

Media Notes

There will be a video for MLK Serve Day before Joys and Concerns.

During the sermon there are several scriptures, two images and a Greek word to display.



Questions, Metadata and Outline

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about Joseph, his life circumstances and humility.

Why is this sermon important?

This sermon is important because it is a reminder that we do not have to be the center of attention to be used by God.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the second week of Advent. This sermon has been prepared with the help of The Journey to Bethlehem sermon series at The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection which was November 28, 2010 to January 2, 2011. More information about this series can be found online at <http://j.mp/1yMt0gL>.

What are the next action steps?

Be humble as you seek Christ this season

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God chooses the humble Mary and Joseph to be used for God's purposes and God chooses you.

Metadata

1. Topic(s)
 1. Advent
2. Sermon Books of the Bible
 1. Isaiah, Matthew
3. Series
 1. Seek
4. Speaker
 1. Andrew Conard
5. Tags
 1. Joseph, Mary, Seek, worship, Advent, Jesus, Christmas, humble, humility

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2nd Sunday of Advent
Seek - The Humble (Mary and Joseph)
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/15KRA6Z>

December 7, 2014
Matthew 1:18-24
Preaching Target Word Count: 2,472
Video is not available online

Conclusion

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Good News

Call to Action

Invitation

Closing Prayer

Matthew 1:18-24, CEB

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. 19 Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. 20 As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 22 Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

23 Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,
And they will call him, Emmanuel.
(Emmanuel means "God with us.")

24 When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife.

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

*** Start Sermon Timer ***

Series Review

Today we continue our journey toward Christmas. We are preparing for the coming of Jesus and taking a closer look at those who were involved in the very first Christmas. Those who were seeking Christ and those whom God sought out.

- Last week, we considered the present and the story of God seeking Mary through the angel Gabriel.
- This week we take a closer look at the humble - Mary and Joseph.
- Next week, we will examine the outsiders - those shepherds who were the first to hear of the birth of Christ.
- The fourth Sunday of Advent we join the seeker as we hear the story of the magi who were looking for the Christ Child.

- Finally, on Candlelight Christmas Eve we will hear the story of the birth of Jesus and celebrate with Holy Communion and the lighting of candles.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today. Today, I hope that you will hear:

- Something new or find new questions
- Perspective on your life or something in your life that gives additional meaning to the message today.
- Guidance about how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

I invite you to write down some of the things that you hear in the sermon today and take your bulletin home as a tool to grow in your faith outside of worship. You can reflect on what you heard today, pray for people of our congregation and read scripture to prepare for worship next week.

Opening

Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Story

Transition

[Text here]

Mary

Fulfillment of Prophecy?

Last week we considered the story of Mary hearing the news from the angel Gabriel that she was pregnant. She would have known the prophecy about the one who was to come. Hear these words from Isaiah 7:14:

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”¹

The angel told her that she was pregnant, but was she the one?

¹ Isaiah 7:14, NIV.

Was she the one that would fulfill the prophecy?
She had been set apart and chosen by God, yet she receives this news so humbly. "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said."²

Transition

We don't often think about the unusual nature of Mary's response.
We have heard the story over and over.
She's in the Bible.
What else is she going to say?
Yet, imagine what this might have been like for her.

Child as President

Imagine, for a moment, that an angel visits a family today.
Let's just say that they already know that they are pregnant.
No, let's make it easier. The couple has already given birth. They are in their room at Susan B. Allen with a baby when an angel shows up with a message from God that this child is going to be:

- President of the United States
- CEO of a Fortune 500 company
- Football, Baseball, Basketball Star

The parents might get a little bit excited, tell someone or brag at least a little bit.
Mary does none of these things.
She says, "God, I'm yours. Put me to whatever you will."

Mary and Elizabeth

Not long after, Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth who confirms the news that she is carrying a very special child. Her response is not to say,

"Old news, Elizabeth. I already got the message from God." She doesn't say,
"Of course it should be me, I've been faithful for my whole life."

No. Instead she sings a song of praise to God, which you may know as the Magnificat.

Mary said, "With all my heart I glorify the Lord! In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior."

Mary is one of the humble.

Transition

This brings us to Joseph and the scripture text which was read a few moments ago.

² Luke 1:38, CEB.

