

Dec 19, 2015

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

*Meeting Jesus in Matthew: Who is Jesus?*

*Jesus is God*

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### Pre-Introduction:

1. Welcome to the first episode of *Meeting Jesus in Matthew*.
2. The author Matthew wrote this book to Jewish Christians.
3. I imagine some of them wanted to know if they could believe in Jesus.
4. Maybe you're a religious or non-religious person who is asking the same question.
5. Matthew's message is the good news that anyone can come to know him.
6. This series will teach you who Jesus who Jesus is, what he taught, and what he did (**let's pray**).

### Introduction:

1. I'm very excited this weekend to start this new series, *Meeting Jesus in Matthew*.
2. But I'm also really excited to go see *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* on Sunday evening (just ask SG).
3. I loved *Star Wars* growing up, so much so I made myself a real light saber out of a broom handle.
4. I'm not a member of the Jedi religion, but sometimes I try to get food from the fridge with the force.
5. Sometimes this works when Monica get's so annoyed with me she get's me the food.
6. There are several new Star Wars actors: John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Adam Driver, and Daisy Ridley.
7. The main star, Daisy Ridley is a "total unknown"; she wasn't a movie star.
8. In an interview, she said when she heard about the part she really felt she had to try out.
9. The moment she was cast was a life-changing moment (fame, fortune, career).
10. Do you need a life-changing moment (job, home, family, spirituality)?
11. Is there something in you that makes you feel like you just had to come try our church?
12. I want to tell you about a life changing moment in history that can change your life today.
13. The moment that changes everything is the moment baby Jesus came into our world.

### I. Jesus came to change our lives. (v. 18-19)

#### A. Jesus changed Mary's and Joseph's lives.

1. Mary and Joseph were engaged but not yet married.
2. Their engagement is legally binding, broken only by divorce ("Joseph her husband).
3. Their engagement lasts a year and at the end they'll marry and start their lives together.
4. Joseph discovers Mary is pregnant and it's not his child, so he thinks she's committed adultery.
5. If they marry, he's condoning the adultery, which he can't in good conscience do.
6. He could have taken her assets and run, but he decides to divorce her quietly.
7. Already Joseph and Mary's life has been radically turned upside down.
8. When Jesus comes into their lives, he puts their whole world at risk.
9. Mary is challenged to trust God when she might lose her reputation and security.
10. And Joseph's black and white world view is challenged by grace.

(Jesus came to change our lives.)

(Sometimes we overestimate what can change lives.)

- B. "As Seen On TV" products tell us they'll change our world.
1. The Woof Washer 360 can reduce your dog-washing time to mere seconds.
  2. The Waving Flag can wave the American flag for you all the time so you always feel patriotic.
  3. The Faceblanket can help you save on electricity or go camping (soft towel with nose hole)
  4. The LED Rainbow Shower Head can make the most boring shower a party.
  5. The Aqua Rug is perfect for those who always wanted a carpet in their shower.
  6. These products promise change but don't offer any lasting results.
  7. Jesus came to produce change we can't achieve on our own (painful).
  8. Mary and Joseph really had to trust God's plans in this moment.

(God sent Jesus to change Mary and Joseph's lives, but our lives as well.)

(How did Jesus come to change us?)

## II. Jesus came to change our lives with grace. (v. 20-21)

- A. God sent Jesus to change our lives.
1. The story says Joseph thought long and hard about his situation but didn't know how to fix it.
  2. An Angel of God appears in a dream to tell him Mary didn't commit adultery (odd dreams).
  3. Both v. 18 and v.20 emphasize that the Holy Spirit, not a man, conceived Jesus.
  4. Against all odds, there's a solution that doesn't require divorce or dishonoring the law.
  5. God provides a third alternative that makes sense and changes Joseph and Mary's lives.
  6. The Angel tells Joseph to name the baby Jesus... Why is this important?
  7. For the father to name the child is for him to formally recognize him as his own (adoption).
  8. The Angel addresses him as "Joseph son of David" because this is a Messianic term.
  9. God made King David a promise that one of his sons would sit on the throne forever (2 Sam 7).
  10. The Angel is telling Joseph to adopt Jesus as his son so he's the legal descendent of King David.
  11. This King isn't just going to rule over a nation state, he's going to rule all people.
  12. God sent Jesus to change our lives.

- B. Jesus came to change our lives with grace.
1. The name "Jesus" is Greek and comes from the Hebrew name "Yeshua."
  2. "Yeshua" comes from the Hebrew verb "Yahsha" (to save) and the name for God, "Yahweh".
  3. So Jesus' name actually means "Yahweh is salvation" (WBC).
  4. The salvation Jesus offers is the forgiveness of our sins.
  5. Jesus changes us by living a holy life and dying an unfair death.
  6. Jesus died for you and me on the cross and then rose three days later.
  7. Now God offers us Jesus' holy life in exchange for your and my sinful lives.
  8. God offers this gift of salvation free of charge through Jesus Christ.

