

Emmanuel
Matthew 1:18-25
Pastor John Miller

Matthew, chapter one, verse 18 to verse 25. The title of my message is Emmanuel, which of course, is God with us. Beginning in verse 18, follow with me as I read. Matthew records of the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise or happened like this when his mother, Mary, was a spouse to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her husband, being a just man or a devout, righteous man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. Verse 20, 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 Spirit. She shall bring forth a son, verse 21, thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

The name Jesus is Jehovah saves. He saves them from their sins. All that was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets saying, behold, verse 23, a virgin shall be with child, shall bring forth a son. Thou shalt call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted as God with us. Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took him his wife and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son and called his name Jesus. Of the more than 6,000 hymns penned by Charles Wesley, one of the greatest is Hark the Herald Angels Sing. In the second stanza we sing in that song, Christ by highest heaven adorned, Christ the everlasting Lord. Late in time behold he come offspring of the virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity, pleased as men with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. One of the most precious names given to Jesus by the angel through the prophet Isaiah, was the name Emmanuel.

Not only Jesus, God saves, but Emmanuel, God is with us. I want to look with you together at this text we just read and point out the four movements of the text and then make application to the thought that Jesus is God with us, Emmanuel. The story starts in verse 18 down to verse 19, with a holy conception. Go back there with me. The birth of Christ was this wise, when his mother, Mary was a spouse. Now, that espousal is what we would call today an engagement one year before they consummated the marriage, but it was legally binding. Marriage was by arrangement. Marriage was arranged by the parents, and then one year before they consummated the marriage at the ceremony, they would enter into an espousal period which was legally binding. That's why in the text they were called the wife of Joseph. They had not yet consummated their marriage, but they were in that period of espousal.

Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man. Mary becomes pregnant, verse 18, by the power of the Holy Spirit. He being a just man, not willing to put her away, not willing to make her a public example, excuse me, was minded to put her away privately. Now, very clearly in this text, Jesus Christ is seen to be born of a virgin. I want you to notice in verse 18, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then look again at the end of verse 20, that which is conceived in her is

of the Holy Spirit. Then look at verse 23, behold, a virgin shall be with child and bring forth a son. Then look at verse 25, and he knew her not. They had no intimate relationship, just she brought forth a firstborn son and named him Jesus. Several times in this text, Matthew's gospel is making it clear that Jesus Christ was born of Mary. She was a virgin. She conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now, that may not seem possible to you. The Bible says what? With God, all things are possible. When God's a part of the equation, God can do anything. The Bible says he's all powerful. This was a holy conception of a holy child who came from heaven in the womb of Mary. He's called also the Son of God. He's called Jesus, God who saves. Now, I want you to notice also not only do we have a holy conception, but we have an angelic intervention. Joseph, her husband being a just man, verse 19, not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. There in this period of espousal and all of a sudden, Mary is pregnant and Joseph has a dilemma. What am I going to do? Now, it's obvious even though the marriage was by arrangement, that Joseph loved Mary and Mary loved Joseph. It was inconsistent in Joseph's mind to think that Mary would be unfaithful to him.

Maybe Mary had already told him about the angel's visitation, but he had a hard time believing it. You can imagine the dilemma that Joseph faced in verse 19. The angel shows up in a dream, verse 20 and 21, and makes it clear to Joseph, don't be afraid to take Mary thy espoused wife for that which is conceived in her womb is of the Holy Spirit. It's interesting to trace the angelic activity in Christmas story. Gabriel first came to Zacharias in Luke chapter one announcing the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner. Gabriel came to Mary when she was in Nazareth and announced to her that she would be the mother of Messiah. Then the angel came to Joseph in Matthew chapter one while he was sleeping in a dream and said to him, don't be afraid. Evidently, he was afraid. To take Mary as his wife, there would be that stigma that he would bear by doing that.

He loved her, to take Mary because that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. Then the angel to the shepherds, Luke chapter two, and then the angel to Joseph when the baby was older and they had to flee to Egypt to be protected from the wrath of King Herod. The miraculous conception and the miraculous intervention. Now, notice also, the angel gave him the name, verse 21, that we know so well, Jesus. Now, the name Jesus is the equivalent to the Old Testament named Joshua. His name was first Hoshea, which means God saves and then became Joshua. Then in the New Testament, the name Joshua is Jesus, which means God saves or God is salvation. One of the reasons that Jesus came and he's bearing that name is to save us from our sins. Being the God-man, he's able to lay his hand on man, lay his hand on God and bring man and God back together as our great redeemer and high priest.

I want you to notice also the prophetic anticipation. We have the holy conception, verse 18 and 19, the angelic intervention and then the prophetic anticipation. Now, all this was done Matthew writing from a Jewish perspective talking about the fulfillment of prophecy for the Jews that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, now he's going to quote in verse 23 from the Old Testament, prophet Isaiah. Isaiah was writing about 600 to 700 years

before the birth of Jesus Christ. He says, a virgin shall be with child, shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us. Now, the Hebrew name Emmanuel is God with us. Now, there are three quick I want to mention important things we learned from this title of Jesus Emmanuel. Number one, we learned that Jesus Christ is God. If he's God with us, he is what? God with us. Isn't that profound? Jesus is actually God with us.

The Bible tells us that he's the second person of the Godhead, that God the Father, sent God the Son. The God the Son came willingly, voluntarily. God the Father sent God the Son. John 3:16, we all know it so well. For God so loved the world that he did what? Gave his only-begotten unique son that whosoever believes in him would never perish but have everlasting life. God the Father sent Christmas, the greatest gift ever given to meet the greatest need, it cost the greatest price. God gave his only-begotten son. He was sent from God the Father, but it means that he is God. In John's gospel chapter one, verse one, in the beginning was the Word. The word was with God and the word was God. Then the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. Jesus came to save and I would propose to you that Jesus is the only one who can save.

