

**Matthew in Biblical Perspective:
A Biography of Jesus of Nazareth the Christ –
Seeing Jesus: God With Us**

Matthew 1:18-25

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December 14, 2008 – Morning Sermon

This is the Word of God, it's the Truth. This is our third study in the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew 1:18-25 says;

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

The grass withers and flower fades this is the Word of our God which abides forever. May His grace and mercy be preached for you.

It is my conviction that if Matthew could revisit the church today, in the 21st century, I believe he would be disappointed in something. I think he would be disappointed in the way we do the nativity scenes. You may be thinking, "What specifically would he be disappointed in?" I think he would be disappointed where we put Joseph. Joseph is kind of that figure that lingers in the background, isn't he? We just don't give him much attention at all. We have Mary right there in front and the baby Jesus. Then in comes the processional the shepherds and usually after that as I will point out in the next study, at the inappropriate time come the wise men and we give all of them air time where we put them all up front. But Joseph is kind of that figure in the background.

I think I know why we do it. We want to do it because that is what was kind of shown in the genealogy. Remember how the genealogy says that this person begot this person and this person begot this person until you get to Jesus and it doesn't say Joseph begot Jesus because Joseph didn't begot Jesus. Jesus adopted Joseph as His father. In fact we learned in the last study that the whole genealogical line wasn't what Jesus actually came through but that Jesus adopted that line through Joseph. Legally that genealogy in Matthew is Joseph's line and because we want to make sure that everybody knows that we believe in the virgin birth then that means Joseph was not involved in the birth of Jesus and so we kind of put him in the background.

Yet Matthew puts Joseph front and center in his account. Matthew obviously refers to, honors and affirms the role of Mary but front and center he puts Joseph. I think Matthew would be pretty disappointed where we hide Joseph to make sure everybody knows we don't believe he is the actual father yet we have lost something that Matthew wants us to see that in this study I want you to see about Joseph as well as this whole narrative on the birth account that is given to us of the arrival of our Messiah, Jesus.

Now, in the last study we built upon the fact that Matthew has written a biographical tract upon the life of Jesus to send particularly to the Jewish people to let them know that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Promised Messiah, the Christ. Therefore, he does what you would expect him to do. A Jewish boy couldn't even get an education at the Synagogue without a genealogy. A person couldn't own property, or bear witness or even be a legal entity without one's roots, without one's family tree. So Matthew gives us the family tree.

We also noted that this genealogy in Matthew 1:1-17 is not the only genealogy of Jesus. In fact, there are four in the Bible. There is an exhaustive genealogy of Jesus that is absolutely complete that starts in Genesis and goes to Malachi which is called the Old Testament because everything back there is pointing to the Promised Messiah, Jesus and the promised salvation through Jesus plus the promised covenant of grace whereby we are saved through a Redeemer. A second genealogy is a genealogy of His deity which is found in John 1:1; "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" This shows Jesus as the Son of God. Then there are two other genealogies in Luke 3 and Matthew 1. Luke 3 is the genealogy of the spiritual biological line of Jesus from Adam through Abraham through David all the way through to Mary. So in that line we have the biological line of Jesus the Son of Man and the spiritual line. As it goes back and before it gets to David Luke makes it clear that Jesus came through Mary from Nathan, the spiritually blessed line from David. Then it continues from David back to Abraham and then to Adam.

Now, the Matthew line is giving us the patriarchal line, the legal line, the royal line down to Joseph His adopted father and that was the line that went from Abraham to David through Solomon to us. So the genealogy is in place. Then it ends,

clearly that Joseph was not the one through whom Jesus was begotten but Jesus had adopted Joseph as His father. Here's an amazing thing. The very line through which Jesus came, including women, Gentiles, Jews, rich, poor, moral, immoral, religious, irreligious, is shouting out what He is coming to do and that is to save sinners from their sins.

We come to this text and it starts off very simply this way. The most momentous event in all of history to this point, it will only be superseded 33 years later when Jesus goes to a cross, so everything that has been anticipated through literally 1800 years up to this point through God's revealed Word comes the birth of Jesus. This is all explained so simply. Look at this historical narrative with me. I have divided this narrative up into six steps to help our understanding.

