

# The Man Who Raised Jesus

## Father's Day

### Matthew 1:18-25

Have you ever wondered about Joseph, the man who was engaged to Mary, the man who was informed by God that his fiancé was pregnant and that she would give birth to Jesus the Messiah?

Joseph, a simple carpenter from the town of Nazareth was chosen to raise God the Father's Son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah. I don't know about you, but I would be terrified and humbled. **Michael Card** wrote this amazing and unique song called "Joseph's Song":

"How could it be this baby in my arms  
Sleeping now, so peacefully  
The Son of God, the angel said  
How could it be?  
Lord I know He's not my own  
Not of my flesh, not of my bone  
Still, Father, let this baby be  
The son of my love...  
Father, show me where I fit  
into this plan of yours  
How can a man be father to the Son of God?  
Lord, for all my life  
I've been a simple carpenter  
How can I raise a king,  
How can I raise a king..."

If Joseph sang this song, we too as fathers "sing" similar songs when we raise our children. I was terrified when my kids were born. How can I raise my kids? How much responsibility is given to us as fathers?

Coming back to Joseph, he was not the biological father of Jesus, yet God entrusted him to be the earthly father of Jesus. You know, to be a father is not just a biological fact. I have seen fathers who have neglected their own children. When we take the role of a father, we also take the responsibilities of **being a Godly father.**

Most likely Joseph was very confused. What would it mean to be the father of the Son of God? I too ask myself the question, “Who am I to be the father of my children? How could that be?”

What can we learn **from Joseph**? Although not much is written about him but we can draw a picture of him from several verses and incidents.

**1. He was a loving husband.** (Love equals commitment)

When Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant, he did not reject her. The penalty of adultery those days was stoning a woman to death. Joseph loved his fiancé, his future wife. He kept his commitment. He knew that God had a plan for this child and for his family. Joseph stood next to his fiancé even though she was pregnant. In that culture that was unheard of. Joseph stood by the side of his fiancé. To love means to have the commitment to stay with the person.

**2. He loved his child.** The child was not of his own flesh. Yet Joseph loved and cared for this child like his own.

a. He protected this child from Herod the king. He did everything possible flee for safety all the way to Egypt. I see a protective father who is ready to risk everything for his the sake of his family.

b. Joseph also taught Jesus to be a carpenter. As a father, he passed the family business to his child.

It is a biblical command to take care of our family. We read Paul writing to Timothy: **“Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”** (1 Tim 5:8)

**3. Joseph was obedient to his Heavenly Father** (the most important characteristic).

The angel of the Lord said: “Take Mary and the child to Egypt”. He did not argue with God. He obeyed. Then it was safe to come back, God told him to come back. He obeyed.

**Obedience to God** was the most important thing **my parents taught me**. The most important thing I can teach to my children is to learn to obey God. The best gift you can give to your child is to teach him/her to grow in learning to trust and obey God: BEST GIFT.

Illustration: It is a gradual process. I heard this illustration from pastor **Chip Ingram**. He gives the example **of a car**. When our baby is born

**we put the car seat in the opposite direction**, rear-facing

**we secure our baby in the seat**, and we drive. Our children depend on our direction.

Things will change as years pass. Now they **do need the car seat facing front**; then they grow more and they do not need a car seat; they **can sit in a regular seat**, in the back, but they can watch the road with us.

Then after some years they **sit in the passenger seat**. We teach them what we are doing, shifting gears, the break, the acceleration, and traffic rules... on and on.

**Then we take them one Saturday morning** to an abandoned big parking lot so they can **learn to drive**. We also give them the manual of the car they will drive and teach them the rules. The best book my parents gave me was my own Bible, the instruction book...

Then they pass the exam and get their license. **You sit next to them and teach** them to be cautious, watch the speed limit, not drink, not text, not make phone calls...

**Then you give them the car one day**, they learn to obey the rules without you....

## **One day you sit in the back, and they drive you....**

Fathers and mothers, and aunts and uncles and everyone; Let me finish with important resources that we can give to our children:

Here are the verses, and what resources you can give as a father:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, ***the LORD is one.***

<sup>5</sup> ***Love the LORD*** your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

<sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are ***to be on your hearts.***

<sup>7</sup> ***Impress (teach) them*** on your children. ***Talk about them*** when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

<sup>8</sup> ***Tie them*** as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> ***Write them*** on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” (Deut. 6:4-9)

Four resources we can give to our children to teach them to obey (adapted from Chip Ingram, Effective Parenting in a Defective World):

**1. Doctrinal:** “The Lord is ONE.” In a world where people around us believe in all sorts of ideologies, we need to teach about the only One True God Yahweh, the I Am, who comes to us in a triune way: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**2. Personal:** “Love the Lord”. Our children need to see our devotion to this One True God as we worship Him and obey Him.

Let your kids see that God is your Father, and you love God the Father in an intimate way, that He is personal to you and you have a personal relationship with God. My dad did not have this. My mom had a personal relation with God. She was my leader in guiding me towards God. Later my dad became a Christian and I was so thankful. Yet, he had respect to God and never lived a life to dishonor God.

**3. Biblical:** We teach them the Bible: “to be on your hearts....” The Bible will be the “instruction manual” for their life.

You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>19</sup>You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.<sup>20</sup>You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, <sup>21</sup>that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. (Deut 11: 18-21)

We entertain our kids in many ways. We send them to piano lessons, soccer and football games, math clubs...you name it. Don't hesitate to prioritize biblical knowledge for you kids.

**4. Systematic teaching:** Teach, talk, explain, live, experience, walk the Talk., when you sit, walk, on the road..., all the time. Let your children experience what you are experiencing with God.

**Summary:**

**How do we know if you are hitting the target?**

**When you find that your child loves Jesus Christ and submits to him, you know you are on the right track.** That is the best gift a father can receive on Father's Day. You see parenting is a process. It starts with you, then your role changes and you see that your child is “driving the car” on his/her own. Your child will be learning **the real pilot is God.**

This is a process. It is never late. If you did not do some of those before, do not give up. God works in you from this moment and on. If you did all you could and did not see results, do not give up, keep praying and parenting with God's love.

May our heavenly Father teach us to be fathers.

Amen