



GOOD NEWS OR BAD NEWS?

“So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God.” – Luke 1:35b

MARY & JOSEPH

READ MATTHEW 1:18-25, LUKE 1:26-38

We’ve all heard the question “Which do you want first – the good news or the bad news?” How we answer that may say a lot about our personalities. Do you want to get the bad part over with and then end on a happy note? Or do you want to gain strength from good news before you face the bad?

Mary and Joseph both faced their own version of the good news/bad news scenario. Mary was a young woman (probably mid-teens) who found herself pregnant. And Joseph, who she was engaged to, knew he wasn’t the father. They both must have been scared to death about the future – should Joseph divorce Mary as he had every legal right to do? How would Mary find the strength to face the judgment and disdain of her friends, neighbors, and family?

But God was centered in their situation. He appeared to both of them in different ways, reassuring them that they did not need to be afraid. They were both a part of God’s amazing plan to bring salvation to all the earth. And they both responded with quiet humility. Joseph chose to continue with his plans to get married, in spite of the personal hardships this decision would bring him. Mary recognized how her pregnancy was all about God and her only desire was to trust and serve him. The road ahead would not be easy for either of them, but they both were moving forward with the knowledge that God was with them.

As you think about some bad news or hard situations you may be experiencing, consider the phrase “But God was centered in their situation.” Mary and Joseph were facing something beyond comprehension, *but because of where they placed God*, they were assured it would all be okay. It was part of his plan. Hold on to the hope that with God at the center, your trials will continue you on the path to God’s better, good plan.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How do you respond to the question, “Do you want the good news or the bad news first?” Why?
2. Put yourself in Mary or Joseph’s place. How would you respond to the angel’s words?
3. Consider a current trial – the bad news you are facing. Where is God positioned? In light of Mary and Joseph’s story, what is God saying to you today about whatever it is you are facing?