

December 7, 2025

## Angel Says Jesus Is Legit (Matthew 1:18-25)

*Warmup: If an angel appears to you tonight with a message that completely changes your plans, what's the first thing you'll do tomorrow morning?*

READ Matthew 1:18-25

Note: Mary was betrothed to Joseph. Betrothal usually lasted one year and was legally binding requiring a divorce to nullify it. During the betrothal year, the young woman stayed with her parents and was called a "wife," though the marriage was not yet consummated.

- Joseph planned to end his betrothal to Mary with divorce. His plan included justice and mercy. Explain how justice and mercy were integrated in Joseph's plan.
- Which prophecy did the angel reveal to Joseph, and what makes it so important?

Bonus Question: Pastor Neil speaks of the Spirit of God hovering over the water and unformed matter and asks if there is a possible similarity with \_\_\_\_\_. What was the comparison?

### REFLECT

- God adjusted the plans of Mary and Joseph, which created life-long challenges and blessings. When has God adjusted your plans in a way that stretched your faith?
- During your faith challenge, how did you experience Immanuel, "God with us?"
- God consistently works through the Holy Spirit to provide God encounters with humanity. God could have partnered with other people, but he chose Mary and Joseph—and they said "Yes." What does this teach us about God's invitations and our freedom to respond?

### RESPOND

- Christians are Spirit-led followers of Jesus. Even when we make other plans, like Joseph did, God can intervene. How can we learn to hold our wisdom lightly in the presence of a living and active God?
- God intervened in the lives of Mary and Joseph because He had a greater plan. Can you say "Yes" to God although you may have doubts?
- Pray for opportunities to talk with people—not forced or awkward conversations, but organic moments where Jesus naturally enters the dialogue.
  - Ask God to bring people who are ready to encounter the Spirit, revealing Jesus as the legit Savior Scripture proclaims.

*"To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ."*