

This is a series on the parents of Christmas. Last week, we did Mary, and this week, we're doing Joseph. Next week, I'm going to include both Elizabeth and Zacharias. These are wonderful people of faith that God chose to be parents of this Christmas story. Now, I'm going to be looking today at Matthew chapter 1 verses 18 to 25. So go ahead and turn there, and that's where we're going to be.

As we explore the parent here, Joseph, in these verses, we're going to develop a character study of him. Then, I'm going to share some things I've learned about parenting, and I'll try to keep it pithy. Finally, we'll look at some takeaways that we can apply from our study of Joseph in this passage.

This passage is probably very familiar to many of you and might include some Bible reading that we do around the home and here at church to think about Christmas. And there are several things that we have here to learn, both in terms of some background, some prophecy, and some clarity about why Jesus came.

Some dreams Wake us up

So, I want to start with a funny story. We look at Joseph first; he is in Matt. 1:24, he was aroused from sleep, and after that, he went ahead and did what God wanted him to do. Now, we'll look at that in greater detail. But the word arousing is very interesting. We use it in two different ways. One, it could be that you are waking up, and you rise from a dream or sleep. Two, it's a word we use to describe when God raises the body from the dead. He will arouse the body, where the body will meet the soul and spirit of the person. In the twinkling of an eye, they'll all come together and have an eternal body, no longer the body of corruption but a body remade for eternity.

Now, have you ever had a dream where that dream, you end up in dangerous circumstances, and it never gets resolved, and you're completely paralyzed with fear, with the only escape being to wake up? I had a crazy dream like that this week, and it went something like this. Don't try to overanalyze it, you know, it's an irrational dream, all right. But I started, I was on a beach, and while I was on the beach, there were a lot of dolphins swimming around me, and they were going through the water and shallow water, and they were going underneath the dock, and then they were swimming on the other side. And they're pretty close to my feet in my lounge chair, like where the ocean and the beach come together. And so far, it's so good, all right.

But as you know, dreams take a turn. All of a sudden, the dolphins turned to all types of sharks. Most of them I was looking at were bull sharks, but again, it was not just a few; it was hundreds of them. And they're swimming right by my feet and out in the shallow area where I was looking. And that gets a little creepy because, you know, I'm not entirely convinced you want your feet that close to where they're swimming. And then it gets a little worse. Now, hundreds of crocodiles are swimming in that area. Well, you know a crocodile can come out of the water. And if it runs towards you, it can run faster than you can. You can only avoid a crocodile by making zigzag cuts because it doesn't run in straight lines or make that kind of cut. But there are hundreds of them. Now, the scene alternates between sharks and crocodiles. Then, the sharks and crocodiles change direction when going across the water. Now they're going towards me, and they're swimming underneath me. And I'm on some dock or something where they're right underneath, and they're swimming underneath, which is fine and good.

But now you have alternating sharks and crocodiles. And you know those crocodiles, they are capable of climbing up. So now everybody on the beach has left. My wife and I are the only ones there. And you know you're asking the real question, "Why am I still here? Why haven't I left?" And you're paralyzed in your fear. Well, this is a good time to be aroused from your sleep, and I was. I woke up in the dream. It was wild.

Mathew 1:18-25 A Dream helps a right decision

Alright, Joseph has a dream here in this passage that we'll look at. So let's let's take a look at this passage. Matt. 1:18, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. After his mother, Mary was betrothed to Joseph before they came together, and she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man and not wanting to make her a public example, was mindful to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which was conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." And she will bring forth the Son, and you will call his name Jesus, and he will save his people from his sins."

