

Bible Studies for Life: December 24

The Salvation Expressed in God's Name • Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25

By Bobby McKay



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With all the good and enjoyable events surrounding Christmas, there will always be the temptation to allow consumerism or noise to win the day. Our peace and comfort this Christmas are not found in a present, but in a person. His name is Immanuel.

With the name Immanuel, God promised to be with us. (7:14)

One author has described Christmas as “God moving into the neighborhood.” There is a lot of truth in that statement. The name Immanuel is more than a name, it is a promise. This promise is one of presence and security. We all face struggles and adversity. What a great assurance it should be for believers that Christ willingly comes to us. The incarnation of Christ reveals the fact that God is with us no matter what our outside circumstances may look like. Through the passing of time and many prophets, the people had longed for the

coming Messiah, and on that evening in Bethlehem, the promise was fully realized.

Jesus is the One who saves us. (1:18-21)

There is much attention given to Mary this time of year, and it is all deserved. However, let us not neglect the character and integrity of Joseph. It is clear in the Scripture Joseph had a deep love for two things: both God and Mary. Upon discovering Mary was pregnant, Joseph must have had an abundance of thoughts and emotions. Joseph cared for Mary's reputation and sought to end their betrothal secretly. God's word records Joseph as a just man and likewise, a confused one. An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and assured him a much bigger plan was in motion. The child Mary was carrying belonged to the Lord and He was sent to save many people from their sins. This can serve as a reminder to all of us that even when we do not understand the ways of God, we can still trust His will. His timing is always better than ours, and His thoughts are infinitely higher than our own.

Jesus is the One who is with us. (1:22-25)

Joseph's faith and obedience resulted in the continued unity and love that both he and Mary shared. He remained with her in these incredible events and kept his commitment to honor her as a virgin until after Christ was born. He took her as his wife and loved and cared for her. Joseph's obedience to the Lord was further made evident by calling the newborn baby Jesus. More than a name, this child called Jesus came to be the hope of salvation for all who would believe. The presence of Christ did not end in a stable or even with an empty tomb. It perpetuates even now, today, and forever. Have you stopped this Christmas season and noticed His presence? Stopping and thanking Christ for the salvation He makes possible is guaranteed to make your Christmas truly merry!

McKay is pastor of New Liberty Baptist Church, Morton.