

Christmas To Do-ers List, Day 6: Protect Him



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Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." Matthew 2:13

Often times, Joseph's role in the Nativity is overlooked. But God chose Him just as carefully as He did Mary. Had Joseph been any less the humble, prayerful, courageous man he was, Mary and Jesus would have been in serious trouble.

If Ever There Was a Righteous Man

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First of all, we see in Matthew 1:19-25 that Joseph is a righteous man. When he finds out Mary is pregnant, he could have made a spectacle out of her to protect his own reputation. He does not want to disgrace her, however, so he decides to divorce her quietly. Before Joseph can do this, God sends an angel who explains through a dream that Joseph should not be afraid to take Mary as his wife. Even though he surely knew his reputation would be in tatters from the village gossip, Joseph does exactly what the angel says. We see the tangible hedge of protection he casts around Mary and her unborn child.

When King Herod orders a census, Joseph packs up a very pregnant Mary, and they set off for his hometown of Bethlehem. Joseph's next test comes upon arrival in the city, which is packed to capacity and beyond. Mary is already in the active stages of labor, but every inn Joseph frantically inquires at has no room. In the nick of time, one innkeeper offers an animal stable, and Joseph becomes midwife by ushering Jesus into the world.

Joseph is the type of man you want around in an emergency.

Finally, in Matthew 2:13 Joseph again protects his little

family as God sends another angel in a dream to warn him of danger, as Herod is diabolically bent on snuffing out the lives of every baby boy in Bethlehem. He bolts up in the middle of the night, gathers his family, and leaves for Egypt.



Through Joseph's example, we can see the importance of protecting our relationship with the Lord. Had Joseph not been a righteous man who made his relationship with God the biggest priority in his life, this story could have turned out much differently. But as it was, Joseph prayed and believed and had so nurtured his relationship with God, that when God called upon him, he was ready. He humbled himself and he displayed true grit and courage that helped save the lives of Mary and Jesus. His is a true story of protection, love, and obedience, one that we should emulate.

How Can We Protect our Relationship with God?

In order to display the grit and courage of Joseph, we need to protect and guard our connection to Jesus.

1. **Make Jesus your top priority.** The only way you'll get to know Him is in the same way we get to know any other person in our lives: by spending time with Him. Show up each day to read the Bible, pray, and listen for the Holy Spirit's direction.
2. **Be obedient to the direction the Holy Spirit gives you.** He is our helper, teacher, and guide. By tuning in to His voice, we will be living under the protection and

direction of the Holy Spirit.

3. **Make sure you're growing and changing.** If you're still at the same spiritual level you were ten years ago, something is not right. We need to be in the process of transformation.
4. **Try something new.** Explore a spiritual discipline, such as silence and solitude. Attend a retreat. Try walking through a labyrinth prayer walk (the link contains a search that will locate the ones closest to you.) Just don't stagnate.

Enjoy the music of the season and let us know your thoughts on how you will protect your relationship with Jesus.

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