So, in this particular paragraph, we have this story. Mary and Joseph are engaged; in their culture, they were already considered married. before they came together sexually, Mary was found to be with child. And she explains that the Holy Spirit did this. Well, Joseph is a just man, righteous man, and rational man. He's taking time to decide but doesn't quite believe Mary. He doesn't want to make a public example of her, but he doesn't want to continue his marriage commitment. So he's considering these things, and while he's considering it, he has a time where he goes to sleep, and he has a dream, and the angel talks to him and tells him specifically he can marry his wife for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Now, this is one of those key doctrines in the Bible that we have to hold to, that Jesus was God and man, and he was born not of a human father, but God was his father, and miraculously caused a miracle in Mary's body to have a baby. It wasn't done by sexual means; it was a miracle that God did. The virgin birth is a cornerstone of our faith. But you know, when you look at the Greek, and you're looking at "of the Holy Spirit," now some translations use the word "by the Holy Spirit," which is acceptable, but King James and the New King James use the word "of the Holy Spirit." Well, "holy, "Αγίου" here is written in the genitive, so this is a child that belongs to God. It's of God, it's of the Holy Spirit, and the genitive indicates that. All right, and so that's kind of interesting to see from the Greek. Now, she did it, or God did this, because "you shall call his name Jesus, and he will save his people from their sins." Remember what John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." (John 1:29). Dying for our sins was one of the key purposes that Jesus would do in his first coming.

Now it goes on to say, "So all of this was done that might be fulfilled through spoken to the Lord through the prophet." What prophet? Well, we find out who wrote this, "Through the prophet saying, 'Behold the Virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us.'" Okay, now, who wrote that? Well, it was Isaiah, and you'll find that writing in Isaiah 7:14. He was the prophet who wrote this, which is now being fulfilled. Isaiah 9:6 tells us about this being

God and man, or being God with us. So that's who Jesus is. He is God with us. John put it this way, "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God," and later, "He dwelt among us." And so God came down and was among us, and that's a key idea here.

In verse 24, "And Joseph, being aroused from his sleep, did as the angel commanded him and took his wife to him. And he didn't have marital relations with her until she brought forth her firstborn Son. "And he called his name Jesus, who will save his people from his sins." Jesus is Joshua, or God saves. So, a couple of things took place here. First, he was waking up. All right, he was waking up from this dream. I mean, his dream was very different. The angel's talking to him, and he's changing his mind. Joseph was going to put her away in some divorce proceeding, but now he's told to take her, and he does. All right, he takes her to be his wife. And, you know, it says, "He didn't know her till she had brought forth the firstborn son." So, while it would be nothing wrong with a couple having marital union after pregnancy, you know, there's a period there where you could comfortably have sexual experience. Nothing wrong with that, but they didn't do that. They ensured that they were letting everybody know that that baby came not from a human father, Joseph, but from God. Okay, that's the reason why that was done.

One day He will awaken our dead bodies - Sword drill

As long as we're here talking about this arousal to wake up, another way this word is used is to wake up from Death. So, if you have a Bible, okay, swords up, all right, I'll give you a chance to chase it down, but go ahead and look up, swords up, 1st Thessalonians 4:13. 1st Thessalonians 4:13. Now, it takes me a while to find it, and usually, there were a lot of people, a lot of kids, when we did this at camp, and they would beat me getting to the verse. They were pleased about that. After a while, I made sure that they won because it got them into it.

But here we go, we're at 1st Thessalonians 4:13. Paul says, "I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning the things which have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope." You know, we all grieve when somebody dies. We all grieve, but we grieve as someone who has hope in life after Death. They have hope that they will see their loved ones again. They will grieve. I have grieved, you know. I've lost people dear to me. I have grieved. There is nothing wrong with grieving. It's just that I grieve with hope that I will see my loved one again.

"For we believe," verse 14, "that Jesus died and rose again, and God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus." So, we believe that Jesus died and rose again from the dead. Now, the Bible tells us that he ascended into heaven into God's right hand, but he will come back again. Now, there have been many Christians over the millennia who have died. That's the word "sleep" here, those who sleep in Jesus. And the Bible tells us that when we die, "we are absent from the body but present with the Lord." And while we're up in heaven, we are

6So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 2 Cor. 5:6-8

recognized. We have fellowship with God. We begin our eternal life there. We started our eternal life when we trusted Christ as our Savior. We had eternal life before that led to Death, but now we have eternal life, which leads to heaven when we trust Christ as our Savior.

