



# REFLECTIONS

December 16, 2018 Refreshed from the Archives of December 18, 2005

**...he did what the angel of the Lord  
commanded him...**

*Matthew 1:24*

## When It Makes No Sense

### Part three in the series *Preparing for Christmas*

Our home is generously decorated with nativity scenes, most of them year-round. But at Christmastime we add some special ones to honor the season. This year, while placing the figures into the scene, the Joseph figure captured most of my attention.

Here is a man looking warmly at his newborn son as any proud father would. Yet the babe is not his own. Still, reverence fills his being as if he knows how extraordinary this child is. In fact, he *does* know the whole astonishing story. His betrothed had a child by the Holy Spirit, and through an angel, God asked him to serve as its earthly father.

Now for me that makes Joseph one of the most remarkable men in the Bible. His faith and obedience rank up there with Noah and Abraham. God asked Joseph to stand by his bride to be, to love, honor, and cherish her. And he *did!* even when it made no sense to do so. Just as for Mary, the months of waiting were long for him too. The girl he loved left home for an extended period, leaving him alone in faith to prepare their home. When she returned, he must have had to answer some difficult questions. Then he was required to make a journey of some 60 rugged miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Perhaps he might have left Mary behind, but they had already been separated more than they liked. And neither did he want to leave her on her own at such a time. Her condition must have been added days to their travel time over the rugged terrain; but his life was more than himself. She was a part of his life too—and so was the Child. Joseph's role was to be there for his bride, to stand by her, to attend to her every need, and to protect her from both danger and disgrace. And he was there to love and serve the Christ Child.

Joseph assumed a special role in preparing for Christmas. A builder by trade, God chose him to become the consummate husband and a model earthly father. But most of all God chose Joseph because of his obedience even when it made no sense to do so.

Only Joseph did make sense of it. He made sense of it because he believed. He believed the angel was a true messenger from God. He believed God was the maker of all things that have been made—the heavens and the earth, the seas, the air, the dry land, all living things, and all the forces that hold them all together. He believed the prophecy—a virgin would be with child and his name would be Jesus. All things are possible with God. And Joseph believed God had led him with his betrothed to Bethlehem. So, there he found himself in a stable with his betrothed that bright starry night preparing for Christmas.

And Jesus came.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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