

Lessons From the Sermon of Jesus on the Mountain Part 17

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled:” (Matthew 5:6 KJV)

We continue in this message to study on how we hunger and thirst for righteousness from studying the life of righteous Joseph the husband of Mary:

“18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” (Matthew 1:18-25 KJV)

Mary was espoused to Joseph. The Greek Word for ‘espoused’, is ‘Mnesteuo’, which means, ‘it had been agreed upon’, ‘to be promised in marriage’, ‘be betrothed’, or ‘that this man will be going to marry that woman’. It is not an arrangement by man and woman. It is arrangement ordained by God, and executed by Him. The marriage of Adam and Eve was arranged and ordained by God, the marriage of Joseph and Mary was ordained and arranged by God. Joseph and Mary did not arrange their marriage by themselves but God used people to make this marriage come true.

Joseph was a just man which means righteous man. The Greek Word used here for ‘just’, is ‘Dikaioi’, which means, ‘righteous observing divine laws’. Righteous man should observe a divine law. ***To hunger and thirst for righteousness entail that man and woman should not meet and have intimacy and communications before marriage. There should be no physical and no emotional intimacy. If Joseph was meeting Mary before marriage, then he would not be having the thought to leave her when he found out she is pregnant.***

Which time Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant? External appearance of pregnancy on the body will not be appearing till after the third month. In the book of Luke let us read how the angel appeared to Mary and announced to her that God is calling her to be pregnant with God’s son Jesus Christ: ***“26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.***

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. 36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing shall be impossible. 38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. 39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.” (Luke 1:26-40 KJV) Here Mary departed after the angel commissioned her to be pregnant with Jesus. Do you think that Mary have told Joseph about what the angel spoke to her? If she had said that to him, then he will not think to leave her after she appeared pregnant. So that is again confirmed that there was neither communication nor intimacy between both of them.

What then we consider the intimacy between man and woman before marriage? It is not the righteousness of God that the Lord wants us to live. Put in your mind, that we are not called only to be righteous, but to hunger and thirst for righteousness. ***If you have not been taught before, then this is the right time for you to know that intimacy between man and woman before marriage is not the righteousness that God desires.*** God gave us His Word to inform us and then His Word will transform us. I pray that the Word of God will change your mind and your life to walk in the ways of God and to hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Mary travelled being pregnant from Galilee to Juda, a journey of not more than several days and she stayed with her cousin three months and she came back, ***“And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.” (Luke 1:56 KJV)*** So in her coming back she was four months pregnant. Joseph and Mary were not in private before marriage and that what the Scriptures says, ***“before they came together.” (Matthew 1:18 KJV)*** So they were not meeting together. After she came back from Juda, that was the time that Joseph came to know about her that ***she was found with child.” (Matthew 1:18 KJV)*** and wanted ***“to put her away privily.” (Matthew 1:19 KJV)***

“To put her away privily.” (Matthew 1:19 KJV) It means to divorce her. Why to divorce and not separate, because espoused woman at that time considered married but they have not yet come together.

Mary said to the angel who announced to her the calling of God, ***“How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke 1:34 KJV)*** So she did not know really what is inside the body of man. ***That is what really God wants from us. Neither the man should know what is woman before marriage, nor the woman should know what is in man before marriage.***

Advances in knowledge do not supersede God's ordinances. If we had not been taught, this is not the fault of God, and it is not that God is asking too much. Why we are so careful to send our children to best educational colleges but we are careless to teach them and equip them with God's Word? It is His will to live a righteous life. Therefore, we should be repenting of all our traditional practices and sinful ways, and be thankful to God who is revealing to us His will and His Word, and move forward in obedience to Him implementing the righteousness of God.

At the time of Joseph and Mary, the people were obeying God's Word, they were practicing social and emotional distancing. The women were wearing veils to cover the whole body, they also put veils to cover their faces. They were obedient, not like now where no fear of God. But their lives were better than now. They did not have COVID 19 that God sent to discipline the universe. God when man does not fear Him, then He knows how to discipline man. Now due to COVID 19 ladies and men are forced to put masks, and instead of putting veils God forced human being to put PPE.

“Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.” (Matthew 1:19 KJV) The Greek Word for ‘put away’, in verse 19 is ‘*Apoluo*’, and the meaning of it is ‘to let go’, ‘to dismiss’, ‘to release’, or ‘to divorce’. The same Word used in ***Matthew 19, “3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? 7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” (Matthew 19:3,7-9 KJV)***

You notice here that Joseph did not choose to marry because he liked her or because he loved her. His decision was to leave her. People at the time of Noah they marry whatever they choose. Righteous people and those who hunger and thirst for righteous they would marry what God had ordained for them to marry. We can say it in this tactful way: Righteous people would love to marry what God prepared for them. ***“But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 1:20 KJV)*** God revealed to him of whom he needed to marry and not his choice. Notice, Joseph in obedience to God married whom he decided to put apart. Therefore, as we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we need to set out minds to marry what God had prepared for us to marry and not our choices.