And so those who sleep in Jesus there, that's us if we have died in the faith. But there's going to come a time when this is going to happen. "For we say to you by the word of the Lord," 1 Thess.4:15, "that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who have fallen asleep." Now, there will come a time when some of us are still alive, and the rapture will take place. And those who are alive will be taken up into the air. All right. Not only are they coming, but all of the bodies of the people who have already died are coming, too. And coming to their bodies from heaven, remember you're absent from the body but present with the Lord, coming to their bodies are the people who have already passed away in the Lord, and now they're coming, and they're going to meet these new bodies. We will find out about these new bodies in just a minute. But that's going to happen all very, very, very quickly. All right. Now I'll show you where that is.

Now, 1 Thess. 4:16, "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven and shout of an archangel and with the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ will rise first." They are going to be aroused. We are not going to get mummified bodies. We are not going to get decayed bodies. We are going to get new, eternal, immortal bodies. They will be changed, and the bodies will be made for heaven and earth, which are coming. They'll be able to live forever. These bodies will have new abilities. They will have new skills. They will be without any defects. You know, they're quite something. And it's all because the Lord shouts and arouses everything to happen.

1 Thess. 4:17, "And those and we who are alive and remain will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we will always be with the Lord." The purpose of this teaching is that it's a wonderful truth that we will have everlasting life, and our bodies will be remade for it. But secondly, get this, 4:18:" Therefore comfort one another with these words." In other words, when we have grief, we grieve, but we also have hope. And we're to encourage other people as they go through the loss of loved ones that they experience. There's a real practical reason for this.

Now, once again, swords up. Swords up. All right. Now, we're going to go over to 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 15:50. And I'll sort it out when we get there. All right. 15:50. Are you there yet? I'm getting there. All right. Oh, we're close. Oh, I'm so close. So close. Oh, man. Here we go. I want to go to verse 51. So look at 15:51. "Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," That's pretty fast, "at the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and the mortal must put on immortality. So that this corruptible has put on incorruption, and the mortal has put on immortality. And then shall be brought to pass the saying that's written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where's your sting? O Hades, where's your victory?' The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of the sin is in the law. But thanks be to God that it gives us victory through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Therefore, like the other ‘therefore,’” remember the other ‘therefore’ to work comfort of one another, “therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain.” 1 Cor. 15:58. There’s going to be a resurrection of our bodies, and these bodies are going to be changed from decay and going back to the earth. They’re going to be remade to where they can now be part of the bodies that can be in heaven and then be on the new earth and do whatever God wants us to do. They’re going to have new abilities. They won’t be the bodies that get tired and wear out. They’re going to be made for eternity. And that’s what’s happening here and the arousing we see here in Matthew. So, Matt. 1:24, “Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and he took, he embraced to himself his wife, and he did not know her until she had brought forth her firstborn son and called his name Jesus.”

Now, we know that Jesus had four brothers. Mark 6:3 “Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him. (See also Matt, 13:55, 56) All of them are named, and two of them wrote books of the Bible. And then Jesus also had two sisters. So, it’s very typical for a married couple to have marital relationships, and there’s nothing wrong with it. There’s no perpetual virginity here of Mary. All right. The Bible tells us she had six, actually seven kids, counting Jesus. You know, you’re not a perpetual virgin if you have seven kids. That’s the reality. And there’s nothing wrong with that. So, some people have to rethink that because they’ve accepted the idea that she had to be a continuous virgin, and they believe these people were cousins of Jesus. Well, that’s not what the Bible says. The Bible says they were brothers (ἀδελφὸς) and sisters (ἀδελφαὶ). We know their names, and two wrote books from the Bible that we’ve been reading for a long time. James and Jude. Great books.

Character Study

Now, let’s look at Joseph’s character study. Joseph was a man of integrity. He was the descendant of King David. Joseph was a legal and earthly father of Jesus. He was sensitive to God’s guidance and willing to do God’s will, no matter the consequences. And, of course, this has a lot to do with how we develop Joseph’s character.¹

Some of the weaknesses are now; these are things I thought about. The study that I looked at, where they were looking at the strengths of Joseph, did not offer weaknesses. I don’t know why, but they didn’t. So, I thought about it. Here are some of the ones I came up with.

