**PP The Shift**

**Part 1-*The King has Come: Jesus* Matthew 1:18-21 11/30-12/1/2024**

**PP** **Matthew 1:18-21** Stand and read

Do you realize that the kingdom of God was a central teaching of Jesus?

Being central, have you studied or learned much about its significance for us today?

I believe it was in Philadelphia, during the Colonial era that a sign hung over the entrance to a

tavern reading, *“We serve no king here”*

That deep revulsion to a king ruling over us renders this central teaching of the kingdom as alien,

strange, and unappealing

Yet no one can come to God in saving faith unless they kneel before Jesus as their King

The Shift will take us through the Gospel of Jesus according to Matthew, and challenge us to

place our primary allegiance to the King of all kings, Jesus Christ

What does citizenship to His kingdom look like, and how ought we to live as His people?

We begin by looking at the King Who has come, the birth of Jesus Christ, the true King

**PP *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been***

***betrothed to Joseph...”*  Matthew 1:18a**

Israel had 3 phases in marriage the **PP** First was the arrangement

Shocking to us, the minimum age for a Jewish girl to marry was 12, and for a boy, 13

We can be assured that whatever age Joseph and Mary were, they were likely still teenagers

Often, the father of a young man would reach out to the father of a young woman whom he

believed would be a good wife for his son, and a good match for both families

Fathers often would use professional Jewish matchmakers called a Shadchan, and the process of

finding potential matches for marriage was shidduchim (shuh·doo·chem)

They were extremely important people in the community, and if you have watched the musical

Fiddler on the Roof, then you may recall the 3 young, prospective Jewish girls singing,

*‘Matchmaker, matchmaker, make me a match’*

The boy and girl really had no say in the matter, but I’m sure their prayer life increased!

During the arrangement phase, the fathers negotiated the price for the bride, the dowry

It wasn’t to buy a woman, but rather was an insurance policy for her in case he died or in case he

broke the betrothal, which was a divorce

The **PP** Second was the betrothal

If the terms of the groom or his father were accepted by the father of the bride, they entered a

legal contract, no less binding than marriage

Girls married between 12 and 17 years of age, and for most, betrothal would happen at 12, the

wedding a year later at 13

A boy married closer to 18 as he must provide for his wife and soon to arrive children

The betrothal lasted usually one year, and intimacy was strictly forbidden as they both continued

to live with their parents until the wedding

The husband was exempt from war during that year so he could live to the day of his wedding

They didn’t date, they didn’t court, they had nearly no contact socially or physically, they didn’t

try before you buy

Throughout the full range of centuries that the bible spans, a man and a woman’s marriage was

*arranged* by their parents and a matchmaker, unless they were older and remarrying, then

they were *betrothed*, and then they wed…afterwards they learned to love each other

The **PP** Third was the wedding

The ceremony would often last 7 days with a great many guests coming and going

Some day, I want to preach a sermon detailing a Jewish wedding but today, we need to follow

Mathew who doesn’t mention any details of their wedding

What he does mention was a scandalous unforeseen incident: **PP *‘...before they came together***

***she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.’* Matthew 1:18b**

That phrase, *before they came together* means before they had sex with each other

She is pregnant out of wedlock, and in that day, more than even today, that was shocking

Nazareth back then had a population of about 400 people where everyone knew everyone

They would all have known that the common name **PP** ***‘Mary’***, taken from the Hebrew

name Miriam, meant, *rebelliousness*

Can you imagine what it would have been like for Mary as she walked to the town well where

women hauled their family’s daily water, and all the gossip and side eyes going on?

*There is Mary, living out her name…poor, kind Joseph. He didn’t deserve this!*

**PP *‘And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to***

***divorce her quietly.’* 1:19**

Joseph was a just man, a righteous, kind and godly man, and he had no desire to hurt Mary

In that day, the religious leaders in Israel had terribly corrupted the sanctity of marriage and

created a divorce for any reason culture

A man could divorce a woman easily but not the other way around

He could divorce her if she burned his dinner, let her down outside of their home, spoke to a man

on the street, insulted his mother, or as Rabbi Akiba permitted, if she wasn’t as beautiful

as another woman

None of this was from God, but from the leaders of Israel who made a mockery of marriage

Can’t you feel his shock and hurt, as he must have been convinced that Mary had been with

another man?

There were two ways to divorce her: He could charge Mary with adultery in a public court, and

he would surely win, dowry returned, messy and Mary’s life would be pretty much over

Or he could ask her to go before witnesses and they would write out a private bill of divorce

which would be more quiet and minimize her public shame

He went to sleep having decided to divorce her quietly, probably the next day

**PP** ***“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’”* Matthew 1:20**

**PP *‘considered’*** means angry, passionate reasoning that comes from an agitated heart

He was angry, yet kind; he was humiliated, yet he wouldn’t shame her. and he was afraid

**PP** ***‘Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife’* Matthew 1:20a**

He was afraid to marry her: *She cheated on me and I don’t think I could ever get over it!*

He was in a crisis of faith

We all experience crises of faith when God asks us to do something that will not be easy to do

and will have repercussions if we obey

**PP** In those moments, we have to decide, *Will I submit to God and obey*, but deeper down in

our heart, we have to settle, *Will I trust God and submit*?

Every crisis of faith lands us at the feet of the King of all kings, Jesus Christ

Will I submit to His right to rule me as a citizen of His kingdom, and will I trust Him and obey?

Even harder to believe, the angel said ***‘that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit’* 20**

Don’t you think he struggled to believe something that hadn’t happened before, a virgin birth?

Jesus born from a virgin, conceived by God is crucial to the Christian faith

One poll of Protestant students studying for the ministry, found that 56 % of them rejected the

belief that Jesus was born of a virgin

Yet the virgin birth shows that salvation doesn’t come from man, it can only come from God,

who caused Mary to conceive the Christ-child

As God created life within a virgin woman, He creates life within a believing sinner giving

salvation

**PP *“She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from***

***their sins.”* Matthew 1:21**

The most popular boy’s name in America right now is Liam, *strong-willed warrior*

My name, Tim, *honoring God*, and it sits at a popularity rank of 2,221

I don’t know why it’s unpopular when backwards you get MIT, the 2nd ranked college in US

Nonetheless, only 3 of every 100,000 baby boys in America are named Tim

Then I learned that in 1966, the year I was born, it was gaining popularity to name a girl Timothy

Now my masculinity is in question, I wonder if my parents could even tell I was a boy so they

gave me a gender neutral name!!

I had an identity crisis studying for this sermon!

In 1st Century Israel, one of the most common names for boys was…wait for it…***‘Jesus’***

**PP *‘Jesus’***, the Greek form of the Old Testament name ***‘Joshua’*** which means *the Lord saves*

Notice **PP Matthew 1:18**, ***“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.”***

**PP *‘Christ’*** is not His last name a title that means anointed one, translated from the Hebrew

word Messiah

Messiah in the Old Testament was a title given to certain prophets, priests and kings, all of whom

were anointed with oil and established in their office

Anointing with oil-a symbol of the Holy Spirit-was to bless the person with the God the Spirit’s

power and favor

Here Matthew is telling us, Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed One, the greatest *Prophet, Priest*

*and King* that was prophesied about all through the Old Testament

He was anointed at His baptism as the Spirit came down over Him, and words from the Heavenly

Father were declared over Him

Jesus, the King of kings has come, and He came to give His life as a ransom to redeem sinners

\*\*\*Transition to the Lord’s Supper