The first step is an amazing revelation that takes place in Matthew 1:18; *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.”* So here's the amazing revelation. Where are we? We are about somewhere from maybe 3 to 5 or six months into Mary's pregnancy and it is at this point that Joseph becomes aware that Mary is with child. Let's take a look at who we have here. We have their genealogy so we know something about them. Who is Mary? Mary's father is Eli or Heli. She goes all the way back to Nathan to David and then back to Abraham through the tribe of Judah who is Joseph. She's young and she's a virgin. She is also a believer because when the Lord calls her to be His servant no matter what the cost of the ridicule of others she said, “May it be done to your bondservant as You so will.” She is willing to be used of the Lord and to be obedient.

So who is Joseph? We don't know his age but he is maybe a little older or probably older, but we don't know. We do know that his father's name is Jacob. We do know that Joseph goes all the way back through Solomon to David back to the tribe of Judah to Abraham. So he and Mary are actually very very distant cousins. We call him a carpenter and that may not be quite accurate. The word that is used to describe him is a word that we would get the idea that he was a technician from. He probably did furniture work, remodeling work, stonework and various types of craftsman's work in Nazareth.

He was somewhat of a technician. He was probably handling things that needed to be handled, built and rebuilt. We also know that he is a righteous man. We also know he wasn't into self-righteousness because self-righteousness is always accompanied by what? Self righteousness is always accompanied by arrogance but Joseph is a righteous man and is accompanied by compassion and graciousness toward others. That's what we know about Joseph. Now, Joseph finds out that his betrothed wife, Mary is with child. I want to take you back to Deuteronomy 22 through 25 because that is pretty important. There you will find out that Hebrew wedding or marriage was a big deal. It kind of had three steps to it. Step one was the contract between the parents and that's where they are

trying to find out, "is your son, my daughter going to work out? Do we think this is appropriate? Is this a yoke that is equal or not?" After the contract was agreed upon including such things as a dowry, which by the way the married couple would get back after the bride's father, then they entered into a period of time called the kiddushim. The kiddushim was probably a year long and it was an interesting time. It was a time in which you were married but you weren't. In other words, if you quit being married you had to get a divorce because you were married but you didn't get to have the honeymoon part. You didn't get to have the consummation part but you had the responsibilities but not the joyful part of it. You didn't have any intimacy and that's as far as I can go in the study. What you did have was responsibilities. This was an interesting time because this was the time you were supposed to learn about each other, each other's families, starting a family and learning about your relationship together. In fact, it was so important that the Hebrew male had no military service during the year. The male was liberated from any military service during that time. So you are free to learn how to start your marriage right and it usually covered about a year.

The third step was that you went from the kiddushim to the hupah. I like that name, hupah. The kiddushim is through and now we really get to be married, "Hupah, this is going to be great!" The hupah generally takes a whole week of all kinds of things and by the way that parents are paying for all this. I think we have a better deal these days to tell you the truth. By the way the parents support the couple in the first year during the kiddushim. The hupah week ended as in this story in the book of John where Jesus attended a wedding feast. The week ended with a wedding feast. Well Mary and Joseph are beyond the contract but they are not at the hupah but they are in the kiddushim. They are in the betrothal and that means Joseph, a righteous man, has had no relations/intimacy with Mary and now she's pregnant. The text tells us she is pregnant by the Holy Spirit but Joseph doesn't know this at this point. That's what he now finds out. His Mary is with child.

