

The Other Side of Christmas || A Series through Advent 2020

THE HOPE OF CHRISTMAS

Matthew 1:18-25

Synopsis: Hope shines brightest in the dark.

Life can feel like darkness

Starting strong

Mary had been betrothed to Joseph (Matthew 1:18b)

A turn of events

...before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18c)

I just want to get out of here

And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly (Matthew 1:19)

Hope shines brightest in the dark

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20-21)

God has no plan B

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). (Matthew 1:22-23)

Are you willing to be woken up?

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus. (Matthew 1:24-25)

We do "not grieve as others do who have no hope." (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

We grieve from a place of hope and not of despair because our grief is grounded in expectation, one that is sometimes disappointed but never thwarted.

How can we wake up to this kind of hope during Christmas?

1. Turn to wonder

a. As he considered these things (Matthew 1:20)

1. Turn to wonder...
 - a. What God is doing in this?
 - b. Why did I react that way when that happened?
 - c. What can I learn from this?
 - d. What might God be saying to me?

2. Turn to obedience

a. He did as the angel of the Lord commanded him(Matthew 1:24)

1. What can you take personal responsibility for right now?
 - a. What is God calling me to do right now?

3. Turn to worship

a. And he called his name Jesus(Matthew 1:25b) - to deliver; to rescue

1. Let's do this together in song.