

God's Strange Providence

*"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..."*

*When Joseph woke up,
he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him
and took Mary home as his wife."*

Matthew 1:19, 24 (NIV)

Very little is told to us about the legal father of our Lord. He is only mentioned a few times in the Scriptures. However, all that is said about him is very positive and causes us to be respectful of his memory.

The first thing we learn about Joseph is that he was "faithful to the law". Joseph loved the Scriptures and sought to live in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

We also believe that Joseph was a fine man because of the sacred trust God gave him as the one to be highly influential in the life of Jesus during His youth. Joseph certainly had a positive influence on Jesus because just as Joseph loved the Word of God so did Jesus.

Joseph was also merciful

in imitation of "the Father of mercies" (2 Corinthians 1:3). Prior to learning about the miraculous conception of Jesus, and after learning she was pregnant, Joseph might have called for Mary to be put to death as an adulteress, according to Leviticus 20:10. His merciful spirit along with his love for Mary halted any such action on his part.

Further, Joseph was submissive to God's strange providence. We have no idea of the price Joseph paid for marrying Mary who was likely harshly judged by society for her perceived "sin". Joseph took her reputation on himself and did as the Lord commanded him.

There is no doubt that Joseph suffered as the fiancé – and later husband – of Mary. However it was the will of God that concerned

Joseph and not his own convenience or reputation.

We do not know when or if Joseph fully learned the purposes of God in his life. All he knew at one point was what the next step was to walk in obedience to God.

We need to follow the example of Joseph in doing the will of God even when we do not understand it or know the reasons we walk a different way from others.

May you find grace today to do the Lord's will regardless of how unusual or difficult it may be. Learn to trust the Lord when you cannot trace Him.

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