

Connection

What is one of your favorite Christmas traditions?

Content

Among the many fascinating elements of the Nativity story, the presence of angels may just top the list. Scattered throughout the Christmas narrative, these strange but divine beings show up demonstrating a practical truth— that God is near, at work, and something big is happening.

Difficulty

1. Read Matthew 1:18. Engagement was a very serious matter, where gifts would be exchanged, two families would be bound together financially and the engagement would not be able to be broken unless someone was not faithful or committed a great sin.

Mary becoming pregnant during engagement was a great difficulty on her, her family and the betrothal as a whole. Why do you think Mary and Joseph experienced such a great difficulty before their marriage could even begin?

Dilemma

2. Read Matthew 1:19 and Matthew 5:7. Joseph learned Mary was pregnant and decided to break their engagement privately even though he would have been justified to seek public retribution.

Character is revealed in chaos, what do these verses say of Joseph?

Dream

3. Read Matthew 1:20 and Deuteronomy 13:1-3a. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. Dreams are a real means that God may use to speak to us, however we need to be careful with them. What other means have you seen God use to try to get your attention?

When have you felt God getting your attention recently?

Direction

4. Read Matthew 1:21. God reminds Joseph of who he is as a “son of David.” And secondly He tells him to change his actions and take Mary as his wife for the child is from the Holy Spirit.

The angel reminds Joseph to not fear the present nor the future of taking Mary as his wife. Why did the angel remind Joseph of his very lineage from the house of David?

Discovery

5. Read Matthew 1:22-23, Leviticus 26:12 and Matthew 28:20. Jesus’ birth was miraculous: He came from a virgin! And, in doing so, fulfilled scripture.

Jesus is always with us, loving us and providing for us. How have you felt the miracle of Jesus’ presence in your life?

Commitment

6. Read Matthew 1:24-25 and Titus 3:4-6. We are to live a life of devotion to God. Joseph lived a “righteous” life - a life of devotion to God, and he believed the words of the angel.

This week, how can you live a life of devotion to God, while remembering how He has saved you not because of your righteousness but because of mercy?