

BIG IDEA

A sacrifice without a cost is never a sacrifice.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO KNOW?

Describe a time in your life when you had to sacrifice something you loved for the good of someone else. What did it feel like? What was the result of the sacrificial act?

Read Matthew 1:18-24. Using your imagination, describe what is happening in these verses with your own words. What stands out to you?

Recall the social pressure Joseph and Mary would have faced because Mary was pregnant out of wedlock. Joseph could have publically shamed Mary which would have lifelong implications for her in that town.

What kind of thoughts are going through Joseph's head when he finds out that Mary is pregnant?

What costs were associated with Joseph's decision to stay with Mary? How does Joseph demonstrate **Romans 1:17** with his life?

Nazareth was a very small town and it's not unreasonable to think everyone eventually found out about Mary's pregnancy. Joseph would have to live in a place where everyone thought he was raising someone else's child because Mary was unfaithful.

Read Matthew 1:19 again. Develop a theory as to why Joseph would have divorced Mary privately instead of publically (go deeper than "because he was righteous").

This would be a great time to get creative and maybe use your imagination to talk about Joseph's upbringing.

WHAT IS MY INITIAL REACTION?

In your opinion, what do all heroes have in common? Where do you see these traits in Joseph's life?

Here's a great article about 5 qualities of a hero. It's also filled with some great stories you might want to share with your group. <https://www.inc.com/bill-murphy-jr/5-qualities-of-incredibly-heroic-leaders.html>



Read Matthew 2:13-15. Notice Joseph's reaction to the angel's message, do you see a pattern in Joseph's behavior? What is the pattern and how can you demonstrate that same pattern in your life today?

The pattern is: God speaks and Joseph obeys.

How do you think Joseph's character and integrity affected the upbringing and training of Jesus?

This is a great question to bring up the humanity of Jesus. Remember that Jesus still had to grow and learn which he would have done by watching his earthly, adopted father. Maybe Jesus was imitating his earthly dad when He showed respect to people like the woman at the well and Mary Magdalene?

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

Who in your life needs a hero right now?

What can you do to be the hero that person needs this Christmas?

Make a list of 5 heroic actions you and your Life Group could work on this week.

You know the drill! Make the list and then come back next week to celebrate the cool stories which come from your heroic actions.

