

**Pastor Jim Jackson, 12/11/16**  
***Christmas in Temecula, pt. 3—Joseph's Love***  
**Matt. 1:16-25**

**Joseph loved his WIFE**

Because Joseph was not wealthy or had religious or political aspirations, his life was probably very normal. After their fathers had agreed upon the terms of their marriage, Joseph and Mary entered into a betrothal where they were legally married but not cohabitating or sexually active. Mary would prepare herself as a homemaker and Joseph would prepare their new dwelling. A betrothal could only be broken by a divorce certificate. The punishment for adultery or sexual promiscuity was death (Deut. 22:13-27). Once Joseph found out Mary was unfaithful (and *before* he heard from the angel) he didn't bring her out to be stoned but wanted to quietly divorce her to not shame her. *Love does what is best for the other person!*

**Joseph loved his GOD**

Joseph was an Israelite through his Jewish father Jacob, but was also of the spiritual lineage of those who loved God. He was called a 'just' (Gr. *dikaios*, 'fair/righteous') man meaning everything he did in word and deed was influenced by his desire to do right in God's eyes (Deut. 6:5; Micah 6:8). Once the angel revealed Mary was still a virgin *and* pregnant, he chose to take the public shame upon himself as people would assume he lacked control. More amazingly, he didn't have intercourse with his wife for at least six months, showing tremendous self-discipline to honor God's word—maybe this is the *real* reason he was chosen! *For those who love God, God's will supersedes personal, professional, public or private desires!*

**Joseph loved his SON**

Even though Joseph disappears from the biblical record after Jesus is 12 years old, through Jesus' adolescent years, Joseph led his family in godliness. Joseph obediently named Jesus as the angel had told him to, he followed Jewish law and presented his Son at the Temple, he modeled the importance of worship by leading his family to worship God at the Temple and protected his family when people wanted to kill his son (Matt. 1:25; 2:14, 21; Luke 2:22, 41). All through Jesus' formative years He got to see and appreciate the faith of His earthly father. *Jesus experienced the living faith of his earthly father so he could learn to trust his heavenly Father.*