



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides! If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions beginning at the bottom of page 2.

SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE

for the Monologue given on December 19, 2021
"Joseph Monologue: Son of David" — Matthew 1:18-25



A well-loved tradition at Grace are the monologues given before Christmas and Easter. Each monologue tells the story from a character's first-person perspective. We love this type of story-telling, and the creativity displayed. While there is some artistic license taken, the accounts are Biblically-rooted with the hope of inviting the listener to receive a gospel truth in a unique and meaningful way.

This Advent, Pastor Bryan took on the character of Joseph, the husband of Mary and the earthly-father figure to Jesus. It's easy to forget just how incredible the birth of Jesus was and how complicated it was for a woman to conceive a child before wedlock – even if the baby was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit. Understandably, this left Joseph with a wide variety of feelings including frustration, confusion, wonder, hope, and love.

What feelings and understandings might we come away as we interact with this monologue given from Joseph's perspective?

Group Discussion Questions

Q – Let's read Matthew 1:18-25 a time or two together.

- What stands out to you in the passage?
- How is Joseph described and what do you learn about him?
- What is the turning point of the story?

Q - Biblically, we are told that Joseph is a descendant of King David and one of the lines from the monologue is Joseph quoting his father saying, "Don't ever forget that you're the descendant of a great king.. Live like it!"

As mentioned in the introduction, this is creative license and not a direct quote from Scripture. We do not know he literally said that but for the sake of putting ourselves in the story to see what we can, it can be easily imagined how a father would say that to his children and why the character of Joseph repeats it here.

- What similar types of things did your parents and loved ones tell you in hopes of instilling family pride and building self-worth?
- Why is it so significant to the story of Jesus that he was a descendant of King David? *(This is a fulfilment of key Old Testament prophecies in 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6. Might be a great idea to read a few to appreciate the beauty of Scripture).*

Q – In the monologue, the character Joseph recounts a scene in where after visiting her cousin, Elizabeth, Mary tells him that she is pregnant, that she has been visited by an angel and that this baby would be God's own son. Understandably the character Joseph is shocked and in denial and the two have this exchange:

"I know it's hard to believe," she said.

Hard to believe? I stared at her. Try impossible. *"Mary, you can't say that! It's—it's blasphemy."*

"It's not blasphemy if it's true," she replied.

I was speechless.

- "It's not blasphemy if it's true" communicates a truth that separates a colossal lie from spectacular miracle. Thinking of personal moments and spiritual convictions, what amazing hopes have you taken on in faith?

Q – The turning point for Joseph is when the angel appeared to him, telling him who Jesus was born to be and to take Mary home as his wife. Despite the miraculous encounter, It must have taken great faith and courage to believe and fulfill that calling. What do you think Joseph was learning throughout this experience?

Q –. One of the secondary themes of the monologue is that all the characters are quite ordinary people: Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, etc. What they have in common is they have experienced love and hope from this newborn baby named Jesus that the angels have announced. As we end this study, what have you been encouraged by or have been reminded by as you meditate on the story of the birth of Jesus?

How to Use These Study Guides:

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
 - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
 - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

Group Leader Support: Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.