That leads us to a perplexing situation. Joseph's perplexing situation is found in Matthew 1:19; "*And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.*" So here's the problem. He is a just man but he's a kind man. Being a just man, he must be obedient to the law. Mary is with child. Since he has not been with her and she is with child he can only assume that she has been unfaithful to him. That means he has one of two possibilities. One he can bring a lawsuit to recover all of his damages but he would also render her to public shame. If it had been hundreds of years prior to that she would have actually been stoned to death but by this time Israel is not stoning them to death for various reasons including a Roman governor which would not allow it. So she would not have been stoned to death but what they would have done is taken her out to the gates of the city, removed all of the things that would have identified her honor and then rendered her to public shame and disgrace. So if Joseph chose that route which would perhaps help him out in some ways which would let everybody know he was the victim and

would take care of his own reputation, maybe even be somewhat financially profitable yet Mary would be put to open shame. Yet he has every right to do that according to the law but he also has another option.

The other possibility he has which we find in Deuteronomy and Numbers is that he can get one or two witnesses, give her a writ of divorce, deliver it to her with the witnesses and privately divorce her. She would, of course, have some amount of shame to deal with. He, of course, would also be questioned by others concerning himself that he could handle it privately and not make it a public matter. As a righteous man he must do something. As a compassionate man he decides he is going to do that which will, in a minimal way, expose married to public ridicule and disgrace. Then comes God through an angelic intervention and revelation.

Look at what happens in Matthew 1:20; *“But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’”* There are many reasons why I believe the Bible is the Word of God. In the last study, who would have concocted the genealogy would tell people that this is the Son of God having come in the flesh with Gentiles, prostitutes, adulterers, murderers and all of that? Now here is the most momentous event in all of history and look at how simply, matter-of-factly, straightforward the angel explains it. The angel basically says, “Joseph, your betrothed wife is with the child and let me explain to you what it is. This is what you are encountering.” The angel of the Lord, first of all, comforts him by saying, “don't fear” and even further comforts him by calling him by his name Joseph affirming his place, “son of David.” The angel says, “Do not fear to take Mary as your wife because what she has, has been conceived by the Holy Spirit and given to her. What she has, has been conceived by the Spirit in her.” Here is the startling truth; the Creator has now penetrated and become part of the creation. The Maker of mankind is becoming a man and He simply states it straightforwardly. So this angel now reveals the truth of the incarnation.

As the angel reveals the truth of the incarnation, he also gives an explanation. The explanation is the fulfillment of what has been promised. This is found in Matthew 1:21; *“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”* So the angel says, “Joseph, son of David, don't fear. Mary has not been unfaithful. She is a virgin. The child she carries has been conceived by the Holy Spirit, has been given to her and now here are the three things that are going to happen.” By the way, there is no sonogram but yet they knew the sex of the baby. So the first thing that will happen is that she will bear a Son. The second thing is that you will call his name Jesus. Yahweh saves. Now, what was anticipated in the ending of the genealogy is being clarified. This isn't a man from Joseph that is coming. This is God with us. This is Yahweh will save. Thirdly is that He will save His people from their sins. Now not only has he intervened that Mary has not been unfaithful and she is still a virgin but there is

this gift to her by the Holy Spirit and then he explains that this is the Promised Messiah. "She will have a son, you will call His name Jesus and He will save His people from their sins." Then he roots it in a prophetic declaration. This is to fulfill the Scriptures.

Matthew 1:22 says, "*All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:*" I want to stop right here for a minute. This is purely a side parenthesis but this is something you need to keep remembering. You have a Bible, it's the Word of God through men to you. How does the angel refer to the Isaiah text? He refers to it by saying, "the Lord spoke through the prophet." It wasn't the prophet spoke and the Lord adopted what he said. It was the Holy Spirit, the Lord, working through the holy man. So this is not a word about the Lord, your Bible is the Word of the Lord. Here is this statement that this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet. So Matthew 1:22, 23 says, **22** *All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:* **23** "*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel*" (which means, *God with us*). So now he roots it in the prophetic declaration of the Isaiah 7:14. In Isaiah 7:14 the Lord through Isaiah spoke to us and declared to us that the Messiah would come by way of the birth of a virgin. Yahweh, God having come. Immanuel, God with us. This means that God has come by way of the virgin therefore this which is being born is a Son. He is the Son of man and He is the Son of God and is rooted in the Scripture.

