

How hard was that? - and - Would you have done it?

The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After His mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly. But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.”

Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel, which is translated “God is with us.”

When Joseph got up from sleeping, he did as the Lord’s angel had commanded him. He married her but did not know her intimately until she gave birth to a son. And he named Him Jesus. Matthew 1:18-25 (HCSB)

Let’s be honest, it’s difficult for us to change course when our minds are made up, and even moreso when we’re angry, have gotten the shaft, feel betrayed, are offended, and hurt. Joseph seems very composed considering his fiancée turned up pregnant, embarrassed and humiliated him, and topped it all off with a lame excuse that blamed it all on God. His solution to putting a quick and quiet end to the whole sordid affair deserves our respect, it also runs counter to our air-it-out-in-public culture. The reason, we’re told, is that he was a “righteous man,” which tells us he consistently did the right thing, he had a track record and reputation of doing what was right before God, shaped his behavior and decisions around God’s commands and ways.

Think with me about when we are most prone to act unrighteous, give ourselves free rein, and justify our unrighteous responses and actions. Let me throw out a few: In matters of the heart, when it comes to money, when we have been wronged, wounded, and betrayed, or

when we are confused. Clearly, Joseph, because of his commitment to righteousness – to handling things in a God-honoring way, didn’t think acting ugly and ungodly in return was an option (although he might have felt like it). He did not see Mary’s unfaithfulness (to him and God) as a license to suspend his own faithfulness to God.

Joseph’s righteousness, his heart and practice of doing what was right before God, helped him. How?

- He had a measure of calm, which helped him to think, which helped him to not just let his emotions and own capacity to do wrong (sin/depravity) run amuck.
- It enabled him to act with composure, restraint, and even more importantly with a measure of grace and mercy.
- His heart was protected. Not from being hurt, broken, or confused, but from growing hard, bitter, ugly, vengeful, and legitimizing sinful responses.
- He was able to hear God. Ungodliness, sinful choices, anger, and bitterness have a way of plugging up our ears and hearts. I don’t think Joseph cancels the divorce, marries pregnant Mary, and restrains his own desires without his commitment to think, act, and process his emotions and circumstances righteously, without keeping God, God’s will, and God’s commands in the center.
- Being able to hear God, Joseph was able to trust and obey God, and most importantly continue as a righteous man.

Around Christmas, we like to suspend the ugly, if only for a while, but all too soon we get back to it. But at the heart of Christmas is the Christ who came to deal with the ugly of all our sins, and the call to walk in the footsteps of an incredible young couple who listened to God, surrendered themselves to God, obeyed the word of God, and committed themselves to living righteously. May we too wrap ourselves like that and put it under the manger as a present labeled,

From: _____ (put your name here), To: God/Jesus.

To God be all glory this Christmas. Love you, Pastor Hans



Lord Hear Our Prayers

PRAYER REQUEST

Bob Clayton, Philip Law, Bud Guyton, Deanna (recovering from a stroke), Claire Wendel (pneumonia), Janice Joyce,
for our Country,
Our community, Our Church, Our Families,
and those dealing with addiction(s).

SALVATION

Nick, Greg, David, Luke, Skip, Demetrius McCray,
Farney, Peter, Jimmy, Dan, Josiah, Amanda, Jim

Military And Those Serving

Michael Berger, Austin Downing, Noah Martin,
John Michael Chavez, Chris Kelly, Austin Kroeker,
Brian Sula, Thomas Hoffman, Joel Thelen,
Clayton Brown, Jonathan Grinols, Joshua Grabowski,
Christopher Sula, Dylan Briggs

CARD & FLOWER MINISTRY

If you know of anyone who is ill or hospitalized, please let us know by calling: **Lynnette Barrera** – (559)400-1862 and/or e-mail **Judy Mahar** at ldpbcpayer@gmail.com with your prayer requests.

Church Board Members:

Hans Frei - Pastor , Richard Mayes - Head Deacon ,
Sue Kluding, Gabi Cox, Chuck Arndt, Barb Deibler

Christmas Schedule



Candlelight Communion Service

Tuesday, December 24th (6:00 P.M.)

Christmas Worship Service

Wednesday, December 25th (10:00 A.M.)



December Announcements

Upcoming Events

- Men's Gathering - Tuesday @ 6:00 P.M.
- Wednesday Night Bible Study for all ages @ 7:00 P.M.
- Food Ministry - 1st Wednesday & 3rd Tuesday 9-11 AM
- Women's Ministry - Wednesday @ 10:00AM

BUNKO – Monday, January 6th @ 11:30 am

Fellowship Refreshments were provided by:
“ Beverly's Class & Youth ”

Thank you

Next week “Merle's Class is up!!”

The Church Board
has voted Aliyah Rose into membership.

“Welcome Aliyah”

Christmas

Is

coming!!!



Giving

December 15, 2024

Offering:
\$3,380.00

Facilities:
\$90.00

Food:
\$135.00

Lottie Moon:
\$2,400.00

Missions:
\$96.83

Attendance:
85

Weekly Events

Sunday School/Small Groups:

9:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship Service:

10:30 AM

Sunday Evening Worship Service:

6:00 PM

Tuesday: Men's Gathering: 6:00 PM

1st Wednesday & 3rd Tuesday

Food Ministry:

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Wednesday:

Women's Bible Study - 10:00 AM

Bible Study/Small Group - 7:00 PM

Thursday: Chicken Foot - 1:00 PM

Saturday: Youth Hang-Out 6-9 PM

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LAKE DON PEDRO
BAPTIST CHURCH

Be Saved

Acts 4:12

Sunday Services 10:30am & 6:00pm
LDPbaptistchurch.com



Yearly Bible Reading Plan - 2024 December 23rd - December 29th

DAY 1 - 2 Chron. 21-22
(Proverbs 23)

DAY 2 - 2 Chron. 23-24
(Proverbs 24)

DAY 3 - 2 Chron. 25-27
(Proverbs 25)

DAY 4 - 2 Chron. 28-29
(Proverbs 26)

DAY 5 - 2 Chron. 30-32
(Proverbs 27)

DAY 6 - (Proverbs 28)
DAY 7 - (Proverbs 29)

Welcome all of you who are guests with us today. Our desire is for you to relax and be blessed by worship, God's Word, and fellowship. We, the members, have committed ourselves to underwrite the church financially. We do not expect you to contribute to the offering, but you are free to participate. We would like to get to know you and for you to know us better.