Joseph

Engaged as Teenagers

First, let me remind you of the circumstances for Mary and Joseph. We learned last week that women were engaged to be married when they were, 12, 13 or 14. As soon as they were able to have children, they were adult women and engaged. There was a formal ceremony of engagement and the engagement lasted one year. They were husband and wife, but not living together. Then there was the official wedding at the end of one year.

The boys were 14, 15, 16 - whenever they were old enough to be able to support a family with their career, what they had learned from their father. So, Mary and Joseph were early teenagers when they were engaged.

Mary is Pregnant

Then came the day when Joseph finds out that Mary is pregnant and he is not the father. Let me read those verses again to remind you of what the scripture says:

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit.
19 Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly.³

Do you think it was like that?

Just a simple thing?

This happened, then this happened, then this happened.

Of course, not.

What It's Like to be Joseph

There is a whole lot between that happens between those sentences. Here is a young man who feels like the wheels have come off his life. He is angry, jealous, frustrated, hurt and wounded – all of these emotions running through his mind. He is not going to expose here publicly so that she will be stoned to death.

He is a good man, he is not going to do that.

His heart is broken.

What is he going to do?

How old was Joseph?

Joseph's life is interesting because we know so little about it. For example, how old was Joseph when he was married to Mary? We don't know, the scripture did not tell us. We know that young people got married and Protestants usually say that this is

³ Matthew 1:18-19, CEB.

likely when people were married in that time. We typically imagine Jesus being a young man of 14 or 15. Our nativity figurine at the altar shows a Jesus with young features.

Here is a picture from the 2006 movie, *The Nativity*

Show Picture of Younger Jesus

Jesus is probably not 13 or 14 here, because he has a pretty good beard. Maybe 18 or 19, yet clearly a young man.

A young Joseph.



Older Jesus

In the second century of the Christian faith, around 150, you find that Christians are trying to fill in the details that are not found in the New Testament, so they use their imagination. By now, the thinking was that Mary was holy and never intimate with a man. We read in the New Testament that Jesus had brothers and sisters. The way that you solved it was that Joseph was a widower. He had children by a previous wife and he was an older man. When he married Mary, he married her not in any way anticipating being intimate with her, but as a grandfather-like figure would care for a young girl,.

By 150 the thought was that Joseph was 93 years old when he married Mary and lived to be 111, so he lived until Jesus was 18. In the Orthodox and Roman Catholic church, you are more likely to see a Joseph that looks like this:

Show Picture of Older Jesus

Where you have an older Joseph caring tenderly for the Christ child.

The truth is, we don't know. When you go home and look at your nativity set today, look to see if it is a Protestant nativity set or a Catholic nativity set. You can tell by how old Joseph is.



Tekton

One of the things that we know about Joseph was that he was a

tekton

This is the Greek word for carpenter. You recognize the word tekton, architect is based upon that Greek word. In architect you have archi- and tecton.

If you have an archangel, you have an angel that is above all the other angels.

An architect is a master builder, but Joseph wasn't an architect. He was just a tekton. This word is typically used to describe a woodworker. In those days they did not build houses out of wood, because there aren't very many trees in the holy land, except olive trees and you don't build houses out of olive trees.

This means that Joseph built doors for houses. Joseph built farm implements to use in the field and he repaired them. This is what a carpenter would have done in his day.

Joseph's Possessions

Everything a carpenter had to do their job was in their toolbox. Think about this for a minute.

Farmers had land.

Shepherds had sheep.

What did a tekton have? His two hands and his tools. That is what he had.

For Joseph, everything that he possessed, that was his way to make a living fit into a box. It is likely that Joseph used his hands and worked hard for his living.

Joseph is Chosen

God chose Joseph, a tekton, a humble and simple man. He is never again mentioned in the New Testament after Jesus turns 12. Joseph doesn't even get any lines. Mary gets lines. Joseph doesn't have any lines in the story. Joseph doesn't get recognition. In fact, he is the patron saint of those that serve God quietly without anybody ever noticing.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that God chooses the humble Mary and Joseph to be used for God's purposes and God chooses you.

Call to Action

I want to be like that.

Inside there is part of me that wants to be recognized when I do something good. But do you remember what Jesus said? When you do your works of righteousness do them where no one else can see them except your father who is in heaven. Part of what we learn from Joseph is to humbly serve God, even if we don't get recognition

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This advent, learn from Mary and Joseph and join them in being the humble who seek after Christ.

Will you pray with me?

Closing Prayer

[Text here]

Amen.

8:30 AM			11:00 AM		
Sermon Time					