By the way, it is also accommodated in another passage that even precedes Isaiah. In Genesis 3 within the curse because of sin the hope of the gospel was embedded. There was a gospel promise of the Redeemer who would conquer sin, Satan, and death. That promise was given all the way back in Genesis 3:15; "*I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*" So what is promised is that there would be given to the woman a, keyword, seed and that seed, singular, would defeat Satan, the kingdom of darkness, and sin. It will cost Him. He will be bruised upon the heel but He will be the victorious for He will give the death blow upon the head. What is interesting is that here the woman is said to be given a seed. Seed belongs to men not women. Egg belongs to women. Here is the accommodation, first and foremost, of what will be further prophesied in Isaiah of the virgin birth. So the birth of Jesus is a virgin birth. Yahweh saves, God is with us. Back in Matthew 1 the word *behold* in verse 23 will become Matthew's favorite word. Behold means "Look!" Something you wouldn't have known without God revealing it. That word would be used 61 times in the Gospel of Matthew. It will be a keyword for us that we will keep finding and making use of. The second word found in Matthew 1:22, I want you to see is the word *fulfill*. "In order to be fulfilled", scores of time, you're going to see this that Matthews going to make the point that Jesus is not an afterthought, He's not plan B, He is the One who fulfills every promise in the Old Testament. "In order to be fulfilled", and it will point to Jesus which will be used scores of time in the Gospel of Matthew.

By the way, did you know something unusual about this? This is the only time that I could find in the Bible that an angel quotes Scripture. Angels are used to give Scripture to reveal God's word that this is the only time I have found that they quoted Scripture in which this angel quotes from Isaiah 7:14. Of course, this is also the only time that there is a virgin birth in the Bible. The virgin birth is not a miraculous birth simply. There have been other miraculous births. There have been other supernatural births and Abraham and Sarah are an example of this where Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 years old. That's the miracle, believe me, that is a miracle. This isn't just a miraculous birth. This is a unique, one-of-a-kind, a virgin birth that has taken place.

Finally, in this narrative he sums it up in this concluding explanation in Matthew 1:24, 25; **24** *When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,* **25** *but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.* Basically, Joseph did the next right thing. Joseph did what the Lord commanded. I don't think Joseph belongs in the shadows. What did he do? He did three things.

Number one, he took Mary as his wife. No matter what other people would say, no matter of the ridicule that would come, no matter what he took Mary as his wife. I don't know whether they told people that she was still a virgin and that the Holy Spirit had given her this child. I don't know how they announced this or how many people they announced it to but I can just hear the people; "Boy, now that's a good one," "I've never heard that one before." But Joseph takes Mary as his wife and thereby covers her with his leadership and his headship and his heart.

Secondly, Joseph gives Jesus the name. Only six other times in the Bible was the name given before the child was born and here is one of them. The name he was given by the angel he gives to Jesus, Yahweh saves.

Thirdly, Joseph kept her a virgin until Jesus was born. Now Jesus would have other brothers and sisters and obviously they would have intimacy but until Jesus was born Joseph was faithful to keep Mary a virgin. So Joseph did the next right thing. Joseph did what he was commanded to do.

So where does this lead us in some takeaways from this study? Before I give you some takeaways I want to take you away to 1963 when I walked into my 10th grade biology class, biology 101, and that was not simple enough to tell you the truth. It was taught by my football coach, Coach Odo. Can you imagine a coach named Odo? Can you imagine biology being taught by a football coach? Even all of that did not help me very much but there I was in my biology class with Coach Odo. They gave us a microscope in the very first thing they said was, "you're responsible for this microscope." Then he said, "I want to explain this microscope to you. Notice that this microscope has a revolving, rotating three lenses." I don't remember exactly but the three lenses were like 10 power, 20 power and 30

power or something like that. He went on to say, "As we look at things you're going to look at it at the 10 power and tell me what you see and then you look at it at the 20 power and tell me what you see and then you look at it at the 30 power and tell me what you see." With the 10 power you see what is obvious. With the 20 power you see things not quite as obvious and with the 30 power you see maybe what you might've missed. That's what I want to do in closing this study. I want to ask you to put the 10, the 20 and 30 power on this text with me.

