

*Fear Not The
Impossible*

*Preached By
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Open your bible and go to Matthew Chapter 1. In this chapter is a list of generations (the begat verses) beginning with Abraham moving along through David and finally getting to the 28th generation that brings us to Jesus. Matthew by listing the family lines makes it very apparent that Jesus had a right to the throne of David. Jesus had the right to be King of the Jews. Then Matthews chronicles the birth of Christ starting in verse 18. Let us read Matthew 1:18-19.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on the wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

Now you can also find this story in Luke's gospel. He documents this event by giving us Mary's perspective while Matthew lays out the details how Joseph was affected by the news and how he reacted to the situation. Tonight as I am preaching this message, try to put yourselves into this incredible, impossible and unheard story. What Joseph and Mary experienced had never happened before in history. They had no references to guide them or manual to follow along. Now just when Joseph was probably getting a handle on the situation it suddenly turns and even becomes more bizarre. Let us read verse 20.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

Remember to put flesh and blood in tonight's message. Joseph up to this point in the story never knew Mary in a sexual sense. Mary was still a virgin. Just imagine the state of shock that Joseph was experiencing. I am willing to bet the house that Joseph never received any word from the Lord from an angel before, and if he ever had hoped to he never thought it was going to be anything like what he heard. He

was told that the Holy Ghost conceived the child in Mary. I can hear Joseph saying ‘The Holy, Who!’ Come on you men listening tonight, put yourself in his situation, I am sure you would not have believed your wife or the angel. I will be honest, I probably also would have said something stupid to my wife such as “you lied to me; I thought you were a virgin.” I would have felt betrayed and probably full of uncontrollable anger. Most of us if not all of us would have convinced ourselves that Mary was a lying unfaithful wife. I believe none of us would have reacted by saying Hallelujah something wonderful just happened while falling on your knees and praising God for choosing you to be part of something so wonderful. I do not care how super spiritual you are you would have been shocked and crushed when placed in the same situation as Joseph. I am sure that Joseph’s heart was not only pierced but also broken. I know my heart would have been. Some of you are probably by this point are asking yourselves what about Mary’s heart? Mary knew she was telling the truth. You need to stay with me here, this story is in Matthew, and as I said earlier this story tonight is about how the Lord’s deals with Joseph. Sometime soon, I will preach a fear not message concerning Mary’s situation and how the Lord comforts her. As I already stated, Joseph must have been devastated not knowing what to do. Then, sooner rather than later fear and anxieties took its nasty turn at him. Joseph just did not understand what was happening in his life.

There is no hint in the story that Joseph looked to the scriptures to gain any understanding in the matter. If he did, he would have been encouraged and comforted that the promise given so long ago has finally arrived. If we stop and reflect about this story, shouldn’t we be applying that same principle in our everyday lives with all of its trials and tribulations? How quickly we forget what to do and where to run. Let us look at what could have comforted Joseph if he had looked to God’s word. Let’s read Isaiah 7:14

Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Do you really believe that Joseph when he heard the disturbing news about Mary stopped his racing thoughts and reflected back to what Isaiah proclaimed? Do you

really believe that Joseph thought for one moment that his wife might have been the chosen virgin? If Joseph did, there is no evidence of that in scripture. In fact, Matthew says that Joseph's reaction was one of fear and anxiety over the situation. He did not even consider for one minute that the Lord selected them to be part of a world changing history. He did not even understand the privilege and promise that some couple needed to be the earthly parents to the promise Immanuel the Saviour of the world. Just in case you think, I am being too hard on Joseph; I do not think any of us would have done any better. How many husbands including myself listening tonight would have trusted a dream that you dreamt to be from the Lord. I know I would have rationalized the dream that I had was really a bad nightmare probably created by the racing thoughts I had before going to sleep. Furthermore, I would have convinced myself that there was no truth to it. Once again, my first reaction would have been who is the person name angel and why did you have an affair with him? Let me ask again. Husbands what you would have done after receiving the news that some supernatural force while still being a virgin impregnated your wife. What would you have done knowing that the child Mary was caring was not from your loins? Let see what Joseph did in verse 19.

Joseph was a just man and was not willing to make a public example of Mary, which would have been a common practice in those days. Instead, he was thinking about putting her away privately. If Joseph was a legalistic man, he could have demanded that Mary be stoned and put to death. After all what further proof would he need that she committed adultery? The Mosaic Law was on his side, and it would have justified Mary's punishment. Let us read what the book of Leviticus 20:10 says.