First of all, Joseph was human. Human beings have limitations. We are not the creator. We are created. We begin at a point in time and end at a point in time where if we trust Christ as our Savior, we are absent from the body, and then we go to be with the Lord in heaven. But we always had a point of start. We are human.

Second, we are born a sinner. We always have to deal with conflicts with the world, Satan, sin, and the flesh. That part of us that wants to follow the natural man

¹ Tyndale. NIV Life Application Study Bible, Second Edition . Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. 1 Kindle Edition.

and doesn't want to obey God. We have those battles, and Joseph had those battles. Being a sinner affects all of our parenting.

Now, he was a good father, but notice what it says in Hebrews, chapter 12:9. "Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Verse 10, "For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them. But he, that is God, always does this for our profit, our benefit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." You see, sometimes parents, they're doing the best they can. I'm not picking parents here who are criminal or, somewhat inept or unable to be a parent. I'm talking about parents who care about their kids and are trying to do their best, yet we make mistakes. We're not always correct in our actions with our children. Sometimes, we make mistakes, and Joseph was part of that.

We got a glimpse of that when Jesus was 12 years old. (See Luke 2:41-50) Mary and Joseph assumed Jesus was with the other group, and they traveled in groups, probably family groups. They had a couple of them and went from Jerusalem back to Nazareth. So, they assumed that Jesus was with the other group. Jesus has never been a problem before, so they thought everything was okay, and then they discovered, "Oops, he wasn't with the other group. Where was he?" So, it shows human limitations. Even though we try to do our best to keep our kids safe, things happen. That's all I'm trying to say there. And they went there, of course, and they didn't understand why he was talking with these educated people down in Jerusalem and exchanging ideas. And everybody was amazed at Jesus' wisdom at 12 years old.

Now, that's the time in life when many adolescents begin to think about things in abstract ways. Well, there you go. Jesus is conversing with abstract thought and other things about spiritual things, and they're amazed at what he knows. It also tells us what a good job Mary and Joseph did in helping Jesus learn the Bible. He had to learn those things.

A note on the following: After writing this text, I sought similar insights from scholars. We have a good idea of what Jewish homes were like at the time of Christ, but the Bible is largely silent on the specifics of Jesus.

Now, we know that Joseph was a businessman in carpentry, but he always remained poor. Circumstances and life dealt him a bad hand because he had to be in a location where he couldn't develop a regular carpentry business. And part of that was because God chose to put the family, Jesus' brothers, sisters, Mary and Joseph, in a place where they would fly under the radar. They wouldn't be noticed. So they go to a city that nobody pays attention to, a little town called Nazareth. It is not a place of opportunity. It's not the kind of town that people take note of. And there they are. They're right under the nose of Herod, and that fox who had his palace just a few mountains, a few mole hills away from where Nazareth was, was Sephoris. And I think

Joseph and Jesus worked there.² They traveled to locations in the area to work. I think it's reasonable to assume this, but I do not know if they did. As a businessman, Joseph was poor, but part of that was where God put him. And he was obedient to God. And that obedience factored into the kind of resources that this family had.³

By the time Jesus entered the ministry, Joseph had died. So, age was a problem because Joseph couldn't continue being a parent. And Mary had to raise the children at some point. Remember, we know Joseph lived as long as when Jesus was 12. But somewhere after that, Mary had to raise the kids. And Jesus was the oldest son. And he took up the trade that his father taught him.⁴ And he helped care for his brothers and sisters. Swindoll informs us, "At thirteen, young men were considered full-fledged "sons of the covenant," complete with all the rights and responsibilities of adulthood, and were fully responsible for knowing and following the Law of Moses."⁵

So, you know, we're human. We commit to being there for our kids, but sometimes, we won't. Whatever his weaknesses were, he was a spiritual man. He was a man of integrity. But, you know, human parenting, even good parents, were subject to the fall. Stuff happens. All right. Stuff happens. And we have to work through that.

Now, God honors integrity. With God, social position isn't really that important. It is essential to see that God did choose to use Mary and Joseph. He enabled them to do what he wanted them to do. They were obedient to God's guidance.

