

**Dr. Ron Armstrong • December 19, 2021**  
**Advent: Faith-Filled, Hopeful, Joyful, Love**

Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah (*Christos or Christ in Greek*) came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

<sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup> But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

1 Peter 3:9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

**A. Why Joseph?**

1. Because he was faithful to the law? That was a good thing, but quoting all the rules can make us hard to be around.

2. Because he was obedient to God's direction? That's easier when an angel gives you specific instructions. (We're usually not that lucky.)

3. So why Joseph? Because he was kind, and Mary was going to need someone kind. The looks, judgment, and criticism she was facing would be intense. "Unmarried and pregnant in a small town" wasn't an easy life.

4. It's not helpful to say that Joseph "loved" her in the way we use love. Joseph loved her through kindness, not passion.

**B. Christians are really kind. (Most of the time.)**

1. Christians are extraordinarily kind. They give, help, support, visit, pray, and encourage. They'll build you a house or clean the mud out of yours.

2. But too often we are easily provoked to unkindness.

a. Someone irritates us.

b. Someone steps on one of our rights. (And Americans turn almost everything into a right.)

c. Someone is unkind to us or insults us.

d. And if you inconvenience us, all bets are off.

3. You expect me to be kind to .... Yes, welcome to the teachings of Jesus Christ. We are to:

a. Do good to those who are unkind to us.

b. Show kindness to those who don't deserve it.

c. Be respectful to those who disagree with us.

4. Advent is about preparing our heart. It's about faith-filled, hopeful, joyful love toward God and others.