

Beyond His Birth

Life Lessons on Christmas from Those Who Were There

SESSION 1: JOSEPH - RIGHTEOUSNESS

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a **righteous** man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus. **Matthew 1:18-25 NASB**

Joseph teaches us Righteousness through his:

1. MERCY

Righteous people don't feel the need to punish, even when someone wrongs us.

2. FAITH & OBEDIENCE

OBEDIENCE is how make our FAITH active!

3. GRACE TOWARD OTHERS

We follow Jesus' example by extending grace, even if we're entitled to have something from someone, doesn't mean we have to take it.

4. HUMILITY BEFORE GOD

We always put God first in our lives. We give Him more importance than ourselves. When it comes to God, we know our place!

Notes:

Discussion Questions:

- Do you have an example where you showed mercy over punishing someone? Where you showed kindness and forgiveness over getting back at someone? Is there someone in your life you can show mercy to right now?
- Is God calling you to do something where you need to act in faith and be obedient?
- What are ways in which you show grace toward others in your life? How do you show grace toward strangers?
- Is there an example of something that’s hard to humble yourself before the Lord to do?
- By practicing mercy, faith & obedience, grace for others and humility before God, do you see how you can become more inwardly righteous?

Homework:

Write down the four characteristics of righteousness displayed by Joseph according to our lesson and keep them in a visible place. Be intentional about practicing them and note the impact on yourself and/or others, journaling if necessary. Be prepared to share with your group at your next meeting.

Meditate & Memorize:

The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and His ears toward their cry. **Psalm 34:15**

Let the righteous one rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in Him! Let all the upright in heart exult! **Psalm 64:10**