: Jesus, the older “brother”

It is sometimes easy to forget that when Jesus walked this earth over 2000 years ago, He was both the Son of God and the Son of Man. He walked, talked, ate, wept, and slept just as any human would. Though it is not our normal thinking to consider Jesus as the older brother, yet He was!

Mark 6:3 tells us that Jesus had four younger brothers (Jesus was the first-born) and at least two sisters (Scripture uses the plural), who were the children of Mary and Joseph. The sisters' names have not been preserved, but the brothers were called James (in the Hebrew, Jacob), Joses (in the Hebrew, Joseph, probably after his father), Simon, and Judas or Juda (also known as Jude). Two of the names, James and Joses, appear again in Mark 15:40 where they are said to be the sons of Mary, one of the women watching the crucifixion.

Mary and the brothers are mentioned from the first miracle, leaving the wedding at Cana together (John 2:12), but may have been misaligned per Matthew 12:46-49 when they wanted to speak to Jesus. As brothers, they were no different from any today, taunting Jesus to a more public life as the Messiah (John 7:1-10) even though they doubted at that time that Jesus was the Messiah. However, after

the resurrection of Jesus there appears to have been a change as we read that Mary and the brothers gathered in fellowship and prayer (Acts 1:13-14).

Many commentators hold that the author of the epistle of Jude, who identifies himself as the “*brother of James*” (Jude 1), was one of these brothers. It is also generally believed that the leader of the church at Jerusalem was James, the brother of Jesus (see Acts 12:17; 15:13). This seems to be confirmed by Paul’s reference to his visit to Jerusalem, in which he states that he saw only Peter and “*James, the Lord’s brother*” (Galatians 1:18-19).

Jesus’ family was probably no different than many of our families today. Questions, love, relationship challenges and much more. How easy it is then to share our questions, challenges, dynamics, and frustrations in our families with the Lord of our lives, who probably experienced just the same!

QUESTIONS

Is this the day to contact members of your family and tell them how much you love them? What could you do differently to show the love of Jesus in your family today?

PRAYERS FOR PARS THEOLOGICAL CENTRE

Please pray for the women whose safety and education are being threatened. Please pray against a new internet bill waiting to be approved by the Iranian government that will place stronger restrictions on internet use. The government is asking social media platforms to register with the government so they control user data.

THURSDAY

Read [Luke 1:26-56](#); [Luke 2:41-52](#)

The Family of Jesus: Mary, the mother of Jesus

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was indeed an amazing woman. Our focus as modern-day Christians on the person of Mary tends to be at Christmas: the immaculate conception, the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55), and the manger scene (Luke 2:4-7). However, Mary's story starts centuries before through the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14), where Isaiah speaks of the virgin-mother of Emmanuel.

This young woman was of courageous character as we see reflected in her obedience and servant's heart for her God. Can you imagine as a teenager having an angel appear to you with the news that you were pregnant with the Messiah! And yet we read and ponder the maturity of her first question, "*How will this be ... since I am a virgin?*" (Luke 1:34) and then her response in obedience and calmness: "*I am the Lord's servant,*" Mary answered. "*May your word to me be fulfilled.*" ... *Then the angel left her*" (v. 38). Mary's obedience and courage could only have been sourced from her deep and existing love for God. Mary's powerful words, "*My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior*" (v. 46), a song of praise we have named the *Magnificat*, reflect an attitude that every believer would, and should, aspire to in living in a deep and meaningful relationship with God.

Mary is a significant character in Scripture as the mother of Jesus. It is easy to forget that without Mary there is no Son of Man. Mary followed the tradition of all Jewish moms in having Jesus circumcised (Luke 2:21) and parenting Him as He grew and became strong (v. 40). And at the embarrassing moment of losing Jesus as a twelve-year-old for three days (v. 45), like any good mother, she asked, “Why?” Her young son, who respected her and was obedient to Mary and Joseph as His earthly parents, answered: “*Didn’t you know I had to be in My Father’s house?*” (v. 49). Mary was courteous, obedient, traditional, and thoughtful: “*His (Jesus’) mother treasured all these things in her heart*” (v. 51).

QUESTIONS

As Jesus works in your life, do you treasure what He teaches and shows you? Is your response to God’s direction and plans for your life that of Mary’s, “*I am the Lord’s Servant*”? What would be the first step to this unquestioning obedience to God’s voice?

PRAYERS FOR PARS THEOLOGICAL CENTRE

Please pray for Pars’ students. Currently there are approximately 500 students registered for the upcoming classes. Pray that God will continue to provide for our students as they make the sacrifices and take substantial risks to study with Pars.

FRIDAY

Read [John 2:1-12](#)

The Family of Jesus: Mary, just “the mom”

Mary is never mentioned in the New Testament without her words or actions pointing to Jesus. As “just the mom,” Jesus was her son and joy, a very special child indeed. From her song of praise while pregnant, through her anxious encounter with Jesus in the temple after “losing” Him, to her quiet intervention at the wedding at Cana, to the sadness of finding herself standing at the cross, and during the final mention of her praying with the disciples and her other children, every mention of Mary leads us back to Jesus, His mission, and our salvation.

Mary’s life is a tribute to the life and ministry of Jesus on this earth. As a mother she watched Him grow “*in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and Man*” (Luke 2:52). He was a very different child as the Son of God, but Mary was still His earthly mom. The first miracle attributed to Jesus of turning water into wine at a wedding in Cana is all about Mary the mom, and Jesus her son (John 2:1-11).

Mary starts the miracle by telling Jesus that there is no wine. Jesus replies that this is not yet His time. Mary then instructs the servants to do whatever her son tells them; Jesus then performs a miracle by turning water into wine. We can only guess what the conversation was like when Jesus went down to Capernaum after the wedding with His mother and brothers (v. 12). It must have been an interesting family dinner conversation!

The last mention in Scripture of Mary is her being named—and the only one to be named other than the disciples—in the upper room praying after Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1:14). How extraordinary for a mom to give birth to a son, see Him crucified, celebrate His rising from the dead, and then watch Him finally ascend into heaven. No other earthly person knew Jesus like Mary did.

Mary, as Jesus’ mom, portrays a model of obedience, learning, humility, and oneness with God, while never seeking personal glory, but consistently glorifying God and His Son, Jesus. This is a model for us Christ followers.

QUESTIONS

What attribute of Mary would you most like to grow in as you show to the world your love of Jesus? How can you be different as a follower of Christ as you consider the life of Mary?

PRAYERS FOR PARS THEOLOGICAL CENTRE

Pray that the Lord would guide and direct Pars as we look into new endeavors to help our students local and abroad. Pray that the Lord would lay it on the right people’s hearts to support and be involved. Pray for the health and safety of all staff involved. .



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