



Small Group Discussion Guide

June 18, 2017

Sermon Title:

"Family Matters: Fatherhood"

Sermon Text: *Matthew 1, 2; Luke 2 - selected*

Scripture Reading: *Ephesians 6:1-4*

Leader: *Please allow a moment for introductions/visiting, and then have someone offer a brief prayer for God to meet with your group.*

Getting Started: What are some of the lessons (positive or negative) you learned from your father?

Discussion:

1. What are the inherent challenges of being responsible for another person? If you are a parent, what is/was the hardest part of that role? Can you imagine the responsibility, earthly father for the incarnate God, set before Joseph?
2. **Joseph modeled HIGH CHARACTER.** What is the difference between a person of character and a person who is a character? What ideals or qualities define the former for you?
3. **He was patient/gentle** (Mt 1:19). Gentleness is not always viewed as a positive trait, but why is it an essential for growing one's character? See 1 Corinthians 13:4, Galatians 5:22, how are these verses reflected in Joseph's actions in Matthew 1:19?
4. **He was reasoned** (Mt 1:20). Compare Joseph's reaction with the story about Esau (Gen 25:29-34). What differences can be noted about the character of these two men? (see also Prv 19:2, 21:5, and Phl 4:8).
5. **He was protective** (Mt 2:13-14). Read 1 Timothy 5:8. How is this verse applicable to Joseph's action? Read John 19:26. What character does Jesus display? Do you think Joseph's character is being reflected in his son?
6. **He was hard-working** (Mt 13:55, Mk 6:3). Joseph obviously taught his trade to Jesus. Read Proverbs 12:11 and 13:4. What is the value of a good work ethic?

7. **Joseph modeled ACTIVE FAITH.** Who are people of admirable faith that you can identify. What distinguishes their faith above others?
8. **He was faithful/righteous** (Mt 1:19). What does it take for someone to earn a reputation as a righteous individual? (see also Ps 34:19, Prv 10:21)
9. **He was attentive** (Mt 1:20, 24, 2:13-14, 19-21, 22-23). Four times Joseph responded to the Lord's leading. How difficult is it for you to respond when the Lord asks something of you? Does he have to ask you more than once or do you act immediately as Joseph did?
10. **He was pious** (Lk 2:22-23). In the best sense of the word, Joseph kept the observance of his faith. How do the observances of the church add to our understanding of God and serving him? Read James 2:14-26. What insight does these verses have to offer about the relationship between what we say about our faith and what we do with our faith?
11. **He was consistent** (Lk 2:41). Every year Joseph and his family made the journey to the temple in Jerusalem. Read Hebrews 10:25. Why is consistency in worship so important? How does regular connection with other believers help you? Consistency applies to more than just worship. Read 2 Timothy 4:2. What is the essence of being prepared "in season and out of season"?

Closing: *Close by sharing pray requests. Praying for one other and each other's families.
Go **SHARE JESUS . . . in Service!***