


Matthew's Messiah
The Fathers in Jesus' Genealogy

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2020.12.3&6



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent, action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "Talking Points, Walking Points" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep" too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time", are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- When Joseph found out that his fiancée was pregnant, he was faced with a dilemma: how could he be gracious to the woman he loves while also being faithful to the God who loves him (Matthew 1:19)? When have you been placed in a similar situation? Tell us about it. How did you resolve the tension?

- Pastor Doug noted the exclusive claim Christ makes: **"No one comes to the Father but through me"** (John 14:6). We each have a lock on the door to **our** home and decide who to let in—so **why** do you think so many people find it difficult to accept that God also has **his own** entrance requirement?

How does "salvation by grace, through faith" actually give **everyone** an **equal opportunity** for heaven?

- "Gospel" means "good news". Pastor Doug noted that *"When Jesus comes into our life, we forfeit the right to live our lives the way we want to. We lose the right to self-determination because Jesus is God and has ultimate authority."* Does that sound like "good news" to you? Why or why not?

Read Romans 6:20-23. Were we **ever** fully free (see v. 22a)? Explain.

According to this passage, what choice do we **actually** have?

How does this passage illustrate the truth that **"Whatever** a person sows, **that same thing** is what he will reap"?

Need help connecting with God?
Write to:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

Application-Challenge

Embrace Jesus as your Savior and you can come to know the joy that only comes through glad surrender.

Sermon Summary Key Text: Matthew 1:18-25

Today we're exploring the true meaning of Christmas through the perspective of Jesus' earthly father, Joseph, and his heavenly Father, God. When Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant out of wedlock (v. 19), he displayed a remarkable balance between graciousness and allegiance to God's moral law. If Joseph is going to be faithful to the law of God, he can't turn a blind eye to what has happened. But on the other hand, He loves Mary and doesn't want to expose her to public ridicule and shame. As remarkable as Joseph's response is, Jesus' other father—God—reveals three truths that are even more important.

1. The importance of Jesus' identity. No mere man, but God Himself, is the baby's father (v. 20). Comparing v. 21 ("...**he** shall save **his** people...") to Zechariah 9:16 ("**God himself** will save **his** people") reveals that **Mary's baby is God!** Then, just to make Jesus' identity absolutely clear, Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:23 ("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."). We may not be amazed by that assertion, but first century Jews would have been thunderstruck by the idea of God taking on humanity. Jews knew that God is so holy that fallen humans cannot go into his presence without dying. They wouldn't even say God's proper name, "Yahweh"; instead they called him "Lord". (Unlike the Jews, who knew that Yahweh was the only source of salvation, instead we are shocked by the all-or-nothing character of Christianity.) Instead, like the Jews, we should be shocked by the radical, enormous implications that Jesus is "God with us". The "doctrine of Christmas" changes everything!

2. The importance of the doctrine of Christmas. Not only does the angel tell us who Jesus is, he also tells us what he came to do: "He will save his people from their sins" (v. 21). Every other religious leader claimed to show the right way to live, how to be a good and virtuous person. But Jesus presents himself as our great God and Savior who came to achieve salvation for us. This great salvation comes to us solely by grace, and not by our efforts (because God's standard is perfection). Jesus came to do what we **cannot** do for ourselves; **no one** can be justified by his deeds.

3. The importance of the Jesus' authority. Even though Joseph had all of the responsibilities and challenges that come with raising Jesus, the authority to name this child was "above his pay grade" (v. 21, 25)! You had the authority to name your kids and Adam and Eve had the authority to name all the animals, but Joseph was denied this authority. Why? Because to name someone is to have authority over them, and we don't manage Jesus—he manages us! When Jesus comes into our life, we forfeit the right to live our lives the way we want to. Jesus is lord! We lose the right to self-determination. Jesus has ultimate authority—because he is God! This is the message of Christmas, and it challenges the lie that has become the chief operating assumption our hearts: We think that we must not submit ourselves fully to God, that we can't trust that his plan is good for us.

We think God wants to withhold good from us. (This was Satan's lie to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:1-5). Satan's lie has entered the bloodstream of the human race, with the result that our main working assumption about God is that if we ever give ourselves completely to Him, we will be miserable. Take a hard inside look and you'll discover this assumption operating at the bottom of your heart—whether you tend toward relativism or moralism. The relativist says, "*I'm not willing to give up one ounce of my freedom to God (if there is a God), because I could never be happy if I did.*" The moralist says, "*I'm willing to give up some of my freedoms because that's the only way to get anything out of God. If I'm going to pry blessings out of his begrudging fingers, I'm going to have to toe the line and try to live a moral life.*" Satan's lie says, "Don't you dare unconditionally trust God—he'll make you miserable." But when we see the great lengths God has gone to bring us back into relationship with himself, we cannot continue to believe Satan. **Christmas silences Satan's lie!**

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) *is a simple way to study any passage. We can use it to learn about how Jesus' earthly father related to his heavenly father...*

Monday—Read Matthew 1:18-24. How does Joseph's response show shocking submission to God?

Tuesday—Read Matthew 1:24-25. What sacrifice did Joseph make? **Why** did he do this?

Wednesday—Read Luke 2:29-35, 48-49. How was Joseph's role as "head of the house" diminished?

Thursday—Read Mark 6:1-3. Joseph raises Someone else's kid—and doesn't complain when *dissed!*

Friday—Read John 19:25-27. Joseph apparently died without getting to see the fruit of his labors.

Saturday—***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord with your church family,***
study **Matthew 2:1–12.**

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]