

December 13, 2020

# CHRISTMAS

— *It's Not Hallmark* —

**"FOLLOWING JESUS ISN'T EASY"**

**John Greene, Senior Pastor**

## **MATTHEW 1:18-25**

**CORE STATEMENT:** Service to Christ will inconvenience your life.

**QUESTION:** Why did Mary and Joseph go through all they went through from the perceived sinful pregnancy, the challenges of bringing a baby to term and the job relocation to Egypt?

**ANSWER:** Because for them, Jesus was worth it.

**QUESTION:** What is Jesus worth to you? Are you on board with God and His mission?

**TRUTH:** There are a lot of people who lack the resolve to wholeheartedly follow Jesus.

**INSIGHT:** To actually follow Jesus is difficult. Following Him is joyous, difficult, and life-altering (John 10:10; Psalm 16:11); but then there's Matthew 16:24, "If anyone desires to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

**QUESTION:** Does the resurrection have to be true for you to consider your life good? If not, then you're not living a life of sacrifice.

**INSIGHT:** We'll never have a sacrificial gift to reach the next generation of children from you, unless you have a strong grasp of why Jesus is worth your sacrifice.

## **I. FOLLOWING JESUS REQUIRES FAITH AND ABSOLUTE SUBMISSION.**

**INSIGHT:** During the betrothal one was considered married, and getting out meant a legal divorce.

**TRUTH:** The will of God for Mary to birth Jesus destroyed Mary's hopes of a beautiful wedding day and family celebration that would have occurred at the end of the year of waiting.

**INSIGHT:** The virgin birth ruined both Mary's and Joseph's reputations.

**INSIGHT:** The Holy Spirit is laying out for us in the first Christmas what people will have to go through to follow Christ.

**TRUTH:** You will struggle with being sacrificial when you lack confidence in the promises of the unseen God.

**TRUTH:** Forgiving an abuser requires seeing God's forgiveness is bigger than yours and God's ability to work all things for good is greater than others' abilities to inflict evil upon you.

## **II. FOLLOWING JESUS MEANS DYING TO YOURSELF.**

**TRUTH:** Mary and Joseph had to die to personal dreams to follow God's will.

### **INVITATION**

**TRUTH:** Joseph was invited by God to share in the suffering of Jesus.

**TRUTH:** Serving Jesus is rarely convenient.

**INSIGHT:** People in our church who serve the community don't do it because it's convenient but because of their commitment to Jesus.

**INSIGHT:** Not every ministry is for everyone, but do you have a ministry that is inconvenient for you? If not, then there's a good chance you're not following Jesus.