

The Special Reason You Need to Be Like Joseph This Christmas—and Beyond

When Joseph chose Mary as his wife, he had no idea what he was in for. That's an understatement! He certainly didn't expect God to choose her to give birth to His Son, the long-awaited Savior. This changed everything.

Their beginnings as a couple were different in many ways. Of course, the most significant was that Joseph would raise a boy not his son by birth. He would raise Jesus. God not only chose Mary; He also chose Joseph.

Joseph and Mary started their marriage with an infant and wouldn't have much time alone. They also relocated often in their early years because Joseph was obedient to the messages received in dreams. Joseph saved Jesus' life by fleeing to Egypt and then to Nazareth.

Let's Be Like Joseph

There's much about Joseph I appreciate and admire. When finding out Mary was pregnant, he could have left without shame or blame because of cultural expectations. But, he stayed. He put Mary and Jesus first. He believed Mary was pregnant with Jesus. Joseph had integrity, taking his vow seriously.

During this Christmas season, Joseph's ability to be flexible inspires me. He was also able to act quickly when he needed to. He most likely had plans and expectations for the way their lives would start together and continue. Little or nothing went according to his plan.

I need to be more like Joseph especially this Christmas

season. I wish this for you, too. We need to be flexible, not holding onto our plans too tightly. It's fine to have expectations, but we don't need to get upset when things change. And, rather than analyzing everything, even if this is our preference, we need to act quickly when we clearly know what's best.

A Reason to Be Like Joseph

I arrived at my brother and sister-in-law's home outside of Atlanta on Nov. 30, because of a series of speaking events in the area that began on Dec. 1. Deb and Dave's washing machine malfunctioned before Thanksgiving. Their kitchen wood floor and some cabinets were damaged. Repairing the floor would mean it wouldn't match the rest of the wood floors in their home, so the insurance company approved the plan that all their flooring would be sanded, stained and varnished to match.

Therefore, we moved out of their home to a hotel for four days. We're back in the house now, surrounded by boxes we need to unpack. Including the two basement rooms that needed new carpets and ceiling tiles, eight rooms in their home were packed up. In fact, from the room in which I'm writing this blog post, I'm staring at two huge storage units taking up space on their driveway that were full of their furniture and boxes.

Other than one small pre-lit Christmas tree, no decorations are up. We didn't have our big (huge!) cookie-baking day on Dec. 2 as we had planned way back in early November. Other traditions won't be enjoyed this year because there won't be time.

We have to prioritize dusting everything and putting things back where they belong. We want to have energy left when their children and first grandchild arrive for Christmas.

Taking Responsibility

It's all OK. It has to be. That has to be our attitude. Otherwise, we'll ruin what is left of the month. We will be responsible. No complaining about the washing machine, floors, the timing, or anything else. We will be responsible.

Attitudes are *our* responsibility. *I'm* responsible for mine, Deb for hers, Dave for his and their kids and others affected for theirs.

For a while on Monday, I didn't handle things well. I chose to focus on what I wasn't able to accomplish. I chose to experience stress and stay in that valley for a while. Rather than focusing on one thing and feeling good when accomplishing it, I thought more about all I had left to do. I focused on my plans and expectations. And I was not pleasant to be around.

I want to be more like Joseph. I need to be more like Joseph. Do you?

(By the way, the floors are beautiful. and we are very grateful excellent craftsmen accomplished everything before Christmas. We realize we have a lot to be grateful for. This perspective will help us be well and do well the rest of the month.) {eo}

Dr. Kathy Koch *is the author of* Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World.

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