

A Dad Fit for a King

Mt 1:18-25

INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about Robert G. Ingersoll's being born in Dresden, New York in 1833, *Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations*, #8885.
 - 1. There has never been anyone who attempted to do the church more harm in the modern age than Robert Ingersoll.
 - 2. But, had his father been a different man & had he taken the time to raise his son, things might have been different.
- B. We fathers have a serious responsibility in raising our children.
 - 1. Prov 22:6.
 - 2. Prov 19:18.
 - 3. Eph 6:4.
 - 4. If we fathers fail our children, we fail future generations, for our sins will be repeated in our grandchildren & their children.
- C. Since fatherhood is such a serious responsibility, surely God would have chosen a good father for his own Son. This morning, we want to examine the life of Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, to see what lessons we can learn.

COMPASSIONATE TOWARD HIS WIFE, vv 18-20

- A. Mary and Joseph were betrothed to one another, v 18.
 - 1. The Jewish wedding traditionally involved three steps.
 - a. The engagement—this was usually arranged by parents while children were very small.
 - b. The betrothal.
 - 1) The betrothal gave credence to the engagement—the girl could break the engagement at this point if she wasn't happy.
 - 2) But, the betrothal was as binding as marriage.
 - a) The betrothal could only be broken by divorce.
 - b) Unfaithfulness at this point was considered adultery.
 - c. The marriage—the marriage took place at the end of the betrothal year.
 - 2. During the betrothal, Mary was found to be with child.
 - a. No doubt, those around Mary believed this pregnancy resulted from intercourse. What else could they have thought?
 - b. Even if Mary attempted to explain her pregnancy to family & friends, they probably would not have believed her.
- B. Joseph must have been heart-sick, for he planned to divorce Mary, v 19.
 - 1. Yet, Joseph was a just man.
 - a. The idea behind "just" is that Joseph conformed to the laws of God & man.
 - b. This term was applied to model citizens in the Greco-Roman world.
 - 2. Joseph did not want to make Mary a public example.
 - a. Had Joseph made a public example of Mary, she would have been stoned (Deut 22:23-24).
 - b. Instead of having Mary stoned, Joseph wanted to put her away privately.
 - 3. Joseph loved Mary, and he was, therefore, compassionate toward her.
- C. We need men who are compassionate toward their wives today.
 - 1. Col 3:19—the idea is that husbands should not be harsh or angry toward their wives.
 - 2. 1 Pt 3:7.

3. Eph 5:25.
 - a. Illustration about the man loving his wife too much, *Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations*, #5356.
 - b. Men, we are to love our wives the way Jesus loved the church—we are to love her enough to lay down our lives for her.
 - c. Men, can you honestly say that you love your wives that much?
- D. “The most important thing a man can do for his children is to love their mother,” Theodore Hesburgh.
- E. Men, are you being loving, compassionate toward your wife?

OBEDIENT TOWARD GOD, vv 20-25

- A. While Joseph was considering what to do with Mary, an angel of the Lord appeared to him, vv 20-21.
 1. The angel called Joseph “son of David”—this would remind Joseph that the Messiah was to come from David’s descendants.
 2. Joseph did not need to worry about taking Mary as his wife, for what was conceived in her was from the Holy Spirit.
 - a. It could have been that Mary had told Joseph about her vision, but he failed to believe her. Would you have believed Mary had she told you about her vision?
 - b. The vision Joseph received would take away any doubt Joseph had about Mary.
 3. Mary would bring forth a Son; Joseph & Mary were to name him “Jesus,” for he would save his people from their sins.
- B. When Joseph was aroused from sleep, he did as the angel had instructed, v 24.
- C. Joseph did not have sexual relations with Mary until after the birth of Jesus, v 25.
- D. Joseph called the son’s name Jesus, v 25.
- E. Joseph did exactly what God had told him to do—we need men today who will do exactly what God has said to do.
 1. Deut 26:16.
 2. Love is walking according to God’s commandments (2 Jn 6).
- F. Illustration about Stephen Girard, *6,000 Classic Sermon Illustrations*, #10762, p 596.
- G. Men, our children deserve fathers who obey the Lord—if our children are to learn to be obedient to God, we have to set the example. What we do will greatly influence our children?
- H. Men, are you living obediently to God?

LEADER TOWARD HIS FAMILY

- A. Joseph had a family that lived obediently to Scripture.
 1. Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day (Lk 2:21).
 2. Joseph & Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as was to be done for a firstborn son (Lk 2:22-23).
 3. Joseph & Mary offered the sacrifice they were to give after the birth of a child (Lk 2:24).
 4. Joseph & Mary went every year to the Feast of the Passover (Lk 2:41).
 - a. The Law required all males above the age of 12 to attend three annual feasts in Jerusalem; the Passover was one of these feasts.
 - b. Joseph took his family to the Passover every year—in doing so, Joseph made sure that his family did what was right.
- B. We need men, who like Joseph, will be spiritual leaders for their families.
 1. Josh 24:15—Joshua made the decision for his family & his family followed suit.
 2. Eph 6:4.
- C. We need spiritual leaders. We need fathers who:
 1. Set an example before their children of what a Christian is.

2. Read Scripture to their children.
3. Take a stand for what is right, and lead their family in doing right.

CONCLUSION

- A. This world desperately needs godly fathers.
- B. Men, can you honestly say that you are a godly father?