

Worship Christmas December December 1: HOPE

Purpose Statement: Life is a journey, who is going with you? How are you packing? What is the nature of God's Son, Jesus Christ? Mary was engaged to Joseph and found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. This was a serious commitment. When Joseph found out the truth an angel approached Joseph to explain. The baby is Jesus and His purpose is to save people. How did things come about?

Outline: Look at the _____ (**journey**) to Bethlehem for Mary and Joseph. What is important about the virgin birth? What is the redemptive work of Christ? The birth took place right after the genealogy was listed in the Bible. Mary was found to be with child. Her man, her betrothed man, Joseph, a just man resolved to divorce her quietly. He considered these things as he was approached by an _____ (**angel**).

The birth took place this way. Mary was found to be with child by the _____ (**Holy Spirit**). Joseph considered these things to put her away or divorce quietly. And an Angel came to Joseph, saying, "*Do not fear. That which is conceived in her is to be born Jesus. He will save His people from their sins.*"

All this took place in order to fulfill _____ (**prophecy**). "*A virgin shall conceive of God and bear a Son, He shall be called _____ (Emmanuel).*"

Matthew emphasized that Joseph was not going to _____ (**shame**) Mary. He considered and pondered these things. The Angel told Joseph, "*Do not fear.*" Why did the Angel not come to

both Mary and Joseph at the same time? Instead, only to Joseph in a dream. Why do we need to be told "do not fear?" What is worry?

Webster defines Worry as "to afflict someone with mental distress. And to be subject to constant nagging." Worry means there is something in which you can't have your own way, and in reality, is your _____ (**personal**) irritation with God. Mary is _____ (**not guilty**) of wrong which everybody considers. When Joseph was struggling or worrying to divorce her quietly, was he hearing conflicting messages? Do we hear conflicting messages? Joseph had to _____ (**wait**) for God's timing. Sometimes we need to wait for God's timing as well. _____ (**Obedience**) was a key element. Joseph did the honorable thing. Would we do the honorable thing in his shoes?

This prophecy, a divine conception, God at work, God almighty orchestrated this conception. A virgin will conceive and the Angel talks of Jesus, Emmanuel, His name. The Angel said, "*Call Him Jesus.*" A clue is the fact that people in general identify Jesus as Emmanuel, God with us. This prophecy had a _____ (**conditional**) fulfillment in Isaiah's time. Isaiah 7:14 ... A preliminary fulfillment. People will know Jesus as God with us. God was with Mary and Joseph. Joseph did the right thing, trusting God, and protecting Mary and the baby and taking them into his home.

Are we waiting in hope, trusting in Jesus for His plan or are we rushing ahead with worry, fear, and anxiety?