

**A Christmas Dream Come True**  
**Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV)**

*Immanuel God with us—Matthew 1:23*

As we saw in the message the name Immanuel, embodies the mystery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While this phrase is very common to us, especially this time of year, if we take some time to ponder it we find that its meaning is anything but common. We saw in the sermon that Immanuel is the I AM, *the self-existing one*, the Alpha and the Omega, *the first and the last*, and El Shaddai, *The Almighty God*.

Take a few moments to ponder yourself. What are some other names for God? What is significant about those names in light of the incarnation?

As we noted this morning a reading of Matthew defines the word “us”

- He came to be with the poor in spirit. (Matthew 5:3)
- He came to be with the with mournful. (Matthew 5:4)
- He came to be with the weary and heavy-laden. (Matthew 11:28)
- He came to be with doubt-and-fear-filled fishermen. (Matthew 8:26)
- He came to be with ridden vagrants. (Matthew 10:9)
- He came to be with those feeble in body and mind. (Matthew 15:29, 20:29)
- He came to be with slaves (Matthew 8:5)
- He came to be with tax collectors (Matthew 9:9)
- He came to be with pagans (Matthew 15:21)
- He came to be with the demon possessed. (Matthew 8:28, 15:21, 17:14)
- He came to be with a rich but misguided young men. (Matthew 19:16)
- He came to be with 1000s of hungry and needy people. (Matthew 14:13, 15:32)
- He came to be with children. (Matthew 19:13 )
- He came to be with a dying little girl. (Matthew 9:24)
- He came to be with the one stray sheep (Matthew 18:10)

As you consider this list ask yourself, who is God put in your path that we wants to be with? Who has God put in your path that you can share him with?

*Joseph’s Character—Matthew 1:18-20a*

In Joseph’s response to the apparent unfaithfulness of Mary something of his character emerged. He desires to honor his God in obedience, but he also desires to uphold the dignity of his seemingly unfaithful bride. In Joseph there is a holy tension—righteousness tempered by love—a piety and a pity that Jesus would continue to demonstrate throughout Matthew.

As you consider your relationship to others how to you live in the tension between piety and pity? Do you need to grow in this regard? How do you need to grow in this regard?

*God make's good on his promise—Matthew 1:20-24*

In Joseph's dream God reveals his intention to fulfill his promise to raise up from David's line the Messiah—a Savior that would free us from the tyranny of sin. In the message we defined sin as living independently from God. As God's creation we sought our independence and so sin enter the world—but God sought to get us back so Jesus entered the world.

Consider your own story of redemption? Do you remember the day, the moment when he sought you back? Take some time to reflect and remember that moment. When we've been walking in faith for so long we can lose sight of where we began. Sometimes it's good for us consider where we have come from and the faithfulness of God that has brought us so far.

*Joseph steps out in faith—Matthew 1:25*

The dream of Immanuel took root in Joseph's heart, it flourished in faith, and he acted in obedience. Joseph's dream gave way to reality and he had to face that reality in faith if he was to be obedient to that which he had been called to do.

As you think of the dreams that the Lord has placed in your heart. As you consider the things he called you to. What steps of faith do you need to take to walk in obedience?