



Matthew 1:18-25 (NIV) ¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" which means, "God with us." ²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

"She should be brought to the door of her father's house, and there the men of her town shall stone her to death..." (Deuteronomy 22:21)

"Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. (Mark 6:3)

"If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." (John 8:7)

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them." (Luke 6:32)

"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20)

God will also declare us to be righteous if we believe in God, who brought Jesus our Lord back from the dead. (Romans 4:24, NLT)

(over)

Want to Go Deeper?

- Memorize Matthew 1:21.
- What scandals in your life has God forgiven?
- List the names of some people that are difficult for you to love. Ask God to give you compassion for them.
- If you are ready to accept God's invitation to a new life, let us know and we will help you with next steps.
- Read *Love Beyond Reason* by John Ortberg.

Please let us know the commitments you are making to God by using the Communication Card. We will pray for you.