

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.
For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.
She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus....
Matthew 1: 20

There is so much we do not know about Joseph, husband of Mary, foster father of Jesus. In the line from Matthew’s gospel quoted above, an angel (the same Archangel Gabriel who appeared to Mary to tell her she would bear a son) reveals to Joseph in a dream that he should reverse the decision he had made to put aside his wife to be, Mary, because she is pregnant and he is not the father. He does not really know who is but he is going to cut his losses, divorce her and move on with his life.

Then comes the dream. In the dream an angel tells him that what Mary said about the child and how the child was conceived was actually the truth. He did not believe her because the tale is so outlandish. Who could believe such a thing? But the angel reassures Joseph and reminds him that he actually has been told the truth, that God is very involved in what is going on, that it truly is miraculous and that the miracle in some way needs to involve him in it.

Joseph pays attention to the dream. He changes his mind. He returns to Mary and once again renews his desire to take her as his wife. But he must also know that this whole involvement of God in the life of his wife will have implications that he has no idea about. But notice, Joseph goes from fear to conviction. He who was going to put her aside is now going to embrace her and her situation wholeheartedly. That, my friends, is what grace looks like—grace under pressure. Joseph is even willing to reverse himself because he has been given a reassurance that Mary’s word is true.

This life is not a problem to be solved. This life is a mystery to be entered and lived. Mystery is beyond us, way bigger than we are and hard to fathom. But that is where trust comes in. And if there is one thing abundantly clear from the whole Christ event, it is that we need to trust in God that the Lord knows what he is doing and has a game plan that is being carried out. Do you believe that? That is the question of the week.