So with the 10 power what do you see first? We see the birth of the Messiah and the marks of Christ. What are the marks of Christ that's clearly being displayed? One mark is who He is. The second mark is what He came to do. So that we make no mistake, everything is wrapped up in who Jesus is and what Jesus came to do. Who is He? He is 100% God and 100% man. Why is there a virgin birth? If there wasn't a virgin birth that means whoever his father was you would have to go all the way back to Adam and if you had gone back to Adam then Jesus would have been born with sin nature and of sin record, and He couldn't have been your Messiah. He would need His own Messiah. He would be born a sinner. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. What we have through the virgin birth is not a son of Adam. We have a new Adam. The Word has become flesh. The Son of God has become the Son of man and that baby is the Son of God. While Jesus is here 33 years on the earth there is never a time that we don't have a Trinity. Jesus is fully God.

Now He laid aside the privileges of His deity. At times He laid aside the privilege to exercise His deity but He did not lay aside His deity. This One born was not a Savior Yahweh would bring salvation through; this was Yahweh coming to save. This is Yahweh the Savior. This is the Son of God and also the Son of Man which is also important because by a man came death and by a Man comes the resurrection of the dead. Jesus is fully God and fully man. So here is the first mark of your Messiah. He is absolutely God and absolutely Man. Here is the new Adam through which a Redeemer has been brought into this world. God with us!

The second thing you find out about this Redeemer is what He came to do; who He is and what He has come to do or like we say, His person and His work. He came to save His people from their sins for the glory of His Father. The glory of the Father has now been revealed for what purpose? It is to save His people from their sins. Brothers and sisters, when we celebrate Christmas have you ever noted the dominate color when Christians celebrate Christmas? The dominate color is red. Why? He came to die. He was born to die for our sins. Why do we have a Christmas Eve communion? On the very moment when we are about to walk into the day of celebrating His birth, He came to die for our sins so all of His people will be saved and not one lost; all of His people, all of their sins.

I want to stop here for a moment and ask, "Are you His? Do you belong to Him? Have you come to Christ and said, 'I am the sinner. Jesus I'm like those people in Your genealogy. I'm a sinner and I put my trust in You alone.'" If you do that

He will never lose you. He will save you from your sins. For this is not a guru. This is not a good guy that we made myths up about. This is the Son of God. Notice how simply, straightforward, matter-of-factly the angel says, "This is God having come in the flesh to save His people from their sins." I can almost see Joseph joining us at a baptismal saying, "Father, name your child and the blessing." Joseph said, "My Child's name is Yahweh saves." The blessing is "My Child is your Savior and Redeemer." He is the One who will purchase you, redeem you and save you forevermore.

One of the things I know is this. What we do eventually reveals who we are and whose we are. Now after I have said this what you do and what I do does not save us. What we do is not a preventive to come to Christ to save you no matter how evil or bad or sinful its been. Just look back at the genealogy of Jesus; men, women, religious, irreligious, pagan, self-righteous, adulteresses, prostitutes, liars, conspirators, murderers and thieves. Just look at that. He saves and uses them. He saves any and all who come to Him but if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation. Something happens. Not only does God's grace take you where you are, God's grace never leaves you where you are.

So in this text we are afforded, when we turn the 20 power, we see not only the marks of our Christ the Redeemer, but we see the marks of a redeemed of a Christian. Joseph, get out of the shadow. Come up here. Joseph, your family tree may be blemished but you are still a trophy of grace. I quit looking down mine. I was just so glad I hadn't found a horse thief yet I just stopped. I don't know what all is in my family tree but I do know this. There are sinners and there are sinners saved by grace. I do know by God's grace when I come to Jesus Christ like Joseph I can bear the marks of my Redeemer.

