

**Our theme for today: Revelation.**

*But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him”—these things God has **revealed** to us through the Spirit. 1 Cor 2:9-10 (my added emphasis)*

Today we look at a commentary of things that occur after Joseph comes to his own conclusion. Yesterday, we got an inside view of Joseph’s dilemma and we’ve had time to contemplate his heart and his plan of action. But then things change! They change dramatically – an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream and tells him God’s plan. This very private engagement becomes public to us through the writings of Matthew; we receive a revelation of God’s plan.

Scripture

<sup>20</sup> *But just when he had resolved to do 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 as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”*

*Matthew 1:20-23*

Thought provokers

- Joseph had made a resolution to do something. He has clearly thought it through. Mary must be divorced! This was what he was placing his hope in.
  - Have you ever come to a conclusion about something, made plans, made the final determination that *“this is the best way, this is what I’m going to hope in”*? Sometimes, these plans may simply be making the best of a bad situation, right? But, does God sometimes reveal a better plan? Is there a better hope?
- Let’s talk today about the hope that comes from revelation. Matthew wants us to make sure that we know exactly what is going on. In this case, the revelation is that this child is like no other. It’s a revelation of huge proportions – a child is going to be born, a child from the Holy Spirit, a child that will mean that *“God is with us”*. It’s a striking revelation not only because of its content, but also because it’s a revelation that is consistent with what God has revealed in times past. We can focus on Isaiah 7:14 the passage that is directly referred to here in Matthew 1:23 as one example of God’s Word from the past (please review it for yourself), but the evidence of the OT makes it clear in multiple places – over and over – that God had declared *“I am sending my servant who will redeem.”* There is hope! It has been revealed!
  - How do we learn anything that really matters? Is it just by accident, are we guided by bumper stickers? Do we conjure up truths in some mystical fashion?

No, we learn only because God reveals. For this humble family from Nazareth, they learned like any other child of Israel. They learned from the written Word.

- For this family, God moves beyond the page. A divine messenger enters into Joseph's life to reveal but also to affirm what Joseph likely already knew – if he had read his scriptures. At the right times, God gives us more of His voice!
- Has God declared truths and revelations (over and over) to you? Is the Word of God living and active in your heart, mind, soul and strength? It can be, can't it? If God chooses to bring a dream or vision into your life then consider it a blessing, but we have a blessing nonetheless – God's written Word

### Reflections

<sup>16</sup> *All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. 2 Tim. 3:16*

Not all have dreams and visions from God, but God's Word is available to all every day and at any time. His Word can impart healthy teaching, it can reprove us, it can correct us, and if Joseph was a righteous man (and the Bible tells us he was), the words of the Bible can train us likewise in righteousness. All of these aspects are available to us as we read the Bible with the guiding, loving help of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor 2:9-10). His Word is God-breathed!

The meaning of God breathed – where we get much of the idea that the Word of God is inspired – is not just some creative impulse. The Word of God is not simply something imagined by earth bound authors. Scripture is the very speech of God; it is His Word! He breathed it out!

We need sense made of our circumstance no less different than Joseph did. The good news is that our hope need never rest on our imagination, things we conjure up, on bumper stickers or things found by accident. Joseph received both God's Word from Scriptures and from a divine messenger. Either way – he received God's Word. Today, you too can receive His Word! His Word will direct you; it will comfort you; it will lift you up and it will do it all day long – our hope is firmly placed on what God has revealed. The deepest revelation? God is with us! And with Him, our burdens will always be lighter (Matthew 11:30)!

### Prayer and Song

Take time to pray and sing. Here is one by Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith: **Thy Word**

*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light  
unto my path*

*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light  
unto my path*

*When I feel afraid*

*Think I've lost my way*

*Still you're there right beside me*

*And nothing will I fear*

*As long as you are near*

*Please be near me to the end*

*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light  
unto my path*

*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light  
unto my path*