

DECEMBER 18, 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MATHEW 1: 18-25

This morning we are dealing with doubt again. Last time it was the disciples of John the Baptist. They wanted to know if Jesus was the One, or if they should look for another. This morning it is Joseph that has serious questions. He has doubts about Mary's pregnancy and her fidelity to him. As we have come to learn, doubt is normal. God is the One in this situation who puts Joseph's doubts to rest. God does this through a dream. Trust in God to ease our doubts. A lot more should be said about Joseph's character. Maybe later.

There have been many doubts, and questions about Mary's conception and virginity. People have argued about the Hebrew word Alma. This word was used to describe Mary and her situation. The word means a young virgin. Some have argued strongly that the word means a young

girl. There is not too much that is unique and special about a pregnant young girl. There are young girls that get pregnant all the time.

However, when a virgin conceives, that is something very unusual, special and supernatural.

In the midst of this entire drama, we need to remember that God is the One in charge here. He has everything under control. Even when we doubt the plan, or it is very unbelievable. He is in control and will ease our doubts. We are only told what we need to know about the plan.

We do not see the whole plan all at once in the now. Only as it is revealed to us and as much as we can understand. God deals with us in this way so that our limited minds and understandings are not completely blown away. Especially since the little bit He shares with us still blows us away.

So, there is no need to worry. God is in charge and has control of the situation. God is with us and not against us. Have faith and trust in His plan. God has our best interests at heart. He is our Heavenly Father

that created us. This is so easy to say and so very hard to do. It requires us to let God be God and to let go.

Back to Joseph and his character. He is a fellow who truly manned up many times. Joseph must have truly loved this girl Mary that he was engaged to. Scripture says he did not want to subject Mary to the scrutiny of their society. That is a polite way of saying he did not want her stoned to death. Joseph had that option but refused to use it. It takes a man of great character to raise another man's child. Then to live in a society that would remind him of his wife's supposed infidelity. They would constantly be shaming him. The important thing to remember in this story is that it is first and foremost a love story. The love between Joseph and Mary and God's love for us. That is the root of Christmas.

God bless and take care and stay safe if you are traveling.

Pastor D.