The marks of the Redeemer upon the redeemed are two-fold and they stand out with Joseph. Number one, there's a love of truth that is manifested with a commitment to obedience. Joseph did as he was commanded. One may be thinking, "Will a Christian be perfectly obedient?" No. "Will a Christian falter?" Yes and praise God for forgiveness. But when one is born again there's a love for the truth and when there's a love for the truth there's a desire to obey the truth. And if you belong to Jesus and you start walking in sin He is going to convict you, and convict you, and work on you until you are ready to confess, come back and walk with Him, to recalibrate back into the redemption of Jesus Christ but He won't just leave you to walk around in sin. There is a love of truth so that you are ready to step forward and obey the truth. I want to know the truth and I don't want to be just a hearer of it. I want to be a doer of it.

The second mark of a Christian is there is a love to love. There's a graciousness. There's a compassion. There's no arrogance. There's a brokenness. There's a humility that's manifested in a graciousness with other people. Here is Joseph. He did what was right and he did what was right in such a way as to take care of not only the Son being entrusted to him. I want to show even more about Joseph

so I am going to do a first person sermon on him on Christmas Eve about the life of Joseph but this guy Joseph just overwhelms me. Don't let him be in the shadows. He may be in the nativities but don't let him be in the shadows. Learn, here is a man of God.

In fact, that's the third thing. Turn the power up one more time to 30 power. Ladies pardon me for just a moment, I want to speak to every man, college male student, high school male and boy reading this. I want to ask you to get your eyes off of celebrities. Pray for them but get your eyes off of them. Find some heroes that are trophies of grace and you can start right here with Joseph. Here's a man of God. When Joseph thought his faithful wife was unfaithful his heart was to reach out for her, even in obedience to what God's law commands he thought "what's the best way I can do it for her?" Here you see the marks of a Christian man. He is strong and courageous to do what's right and he is sensitive and compassionate to take care of those entrusted to him.

Now men, our wives may not always fit the bill. By the way, don't ask them whether you fit the bill or not but there may be faltering that's there. Dare I say it this way? When that happens, 'man up.' Step up like a man and say, "God, by Your grace what do You want me to do in the life of my wife to get her through this? Why do You have me here for her?" Be strong and courageous to step forward at that moment.

Secondly, Joseph has sensitivity and compassion. He is a gentle man. Be a gentle man. I have people, their reputations, their emotions, their lives, are wrapped up with what I say about them and what I do for them. God, give me the ability to take care. Here is a man who wanted to do the right thing, in the right way because this was his wife. These are two well-matched people. By the way, there's another whole study. I don't know many marriage seminars that look at Mary and Joseph but here's a couple of well- matched people. Unequally yoked is not just, okay this guy went forward somewhere so he must be a Christian so I can marry him. Or I think she has a quiet time every once and a while so I can marry her. No, it's much more than that when we look at the matter of what it means to be 'yoked up.' Here are some people that are 'yoked up.' Joseph brings to the table strength and courage to do the right thing at the right time and sensitivity and compassion to do it the right way. This genealogy shouts out to us, "don't let where you have been and your sins stop you from fleeing to Jesus, He saves sinners!"

But this narrative also shouts out, "He changes sinners!" He grows us in and by the grace of the Lord Jesus. This text starts off very simply. Matthew begins in chapter 1 with a statement; God with us and Matthew ends with the same statement. *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:19, 20).* Christ has come to us and for us to be with

us and the same Holy Spirit that birthed Jesus through Mary will birth Jesus in you. You may be born again and He will be with you. Without Him I can do nothing but with Him *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13)*. The Lord with you. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the enormous blessing to look into this text and not only see the declaration of our Redeemer but the marks of a redeemed man and woman, loving truth and loving to love and the specific marks upon a man of God, even within the context of marriage and his disappointments and discouragement. God would You raise up in our minds the eye of faith to see Jesus in all of His glory and what He has done and flee to Him. Would You put in our lives that growing testimony of a love for the truth and obedience and a love to love with graciousness and compassion? Father, would You raise up again in our culture, our nation and even around the world Christian men who act like men, strong and courageous, sensitive and compassionate, a wife can trust and children anticipate what You will do through them? O God, this is You alone that can do it. Thank You for Emmanuel, God with us. In Jesus name, Amen.

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