And in that, Joseph being a father now, he's going to oversee their protection. He's going to take them out of Bethlehem before Herod can kill them. They go down to Egypt. And then once down in Egypt, after the death of Herod, he takes them back up, not to their homeland of Bethlehem, where he might be noticed, only a few miles from Jerusalem. No, they go all the way up to Nazareth into a small community. And they're

² "He belonged to the middle industrial class, being an architect-builder and wood workman. 2 He planned and constructed houses and manufactured domestic furniture and agricultural instruments. In Nazareth he seems to have attained by his character and industry to a special place of esteem and usefulness, and was called by the title "the carpenter" which included all these phases of activity. He seems not to have lived long (Mark 3:32) and to have left a considerable family when he died to the care and responsibility of Jesus, the oldest son." Pentecost, J. Dwight. *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ: A Study of the Life of Christ* (p. 72). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

³ Edersheim, Alfred *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* 1883 See p. 240 "The first intention of Joseph seems to have been to settle in Bethlehem, where he had lived since the birth of Jesus. Obvious reasons would incline him to choose this, and, if possible, to avoid Nazareth as the place of his residence. His trade, even had he been unknown in Bethlehem, would have easily supplied the modest wants of his household. But when, on reaching Palestine, he learned who the successor of Herod was, and also, no doubt, in what manner he had inaugurated his reign, common prudence would have dictated the withdrawal of the Infant-Saviour from the dominions of Archelaus. But it needed Divine direction to determine his return to Nazareth. Also read foot note 577.

⁴ Edersheim, Alfred *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* 1883 See p. 270 "On the contrary, it was deemed a religious duty, frequently and most earnestly insisted upon, to learn some trade, provided it did not minister to luxury, nor tend to lead away from personal observance of the Law."

⁵ Swindoll, Charles R.. *Insights on Luke* (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Book 3) (p. 83). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.

going to go under the radar. That's basically what they did. But Joseph is protecting his family. Now, the boys are named in the Bible. James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. The daughters, as far as I know, they're not named in the Bible. But I do not know their names. And of course, we know the oldest one, and that was Jesus, born of God, different than the others.

Things I have Learned

Now, here are some things I've learned about parenting. All right. Things I've learned. One, parenting is a long-term proposition. Remember, Joseph probably couldn't fulfill that 20 years or so when Jesus was growing up. He would pass away. However, we have a long-term view of when we become parents. When we look at that baby, as cute and lovely as they are, it will grow up. And when I had my child, I said, "You know what? I'm going to look forward to you being 20 years old. And you and I will love each other as father and son. And I'm going to be with you all the way. And I'm going to support you all the way. I'm going to do my very best. And you're going to know that you had a dad. And we're going to have that continual. And I'm going to appreciate you as you go through all the stages of life. And that's precisely what I did.

I took a long-term view of being a parent. And now that I'm a grandparent, my kids are in their 50s and 40s. Guess what? It's still a long-term plan. You know, I'm not hovering over them. Oh my, I've not done that ever. Or at least for a very long time. I don't know when I quit hovering. But you know, you hover a bit when they're two years old. But eventually, they learn independence. You know, that's what I wanted. But we have a long-term relationship with them, and I'm still praying for them. And I'm still doing whatever I can to help them as they are parents.

And yeah, I have a different relationship with the grandkids than with the kids. But it's a long-term thing.

Another thing I learned is that rules without relationships don't work. I got this from Josh McDowell, and it was an excellent idea. Rules without a relationship don't work. If you don't have a relationship with your children, the rules that you may have, they will not be connected. And it could be overbearing, or they could be, you know, you could be a neglectful parent or an overprotective parent, you know. But without the relationship, it just doesn't work. The relationship is significant with the rule. Secondly, when that rule, whatever it was, has been outgrown and no longer needed, get ready to fold it up like a piece of paper and shoot it into the basket. As a parent, I'm still concerned about safety, right? But my kids have learned how to walk across the street. I don't hold their hands. I haven't held their hands. No, I'm returning to holding their hands because I need balance. Irma Brombeck talked about how she became more dependent on her child as she got older. Well, I understand that. But you know, when the rule is no longer needed, either adjust it into a principle that still works or eliminate it; it's not about the rules. It's about the relationship, and sometimes the rules change; they go from walking across the street to learning how to drive. Well, you have to negotiate, and you have to navigate through learning how to drive. You know what that's like. It's, you know, might scare you to death, but you have to teach them how to drive, all right, be part of that. So, that's the things I've learned.

