

Recovery / Reaction

Intro: Joseph has decided to divorce Mary quietly. He believes the situation has forced him into this decision. He is in a carnal state and looking only with human logic; spiritual sight has shut down; He will go to sleep & God will give him a revelation/reminder that will enable him to renew his mind & recover from reactive state. He will then obey God's will

(Matt.20-23) Revelation / Reminder; Renewed mind & Recovery / Reaction; vs.24 Renewed Commitment to God's will; vs.25 Restraint / Respect

Revelation & Reminder (Matt.20-23)

Having considered these things an angel appeared while Joseph slept

- OT revelation – teaching angels revealing God's plan in dreams & visions
- Joseph must have known these prophecies – must be reminded of truth we know

Joseph – son of David – reminded him who he was – Messianic line; the thing conceived from GHS; Jesus – save His people from their sins; Prophecy Isa 7:14 Virgin will give birth; Emmanuel God with us.

Renewed Mind

- Angel gives Joe a short reminder course in Messianic prophecy – virgin gives birth
- Angel gave Joe word of God to renew his mind about the situation – divine view point

Recovery from Reaction

Don't be afraid – (*phobeomai* A.P.Subj) as you look to the future don't allow what you are imagining to lead you to fear.

- Stress of the surprising situation has dropped Joseph into fear & human viewpoint
- Sudden loss/life he had imagined with Mary; afraid of future pain in their relationship
- Joseph has dropped down into his old man defense system – avoidance to avoid pain

Renewed Commitment to the Will of God (Vs.24)

After he rose from sleep, He did as the angel commanded and took Mary as his wife
Joseph did what was commanded – Joseph was volitionally functional in faith cycle

- Heard the word, believed the word & obeyed the word – God did the rest
- Joe is willing to give up the life he imagined and accept the better life for Christ.

Restraint out of Respect (Vs.25)

Knew her not until she gave birth – delayed honeymoon for Joseph

- Joseph had the lesser role but his role required that he make major adjustments
- Joseph delayed his own personal gratification for the sake of God's plan.

Principles from the Passage

1. Mary's surprising pregnancy sent Joseph into shock – reacted to the situation.

- We are not told Mary's words – regardless, Joseph is about to make a bad decision
- Joseph either didn't have enough info or disregarded what he had – human logic
- No prayer, no asking for wisdom – Joseph felt forced to make a decision (pass voice)

- 2. Joseph is operating under fear that has shut down his spiritual radar.**
 - Fear that Mary is an unfaithful type of person – future unfaithfulness
 - Fear of stigma from others – future gossip – he was father; another father; Mt 13:55 – Is this not the carpenter’s son; Is not His mother Mary?
 - He is afraid he won’t get the life he wants and has been imagining
- 3. Joseph didn’t want to let go of the life he had planned and seen in his daydreams.**
 - Life with Mary, with children, in his home town, in his business – normal life
 - Joseph, like all of us, feel entitled to a normal life, a life we imagine for ourselves
 - When God changes our life, it is not natural to immediately let it go.
 - Refusal to let go and accept God’s plan sends us into reversionism
- 4. God provided the necessary information for Joseph to do His will. (Angelic Teacher in a dream, established OT method of revelation)**
 - Provided immediate reassurance to calm his fears – recover from control of fear
 - Explained the virgin birth, its immediacy & his connection with it – Joseph, son of David; take Mary (paralambano); pregnant from HS; bear a son, call Him Jesus, save His people from their sins; prophecy Isa 7:14; Emmanuel God with us
 - Joseph was given a vision of his own salvation and ours – motivated him
 - Angel made it clear that Joseph’s dreams were not the issue – God’s plan
- 5. Joseph had an image that he abandoned to accept God’s better plan for him. Image of he & Mary having a normal, honorable life with a good reputation**
 - He has become afraid to enter life with Mary – opens his life to evil suspicion/gossip
 - He clings to his idea of what he wants his life to be – not wrong, but not God’s plan
 - His refusal to relinquish his image will send him into rebellion against God.

Spiritual Recovery (Reaction à Reversionism)

- 1. Activating event that causes real or imagined sense of loss of some treasure**
 - Joseph – the life he had planned and visualized with Mary – important to him
 - Loss of loved one, loss of physical ability, finances, relationship
- 2. Reaction vs response – react by clinging to what was lost; demanding the return of what was lost; manipulation to retrieve the lost treasure**
 - Inner dialogue that awfulizes the loss; refusal to accept & grieve the loss
 - Sins: fear, anger, jealousy, bitterness become preoccupation – Joseph’s fear
- 3. Rejection of God’s will that allowed the loss à Rejection of God’s will in general**
 - Dulling to the word of God; dulling to sensitivity to GHS; occupation with worldly
 - Rejection of the word as truth; acceptance of worldly explanations for life
 - Eph 4:17-19 – Reversionism – vanity / mind, darkened thinking, alienated from God
 - Joseph never walked this road but he put his foot on it – recovered quickly

Recovery:

1. Return to the hearing of the word – God sends an angel to teach Joseph
2. Confess sin to regain the ministry of GHS as a revealing agent
3. Repent of the determination to hold onto lost treasure
4. Inner dialogue that accepts the will of God related to the specific issue
5. Return to the doing of the will of God

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