

## December 19th, We Do

### Part 2 in the series 'Who Needs Christmas'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

#### **READ Matthew 1:18-25**

**18** This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. **19** Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

**20** But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

**22** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: **23** "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

**24** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. **25** But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

1. Were people expecting the Messiah to be born of a virgin? Why did this matter?
2. Matthew's gospel account was written for the Jews, so why do you think he decided to add the detail about the virgin birth which, would have potentially detracted from the credibility of his narrative?
3. Reread verse 19. In Jim's message, he mentioned how Joseph, at the advent of Jesus coming into this world, found himself caught between the right thing and the merciful thing- the tension between law and grace. He also mentioned how everything Jesus said and did resulted in a heightening of the tension between law and grace. What are your thoughts on this?
4. Would you agree that people might find the idea of the Messiah coming to save his people from their sins underwhelming? Why/why not? What do you think they might have been expecting instead? What kinds of things do you think people would want to be saved from now?
5. What's the difference in saying "save his people from their sin" and "forgive his people from their sin"?

**READ John 8:6-11**

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. **7** When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” **8** Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

***9** At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. **10** Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”*

***11** “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”*

Why do you think Jesus ends this interaction by saying “Go now and leave your life of sin.”?

Do you have anymore thoughts on this passage?

**READ Romans 6:12-14**

**12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. **13** Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. **14** For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

How does this passage provide insight into what it means that Jesus came to save us from our sins?

A:

- Sin is not our master- we are free to not sin! We are not obligated to obey sin
- We no longer have to live in the kingdom and dominion of sin
- We can be freed from the death, destruction and oppression that our sin brings