The angel called him ‘***Joseph, thou son of David***’, reminding him about his responsibility before God to bring God's salvation to the human kind, assuring him not to fear and announcing to him that Mary what is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. Explaining to him that she will give birth to a son that he need to call him Jesus who shall save His people from sins, ***“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his***

name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21 KJV) Here Joseph understood that his marriage and his family will bring glory and will bring honor to God by bringing the salvation of God to the whole universe. Righteous man will not do what he like or wish, away of what God likes and wish. Righteous men and women should realize that their marriage would bring glory and honor to God. Righteous men and women should realize that their marriage would bring fruit of souls to God.

“22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” (Matthew 1:22-23 KJV) The angel confirmed to Joseph the revelation of God from what is written in the Scriptures. To hunger and thirst for righteousness we must be led by the Holy Spirit and instructed with God's Word, that is why we need to read out Bibles daily.

“Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.” (Matthew 1:24 KJV) Joseph once he woke up, he immediately did what God asked him to do. To hunger and to thirst for righteousness we need to do what God wants us to do immediately and not to delay and linger. Delay obedience is disobedience. It says about Joseph, ***“and took unto him his wife.”*** It mean just this time he took her unto him and not before. But he did not know her as a woman till she gave birth to her firstborn son. ***“And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.” (Matthew 1:25 KJV)*** Hunger and thirst for righteousness is to abide with the instruction we received and apply self control in our lives so we will be able to implement God's instruction. Joseph gave the same name that the angel gave to him; the same name that was given to Mary, his wife.

Apostle Paul told the Corinthians church: ***“But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.” (1 Corinthians 7:36 KJV)*** Paul speaking here that if someone betrothed to a virgin girl and he is acting improperly toward her, then he should marry her. The Corinthian were Gentiles who in their previous lives were in fornication. Paul was the one who planted that church, and it was recorded in that church cases of immorality that are not even recorded among the heathen, ***“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.” (1 Corinthians 5:1)*** But inspite of all that Paul emphasized on holiness in his letter to them as we can conclude the following points from ***1 Corinthians 7:36:***

- A. In mentioning the Word ‘***virgin***,’ Paul meant here no sex before the wedding day.
- B. In mentioning the statement ‘***behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin***,’ Paul emphasizing here that there should not be before marriage any sinful improper acts and thoughts between the man and the woman like touch, embrace, kisses and talk that will cause both of them to be unclean.
- C. There should be no emotional or physical intimacy between the man and the woman before the wedding day, the same as we observed in the life and the marriage of Joseph and Mary.

D. The Holy Spirit will work, and glory will be given to God when the man and the woman will have neither emotional nor physical intimacy before the wedding day.

Joseph as a righteous man continued to do God's will, caring for his wife and his family, *"4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)"* 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:4-7 KJV) Joseph as a righteous man obeyed the rules of the government and traveled long distance to be registered in Bethlehem because he was of the house and lineage of David. As we hunger and thirst for righteousness we need to abide with the governments rules in the countries that we are living and residing.

Joseph abided with the instruction of God's Word and circumcise his son on the eight day and present Jesus being the first born to the Lord, giving his first fruit to God. *"21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)"* 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." (Luke 2:21-24 KJV) At this time we are not required by the Word of God to perform circumcision to our children, but we are required to present them to the Lord and dedicate them for Him. As well as we are required to present and our firstfruits and our offerings and all what we ought to give to the Church of God. As well as to be in God's church meetings and gatherings as ordained by the law of God *"Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover."* (Luke 2:41 KJV)

Through their visit to the temple to present Jesus to the Lord, Joseph and Mary received prophetic instructions about Jesus, as we can read the following:

"25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of

many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:25-35 KJV) Righteous men and women who hunger and thirst for righteousness they will receive good instruction and spiritual care for their children from the church as what had happened here with Joseph and Mary, that inspired them and showed them a glimpse of the future of what will take place for their child, *"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."* (Luke 2:40 KJV) In the same way as you keep your commitment with God and your communication with God's church, then you will receive further inspirational messages and prophecies about what will take place for your children and they will grow, and be strong and will have the wisdom of God.

After the birth of Jesus the family was troubled with persecution. Herod wanted to kill the child Jesus. But the Lord protected Him and protected the parents. God warned the wise men not to go back to report to Herod, and they obeyed God, *"And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way."* (Matthew 2:12 KJV) God also warned the family through dreams given to Joseph and instructed him where he needed him to go to protect Jesus, *"13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."* (Matthew 2:13-15 KJV) Joseph obeyed God and fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Hosea, *"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."* (Hosea 11:1 KJV) God also spoke to Joseph after the death of Herod to come back from Egypt to Israel, *"19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life."* (Matthew 2:19-20 KJV) Joseph obeyed God, who further directed him to go to Nazareth instead of Judaea to avoid Archelaus who became king in the place of his father, Herod, *"21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."* (Matthew 2:21-23 KJV) We as Godly families need to hearken to the leading of God. Every husband being the head of the family needs to submit to the will of God and allow God to lead him so he can lead his wife and children. The family of Joseph and Mary at that time was God's church who carried the mission of Jesus and brought Him to other nation. They, with the wise men persevered to protect the church from any work of Satan and from persecution. We as loyal members of the body of Christ we need to act in wisdom and in discernment and in obedience to protect the church, our families, our children, the new born believers, the new disciples from any work of Satan that would come to destroy them.