A Balanced Life

Now, did they do a good job? Did they do a good job? I think they did. It tells us here in Luke 2:40, "And the child grew up and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." So, he's strong physically, he's filled with the ability to apply wisdom, and then he was spiritual. Grace, God's grace was on him. Luke 2:52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom," New American Standard says, "kept increasing." Okay, I like that. "And stature and favor with God and men." So, Jesus had wisdom. He knew how to use his brain to make it very practical. He grew up physically strong. He had favor with God. He had a good relationship with God, and he was a guy who enjoyed people, and people enjoyed him. He got along with people. He was the most balanced of people, and I would say that they were excellent as parents. And, of course, when you look at these two verses, 2:40 and 2:52, that's kind of a nice goal for you to have for your kids, that they would grow in wisdom and stature, and they would have favor with God, and they would be able to get along with people. You know, that's not bad. All right, not bad.

Applied takeaways

So, some takeaways. All right, some takeaways. Joseph, as a father, was the first line of defense. All right, it's essential to be a dad. People, they're not as good without a father. Many people in our time have to learn how to be a father. It's not easy. Children need their dads. So, we know that Joseph protected them when they left Bethlehem and went to Egypt when they came back. He oversaw that. Okay, he was sensitive enough to listen to the counsel of God to keep his family safe. Not a bad idea at all.

All right, as a father, he gave his children usable tools. They were prepared to take on adult life, the male and the female. All right, they were trained, and he gave them usable skills. He taught them how to get into the trade of carpentry. When he passed away, Jesus probably taught them how to use carpentry skills where they would have those skills. They were taught how to read and how to write. They learned several languages, and you know, two of these boys, James and Jude, wrote books of the Bible that had been read for 2,000 years. So, it shows us that Joseph and Mary did their bit to give these kids usable skills. Training our kids for work so that they can make a living is a good goal. Okay, and encouraging schooling is a good goal for parenting. And even though we don't work on the farm anymore, you know, where kids learn how to do the farm, we are responsible for helping these kids learn things in our world to have usable skills as adults to make a living.⁶ That's it, you know, that's not a bad idea. That's a good takeaway.

⁶ Food for thought: To train involves the Lord training them the way they should go. I think God has a personal IEP for each one of us. We may teach our children responsibilities around the house and encourage them to work at school. They may follow us in a trade. Having the ability to work at home, school, the arts or sports gives them principles that will apply in any endeavor they may pursue. Such flexibility will help them pursue careers for their good and others. This is a big topic worthy of research.

The other takeaway here is that Joseph was a good husband. He was a good husband, and you know, they had six more kids. Mary and Joseph were able to be intimate over a long period. He was a good husband. He took care of his family and his wife, and he had respect for her. And we see the respect working in the family again when we look at the incident when Jesus is 12 years old. They're reasoning it out. They don't have the switch from the tree where they'll spank. No, they're reasoning it out because by the time you get to be 12, you know, you've got to be able to see what's good and evil and figure it out for yourself. And that's what they were doing. So, you know, he's a good husband and father who can train his children in practical wisdom.

Train. It's more than just correction. It's also training how to. So we can work on our parenting skills and even get better at them, even grandparenting. And isn't it a wonderful Christmas gift to be a better grandparent, to be a better parent, to take the long view with our kids and realize that we may have lost a battle, but we're not going to lose the war? Are we going to keep going? So I hope these things encourage you.

Let's pray. Lord, thank you for your word. Thank you so much for how practical these wonderful truths are, both for our salvation and our walk with God, our eternity, and the practical areas of living in the home and growing up as a child. I thank you, Lord, for all of this. In Jesus' name, Amen.