

# Real-World Help

Character in the midst of Crisis  
Matthew 1:18-25

## The real-world CRISIS

vs. 18

A confusing and INCOMPLETE story

A PREGNANT fiancé

A personally STAINED reputation and SHAMED partner

## The RESPONSE to the crisis

vs. 19-20

A response from his RIGHTEOUSNESS = obey God's Law for this situation

▶ Joseph decided to 'PUT HER AWAY'

A response from his COMPASSION = he refused to DISGRACE Mary

▶ Joseph decided to deal with this 'SECRETLY'

A STRUGGLED response = he '*considered this*'

▶ Without all the facts Joseph would not act IMPULSIVELY

## The RESOLUTION of the Crisis

vs. 20, 24

All the FACTS finally come out in the open

A relationally HEALTHY and spiritually RIGHTEOUS decision is made

Auburn Grace Community Church – November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## Life Group Discussion Questions – November 10, 2024

**Matthew 1:19** *And her husband Joseph, since he was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.*

### DISCOVER

1. Why is it difficult for us to admit we are wrong? How does this impact our pursuit of excellence? Discuss how intentionally slowing down impacts the decision-making process.
2. In your words, define “vindication.” Compare and contrast your response with justification from the Lord. What is the role of “balance” in vindication? What happens if it’s not achieved?
3. How far are you willing to go to protect someone’s honor? Does their character influence the degree of your involvement? Explain. How might your actions be a benefit or detriment to you? To them?
4. Through a past crisis, how did God reveal something new about Himself to you?

### EXPLORE

1. Read John 10:10. Jesus said He has come to bring us abundant life. Describe what a full, overflowing life looks like in the face of crises. What is expected of us? Are there areas in our lives where Jesus only wants us to have a “semi-full” measure of abundance (less than 100%)? What purpose(s) would that serve?
2. Read Matthew 1:18-25. In Joseph’s day, he would’ve been “in the right” to divorce his betrothed. In what ways does Joseph show his righteousness? From this passage, identify the lessons we can glean when dealing from the midst of a crisis. How can this account inspire us to trust in God’s plans, even when they seem confusing or challenging? (see Romans 8:28)
3. In Psalm 23:3, God says that He guides us in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name. Is this saying that God does not permit us to wander in ways that would lead to ruin? Doesn’t He get our attention through adversity? Explain. (see Job 36:15 and 1 Peter 5:10)
4. Read Daniel 2:14-23. From this passage, identify some of the lessons when dealing from the midst of a crisis.
5. Read 2 Chronicles 7:14. Identify the conditions that must first be met before God responds. What does God’s promise to “hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land” in response to the people’s repentance tell you about His character? How do you respond to the challenges or hardships in your life? Are there parallels to the concept of repentance and prayer outlined in verse 14?

### EXPERIENCE

1. Share of a time when you made a difficult decision without first having all the facts. Was God a part of your decision process? How did it turn out? Were the results what you were expecting? What lesson(s) did you take away? Do you still have a tendency to “trust your instincts”? What will it take to change that and trust God more?
2. It’s reasonable to assume a crisis will come about in your life, maybe even sooner than later. What can you do beforehand to strengthen your faith to deal with the imminent upheaval?
3. After some honest self-examination and with the Spirit’s help, ask yourself: “Am I living a life that is real and experiencing the life that Jesus came to give us? Or, am I just existing, and going through the motions?” What might this say about your relationship with Jesus? Are you absolutely convinced that our real God is in love with the real you, shortcomings and all?

### PRAY

As a group, pray Psalm 46 back to God.