Joseph as righteous man continued to lead his family in the ways of God. After they returned to Nazareth Joseph continued to connect his family with God's church. Joseph

and Mary they were going every year to the feast of the Passover, ***“Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.” (Luke 2:41 KJV)*** In the same way we need to be in God’s church meetings and gatherings as ordained by the law of God.

They trained Jesus with the fear of the Lord. Jesus also went with them when he was 12 years old and the child was exposed to the teaching of the teachers of the temple, ***“42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. 43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. 46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. 47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. 48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. 49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” (Luke 2:42-52 KJV)*** *In the same way we need to teach our children and train them with the fear of the Lord, and make them in contact with the teachers and the leaders of the church so they will grow not only in stature but as well as in wisdom and in favour with God and man.*

My dear and beloved:

Joseph’s family was fruitful and he got other children from Mary after Jesus, The Scriptures teaches us that Jesus had brothers and sisters, ***“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.” (Mark 6:3 KJV)*** All their children finally became believers in Christ, and were included in the church as we can read that they and Mary joined the apostles of the Lord after the resurrection of Christ, ***“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.” (Acts 1:14 KJV)*** In addition to that two of them became apostles; James, ***“But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.” (Galatians 1:19 KJV)*** and Jude, ***“Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James” (Jude 1:1 KJV)*** they were the half brothers of Jesus.

From the life of Joseph we learn that we need to hunger and thirst for righteousness in the way we conduct our marriages and in the way we care for our wives, families, children and our responsibilities toward God, toward His Word and the voice of the Holy Spirit, toward God's government in obeying the rules of countries, and toward His church in obeying our leaders who teach us and follow us and care for us and in dedicating our lives and our children to protect His church and to continually attending the ministries of God and supporting them with our presence, availability to provide our

services and with our financial commitments. Our marriages and families should bring honor, glory and new souls to God.

The Bible tells us ***“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:2 KJV)*** So if you want to follow God and enjoy His good, pleasing and perfect will, then no more in following the pattern of this world and don’t be deceived and follow the bad example of others who are disobedient to the faith that we follow as you agree to commit yourself to apply His Word in your life and in the life of your children and disciples and in the life of God’s church. The Lord shall give you the strength and will provide for you to do His will, and to raise up people who are willing to abide with His Word and will in regard to preparation for Godly marriage, forming Godly families and raising up Godly children. Let us commit ourselves to pray.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death on the third day to give me eternal life.

Let us confess and renounce our sins to the Lord. Let us renounce our worldliness, our idols and the wrong plans and the wrong ways of life that contradict the Word of God. Let us renounce our laziness, complacencies and the lack of commitment.

Let us renounce all the practices of immoralities including dating, courting, boyfriend and girlfriend, and the meeting of boys and girls before marriage.

Let us commit ourselves to separate boys from girls and keeping them virgins, keeping physical and emotional distancing till the wedding day. Let us commit to marry what God ordained and to officiate marriages ordained by God.

Lord I commit my life to leave the following things and practices in order to live the righteous life that you want me to live. _____..

Lord I commit my life to be willing to hunger and thirst for righteousness and to do the principles that I learned from your Word in this message. Lord I commit myself to live a righteous life, and to live in a way different from the people of the world around me and to be a good example to them. Lord I commit myself to preach your Gospel with precise Word and clear instructions for the people to know how to repent. Lord I commit myself to raise my children and lead my family in the fear of Yours and to teach them your ways as I learn from the message of today. Lord provides for me and enable me to do that successfully and protect my family from the bad effects of the world.

Lord I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who had humbled themselves before you to live the righteous life that you wants them to live and to lead their families in your righteousness. Lord makes a way for them to come out from all temptations and to live the life that is pleasant to you. Lord protects them and provides all their needs. Lord comfort them and take all discouragements away from their hearts and minds. Lord fills them once again with the Holy Spirit and makes their lives’ testimony attractive to others

so that people will believe in you and start to follow you and live according to your Word and your righteousness.

Lord I pray for us as a church to help us to go on in serving you and do your work and your will in the midst of people who are opposing the truth and living in worldliness and immoralities. Lord we commit ourselves to do what is right and just in your eyes. Lord fill us once again with the Holy Spirit and enable us to evangelize and to reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God. Lord we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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