(Jesus came to change our lives with grace.)

(Have you ever had someone change your life with grace?)

- C. In high school, my youth pastor Doug changed my life with grace.
1. My friends and I were living lives of sin and rebellion (drinking, pornography, racing).
  2. Instead of judging me, he invited us to begin studying the Bible together.
  3. That extra time with him gave me the space I needed to confess my sin.

4. He cried with me and helped me come clean to my parents.
5. He showed me the love and grace of Jesus in that moment.

(Jesus changes our lives with grace.)

D. My wife Monica changed my life with grace.

1. Before we got married, I lived a very black and white life.
2. I felt like I had to justify my existence every moment of every day.
3. It meant I got a lot done, like writing a whole book, but also that I stressed out a lot.
4. Monica showed me what it means to love someone without expectations.
5. Now I don't feel like I have to perform every moment (I can relax and watch Netflix).
6. This helps me love God as I realize I don't have to be religious all the time to please God.

(God gave me both Doug and Monica as an act of grace.)

(Jesus came to change our lives with grace.)

(Who is Jesus? That's what our series is asking.)

III. Jesus is the God who came to change our lives with grace. (v. 22-23)

A. Jesus has the power to change our lives because he's God.

1. Jesus fulfills an OT prophecy written 700 years prior to his birth.
2. The nation of Israel is being attacked and the prophet Isaiah tells king Ahaz to trust God.
3. He calls on him to trust that God is with him, Immanuel means "God with us."
4. Ahaz is so afraid of losing what matters most to him that he doesn't believe or obey.
5. He forms an alliance with a superpower that results in the loss of his kingdom.
6. Are you going to trust that Jesus is God and can change your life for the better?
7. Or are you going to cling to your desires and lose it all?
8. Jesus has the power to change our lives because he's God.

(If Jesus is God, he can do anything, but what are the ways he can change me?)

B. Here are "5 Ways Jesus Can Change You."

1. He can change your family life (family, boyfriend, consider others as more important)
2. He can change your work life (learn to do it for God and others, finding meaning anywhere)
3. He can change the way you think (anger, sadness, anxiety, happiness, desires)
4. He can change the way you see yourself (courage to self examine because I know I'm loved)
5. He can change your eternal home (no matter what go through have ultimate security in heaven)

(Unlike "As Seen on TV", none of these changes are instantaneous except maybe the last.)

(Jesus is the God who came to change our lives with grace.)

(It may take Jesus a lifetime to change your life, but it can begin today.)

IV. Jesus is a life changer. (v. 24-25)

(Do you want Jesus to change your life?)

- A. Joseph was willing to see how Jesus could change his life.
1. The Bible tells us when Joseph woke up he 1) believes, 2) obeys, and 3) is changed.
  2. **First, he believes** the angel's message and takes Mary as his wife.
  3. He doesn't sleep with Mary to try and make it appear as if the baby is his, he simply trusts God.
  4. Notice belief comes before obedience; trusting in God enables Joseph to obey God.
  5. **Second, he obeys** God by naming the baby Jesus and formally adopting him as his own.
  6. Because of Joseph's obedience, we can legally say Jesus is a descendant of King David.
  7. **Third, he is changed** when he not only gets a wife but a son who will save the world.
  8. Because Joseph didn't walk away, he becomes the father of mankind's savior.
  9. King Ahaz trusted himself and lost it all but Joseph trusted God and got it all.

(Jesus is the God who came to change our lives with grace.)

(Jesus is a life changer.)

(\*Invite musician up to play).

Conclusion:

1. Like Joseph, you too have the opportunity to 1) believe, 2) obey, and 3) be changed.
2. I want to offer you the opportunity to believe in Jesus and begin your faith story.
3. I am going to close by praying what some call the "prayer of salvation."
4. If you're not ready to commit to Jesus yet, just listen and reflect on the words.
5. If you are ready to be changed by Jesus, pray these words internally along with me.
6. In this prayer, we repent, believe, and ask Jesus to change us so we can follow him.
  - Father God, thank you for giving me hope today.
  - I come before you confessing I have a disobedient heart.
  - I know I'm more sinful than I can ever imagine.
  - But I know you love me more than I can ever understand.
  - I believe you sent your Son Jesus to live an innocent life.
  - I believe Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins.
  - I believe he rose again three days later so I can have eternal life.
  - Thank you, Jesus for taking my sins and giving me your spotless record.
  - Thank you for forgiving me and giving me a new start in you.
  - I want to follow and obey you Jesus for the rest of my days.
  - I can only do this as your Holy Spirit helps me in this journey.
  - Thank you for changing me as we go through life together.
  - I love you Jesus. Amen.

Psalm 29:11 "May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!" Merry Christmas!