And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Joseph and Mary during this time were still under the Mosaic Law. In fact, there are still some cultures today that practice death for adulterers. From the Law point of view, Joseph had every right to have Mary condemned to death. Thank God,

Joseph was not a legalistic, self-righteousness, hotheaded man. Scripture tells us he was just the opposite he was a righteousness man. Joseph, for the most part, was a faithful man trying to be right with God. The Lord knew whom to pick not only because of their lineage but also because of the persons. The Law didn't produce many faithful individuals, they were just too wrapped up in being legalistic, dotting all the I's and crossing every T. Joseph loved Mary and did not want to give way to the Pharisees that would have put Mary to death and make a public example of her. What an impossible situation Joseph found himself in, he definitely was in a tight squeeze. If I were Joseph at this point, I would have definitely questioned the Lord's ability to control the events of my life. I definitely am asking by now why did He let me get on this roller coaster ride and where do I get off? I arguably would have thought that I did not deserve what was happening to me. Definitely, I would have questioned the Lord's ability to control matters that concern me. This is what Satan tries to accomplish through fear, doubts and questions. He is still trying today to put that wedge between Christ and us. He is constantly planting seeds of doubt, whether we should put our trust and confidence in Jesus Christ. I can guarantee you tonight that we will not understand every step in the journey of faith we are on. However, we have to remember that we are not on the journey alone Christ is there with us. His promise is that He will never leave us or forsake us in our journey. In addition, as we are about to see He was not going to forsake Joseph neither.

So what was Joseph going to do with Mary? In verse 19, we see that probably he was going to divorce her in private. His intention was not to embarrass her or put her safety in jeopardy. Sure, he was disappointed, confused and full of fear, nevertheless, he still wanted to protect her because he loved Mary. Therefore, the decision that he was about to make was to divorce her and put her away where nobody could see her while she was pregnant. However, something amazing happened! Let us read Matthew 1 verse 20.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

It is obvious that Joseph up to the point before he had the dream was doing a lot of thinking trying to make an intelligent decision concerning the situation. However, there is nowhere in these verses of scripture that he included the Lord through supplication and prayer. There is nowhere he is seeking the Lord for guidance and help. How many times we have found ourselves in impossible situations trying to figure out how to solve our problems without letting the Lord in on it. I will confess tonight that I am guilty! This type of response to our problems leads us down a road to anxieties and fears. We have displaced the Lord thinking that we can solve whatever we face on our own strength. I am preaching tonight only the Lord and His word can keep those fears and problems in check. Even though they might look impossible to solve, God's word make it very clear to **fear not the impossible**. The angel was delivering the message to fear not to take unto. In short, get with the program Joseph the Lord has this situation all under His control. That same message applies to us today. Do not be fearful of the impossible, the Lord is in control.

I know some of you by now are saying to yourselves Joseph was having a dream and in today's world that would not fly. That was Joseph subconscious working overtime. If I were Joseph, I probably would have come up with many different reasons why I had such a dream. I would have rationalized it from every angle. That is not how Joseph reacted to the dream. He was persuaded that the dream that he had was an answer to his dilemma. Joseph found himself faithing that the Lord gave him the answer to his problem. Ask yourself tonight, would you start faithing in a dream that you had concerning your problems. Well thank the Lord that we do not have to because we have the written word to lead us in our dilemmas. We have many more promises to claim and a Master that promised to be there every step of the journey wherever it may lead. Some have preached that Joseph was not a faithing man that is nonsense. It is evident that when his back was up against the wall, he trusted the Lord, and he had confidence that the Lord would see him through. The devil is always looking for the opportunities to push us in the direction of fear and doubt. However, thank God that we have more than an angel we have the Lord Jesus Christ to lead us in the direction of faith in Him.

The angel of the Lord showed up just in time to lift Joseph up above what fear produces. Fear is a Greek word phobia, and it literally means to be struck with fear. It describes the condition where you find yourself not in control or losing control over the circumstances and not knowing where it all might lead you. The last time I checked there are 531 phobias according to the experts. That is a *lot* of ammo Satan and his minions have to work with. They are always on the lookout to use a phobia that would distress you. They know your strengths and weaknesses, and they are waiting to pounce and take advantage of you. However, God's word is real and clear today as it was 2000 years ago, and it says to **fear not to take unto**. I challenge you today to fear not to take unto you God's word to face and overcome all of your fears and anxieties as Joseph did with his fears and anxieties.

Let me conclude this message tonight by reading you a story. "Allen Emery was in the wool business, and he spent one evening with a shepherd on the Texas prairie. During the night in the long wait, he heard coyotes wailing, and it pierced the ear with fear. The shepherd's dogs growled and peered into the darkness not knowing where the noise was coming from. The sheep, which had been sleeping, lumbered suddenly to their feet alarmed fearful and bleating pitifully. The shepherd began tossing more logs into the fire and the flames shot up and started to glow. Allen said that he looked and said he saw thousands of little lights all around the prairie and those little lights were the reflection of the fire in the eyes of the sheep. When he realized that, he said, in the midst of the danger I realized that the sheep were not looking to the darkness like dogs but the sheep were keeping their eyes set in the direction of safety, they were looking to the shepherd."

Let me once again remind us that whatever fears we might face, whatever impossible situation confronts us, to keep our eyes on Jesus, He is our Chief Shepherd, and He will relieve our fears. Nothing is impossible for our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Remember to just keep on faithing in Him and His word!

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