

This Key Character Quality Ignited Joseph and Mary to Change the World

The news must have felt like a punch in the gut.

The ultimate betrayal.

His fiancée was pregnant, and it was certainly not with his child—he had remained pure.

Tossing and turning on his bed, the battle waged within him. He loved her, and yet she had been unfaithful. How could he ever trust her after this? Should he break their engagement? That would only bring a thousand questions from family and friends, questions that demanded an explanation that would not only shame her but alienate her from the community and stain her reputation forever.

Tormented, he turned the scenario around in his head until he had examined every angle and decided to end their relationship as silently as possible.

It was in this moment that the oddest thing happened. In fact, when explaining it to others, they thought he was daft.

An angel appeared to him.

And the strange and utterly distorted situation only grew odder when the angel said there was no reason to fear because the Holy Spirit had impregnated Mary, his fiancée.

Who would ever believe that story?

What's more, this would fulfill prophecies he had heard about his whole life. The angel was asking him to play a part in an event that would forever alter all of history.

He would be the father to the Messiah!

Joseph was about to embark on the most terrifying and intimidating journey any father in history had ever walked. Surely he and Mary would be somewhat distanced from their peers. Anyone doing math would figure out that Mary had conceived prior to their wedding. This not only stained Mary's reputation but his as well. No one would believe them when they told them that the both of them had been pure when they married.

Yet, what would it be like to raise God in the flesh?

Every father throughout history has felt the weight of responsibility and intimidation of training young lives to become respectful and righteous men. But Jesus upped the ante.

How on earth do you raise the Son of God?

To further complicate an already-complex situation, his and Mary's natural children were the siblings to a boy who never sinned. Yes, raising children requires tailoring child-rearing to each individual personality, but how do you not compare their natural inclination to steal, lie, fight and throw tantrums to their oldest sibling who had never sinned—not even once?

When I contemplate the depth of faith Joseph displayed, I am both amazed and ashamed.

Amazed at a faith that was ready and willing to accept the words of the angel despite the challenge and serious implications they carried; ashamed because I know I don't have this depth of faith.

What if Joseph had rejected the angel's instructions? What if he had decided that marrying Mary would have been too complicated and risky?

How would have his decision to end their engagement silently

have altered God's plan?

The Bible doesn't talk much about Joseph. I see him as the quiet, steady type—the one who is content to remain behind the scenes and yet is reliable, dependable and rock-solid.

And his faith was just as solid.

A faith that empowered him to take on a role that no one else in history had ever filled before—a role that would forever set him apart.

A divine role that required him to raise the One who had shaped and formed him, the one who knew him better than he knew himself, the One who—indeed—had created the entire universe with a simple word from his tiny, rosebud lips.

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