



“Where Have All The Heroes Gone? – Joseph” * 12/13/09 * Mathew 1:18-25

I. Why is our modern celebrity-obsession a problem?

Lessons On Heroism Shown By Joseph



Lesson 1 – Godly heroes are masters of their _____.

I. What do you think Joseph was feeling when Mary turned up pregnant?

II. Is passion a bad thing or good thing? How so?

III. How does a godly person channel their passions and emotions? WWJD? (What Did Joseph Do to control his anger?)

IV. Am I a master of my emotions? Do I think out or lash out?

Lesson 2 – Godly heroes are masters of their _____.

I. What did God tell Joseph to do? And what did Mary and Joseph decide to do until Jesus was born?



II. Why did they decide this? Is it because sex is bad and unholy?

III. What principles does this story teach about keeping sexually pure?

A. First, the story reminds us that sexual self-control _____.

I. Why is this important to know?

B. The story also teaches us to set up practical _____ around ourselves.



Lesson 3 – Godly heroes are masters of their _____.

I. An angel appeared to Mary once. What about Joseph? What’s significant about this?

II. Each one of us rules over some “little kingdoms” around us. What are some examples of these “little kingdoms”?

III. What are some inappropriate ways men can rule over the “little kingdom” of their homes?



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I. Why is our modern celebrity-obsession a problem?

Because in being celebrity-obsessed, we are resetting all of our cultural values. Heroes are known for their valor and their virtue, their courage and their character, and in wanting to be like them, we are made into better people. Celebrities are known for their fame, their name, their money, their beauty, their outlandishness, and in wanting to be like them, we become more shallow and selfish and cynical.

Lessons On Heroism Shown By Joseph



Lesson 1 – Godly heroes are masters of their Heroism.

I. What do you think Joseph was feeling when Mary turned up pregnant?

There is no anger on earth like the anger felt when you believe the one you love has been unfaithful to you. We hear all the time about crimes of passion. I’m certain Joseph was at least tempted to go there. Tempted to slap Mary around. Tempted to find out who slept with her and take one of his carpenter’s hammers to his head.

II. Is passion a bad thing or good thing? How so?

It’s not a bad thing in and of itself. If you don’t feel passion, you’re only half a human. For example, masculinity and passion go hand in hand with each other. We have this hormone called testosterone with surges through us like a lava flow. God gave it to us. It’s part of who we are by creation. It’s not a bad thing. Properly channeled it enables a man to attempt great things, to exhibit courage, to launch into the deep, to explore, to invent, to conquer, to fight, to initiate.

III. How does a godly person channel their passions and emotions? WWJD? (What Did Joseph Do to control his anger?)

He ran his emotions through God. The story tells us that before Joseph acted out, he *thought out* what he was going to do. Verse 19 tells us “he *had in mind* to divorce her quietly”. Then verse 20 – “But after he had *considered* this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him...” Joseph is being what we call “proactive” here, as opposed to being “reactive”. A reactive person is someone who acts out, lashes out in response to something, like a reflex. A proactive person, *before acting*, considers his or her steps.

IV. Am I a master of my emotions? Do I think out or lash out?

Lesson 2 – Godly heroes are masters of their Sexuality.



I. What did God tell Joseph to do? And what did Mary and Joseph decide to do until Jesus was born?

God says to Joseph to go ahead with the marriage because the baby in her womb is God’s baby, conceived in her by a miracle of the Holy Spirit. Then the story says: “*He had no union with her until Jesus was born*” –even though they were now legally married, they didn’t sexually consummate their marriage until the pregnancy was over.

II. Why did they decide this? Is it because sex is bad and unholy?

What we do see happen in the Bible is that there are times and occasions when God gets very, very close to us – and everything we have, everything we are, everything we do is laid at his feet, including our sexuality. And so when Israel first approaches Mount Sinai to receive God’s commandments in Exodus 19 God tells the people to “consecrate themselves” in preparation for this awesome moment, and one thing God specifically says is “Abstain from sexual relations”. Not that sex is bad. But God is better. And he needs your focus right now. That’s probably what’s going on here. That Mary’s pregnancy is such a holy thing, such a God-thing, that they decide either with God’s direction or all on their

own that they're not going to mess around with what God's doing by messing around, if you catch my drift.

III. *What principles does this story teach about keeping sexually pure?*

A. *First, the story reminds us that sexual self-control is possible.*

1. Why is this important to know?

Because all day long in this culture, we are bombarded with the message that it can't be done. Everybody's doing it. It's unnatural to restrain your natural urges. Just give in to it. And you listen to those voices long enough, and you may start to think, "Well maybe it is impossible to wait till I'm married. Maybe it is impossible to hold back these feelings." Well, no it's not impossible. The whole point of spending time with heroes, reading about them, thinking about them, is that they show that you don't have to be like the herd. You don't have to sink to everyone else's level. You can attempt difficult things and achieve difficult things because they are possible!

B. The story also teaches us to set up practical boundaries around ourselves.

In Luke's version of the Christmas story, he writes that after Mary became pregnant, she went to live with her relative Elizabeth for three months, Elizabeth who right then was pregnant with John the Baptist. Mary and Joseph were able to ward off the temptation because they weren't around each other. Are you discerning a purity principle here?



Lesson 3 – Godly heroes are masters of their home.

I. An angel appeared to Mary once. What about Joseph? What's significant about this?

An angel appeared to him three times. In God's eyes, Joseph is the head of his home. Joseph is the one responsible in God's eyes for the protection and leadership of his family. That the Bible calls the husband the *head of his home*, is indisputable. Those are the words. What those words mean is open to discussion. But however you interpret it,

when God wanted his son Jesus kept safe, he gave that responsibility to Joseph. The buck stopped with him.

II. *Each one of us rules over some "little kingdoms" around us.*

What are some examples of these "little kingdoms"?

Time is one of your little kingdoms. We are each given 168 hours a week to use, and how you use it is up to you. Your body is a little kingdom. You rule it. What goes on it. What goes in it. Where it goes. What it does. You're the king or queen of your body. Your mind is a little kingdom. Your spirit. In a lesser extent, it extends out to society. You and I are to exercise authority in the bettering of the world around us. We are to bring God and bring good to others, like John the Baptist did. For a man, his marriage and his home is one of his "little kingdoms" he is to rule over.

III. *What are some inappropriate ways men can rule over the "little kingdom" of their homes?*

Did you reign with an iron fist? Because you're bigger and stronger, did you throw your weight around, did you shout or beat your wife and children into submission, did you pull rank, like a little tinpot dictator? You'll answer to God for that. How dare you abuse your authority in that way!

Did you reign with passivity? Did you stand in the background like Joseph in all those nativity scenes, and leave it to your wife to make all the hard decisions, leave it to your wife to be the tough guy when it came to disciplining the kids, figure that to provide a paycheck once a week entitled you to sit on the couch and watch your football game and drink your beer. Did you leave it to your wife to lead the family in devotions and get the family ready for church on Sunday? You'll answer to God for that passivity also. Or did you reign as Joseph did, for the safety, security and well-being of your wife and children? Did you use those bigger muscles of yours and that deeper voice of yours to cherish your wife, and nurture your children? Are they better off because of your leadership? Are they better people because of your leadership? Because of your leadership and example, are they closer to Jesus or further away? Did you show your sons how to conquer sin? And how to treat a woman? Did you teach your daughters how to feel safe and secure and loved in the presence of a man?