This is why Jesus said, "I'm the way, I'm the truth. I'm the life. No one comes to the Father except by me." Amen. There's no other name given among men by which we must be saved than other than the name of Jesus. The name Emmanuel means that Jesus is God, but secondly, it means that Jesus is also man. I just quoted John 1:14, the word which is Jesus, who is the divine word, the personal word, the eternal word, was made flesh. The phrase literally means pitched his tent among us. He's talking about Christ taking on real humanity. Jesus was really, truly God and really, truly man. Now, his manhood or his human nature was not sinful like ours. This is why he was born of a virgin. He came from heaven, came through the virgin's womb, but he was not sinful, he was sinless. Thus, he was able and qualified to go to the cross and pay the penalty for our sins because he had no sin.

He's number one, God. He's number one, man. He is human. He's God with us. In his humanity, he came God with us, but he's also God for us. In Romans chapter eight, it says, if God be for us, who can be against us? When I think about Christmas, I think about God's love. I think about God's great love and his giving love, and it's a demonstration of God's loving and giving to us and that God is for us, not against us. The Bible said he didn't send his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He's not condemning you, he's reaching out to you. In the person of Christ at Christmas, God is reaching out to you. God is coming to you. God is not far off or far removed. He came to show us the Father in John one verse 18, no one has ever seen God at any time. Again, Jesus, the only-begotten son of God who's in the bosom of the Father, the Bible there says he hath declared him or revealed him or made him known.

If you want to know what God is like, take a long look at Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." Not that he's the Father, but he reveals the Father to us. He's Emmanuel, God with us. He is both God and man, revealing God and a God of love. Now, there

are five things in closing I want to mention that Jesus Emmanuel brings to us. Number one, he reveals God to us as I just mentioned. We see God in flesh in the person of his son Jesus Christ. I hear people say from time to time, if there really is a God, why doesn't he speak? He has spoken. In the book of Hebrews, it says God at different times in different ways, spoken to the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us in his own son. In, by or through his own son. Secondly, because he's Emmanuel God with us, he can relate to us. He's God with us. He can sympathize with us.

In Hebrews chapter four, verse 15 says, we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like we are yet without sin. Whatever emotion you go through, whatever experience you go through, when you're sad, when you're glad, when you're lonely, when you lose someone you love, the Bible says Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus. When you're thirsty, when you're hungry, when you're lonely, when you cry out to God, Jesus became a man. He understands, he sympathizes with us because he's God with us. He's with us in life. He's with us in our sorrows. He's with us in death and is with us now in eternity.

Number three, Emmanuel means that God became a man to redeem us. This is the primary reason Christ came at Christmas. He came to buy us out of the slave market of sin and to bring us out and to set us free. We were estranged from God, we're separated from God, and God is reaching out on the person of Jesus Christ to redeem us, to buy us back to God. Jesus is our Redeemer, and he would purchase us by dying on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins. Then number four, he came to reverse the curse. I love this. Do you know how beautiful the world is right now yet it's under the curse? The curse that came from man's sin.

Due to Jesus Christ when he returns in the Second Advent is going to reverse the curse and there's going to be peace on earth and righteousness on earth. We're all troubled by watching the war that's going on in the Middle East and Ukraine and other parts of the world. The Bible says that when Jesus comes back, the nations will beat their swords in the plowshares and their spears become pruning hooks. A nation shall not lift up war against nation anymore. Jesus Christ will come as his theocratic reign on earth and he will dwell in reign forever and ever and ever on the throne of David.

That's my last point, number five. Not only did he come to reveal to us, the Father, to relate to us as human beings, also to redeem us back to God, but to reverse the curse. Number five, to reign on the throne of David. This is why Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He was a son from the lineage of David. David was given a promise, it's called the divinity covenant, that through his lineage, the Messiah would come. Jesus Christ is the son of David. The promise that God gave to David that sitting on his throne would be a son forever and ever and ever and ever. He has an eternal kingdom. How glorious that is God with us all through life, in my joys, in my sorrows. Jesus said, "I will never ever leave you or forsake you." It's also interesting just to footnote for you Bible students that Matthew opens up with his name Emmanuel, God with us. You know how Matthew ends his book? Jesus giving what's called the great commission saying go into all the world and preach the gospel.

He said these words, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." How wonderful to know that because of Christmas, God came down to us and God is with us in the person of Jesus Christ. You say, well, Pastor John, how can I have God with me? I hear the message, I understand what you're saying, but how do I know God is with me? Number one, you must realize that you are a sinner separated from God. The Bible says that our sins have separated us from God. The Bible says, all have sinned, all have fallen short of the glory of God. There's no one righteous, no, not one. The first step for you to be with God and God with you is to acknowledge that I am sinful and separated from God. The second is to do what we call repent. I know that's a word that some people don't like, but it's used in the Bible. It's a Greek word, metanoia. You know what it means? Change your mind. It means to change your mind.

It means to change your mind about the way that you're living, the direction you're going, and it involves a turn of 180 degrees away from where you're going toward God. If God is with you, you need to now be with him. You need to turn from your sin and repent, turn to God. Then thirdly, and lastly, you need to receive the gift of Jesus Christ by faith as your Lord and your Savior. You realize you're a sinner, you receive Jesus Christ by faith after repenting from your sin. The Bible says that salvation is a gift of God. Christmas is all about gifts, right? Well, God has a gift for you tonight. The gift is eternal life. It's wrapped in Jesus Christ. In order to have eternal life, that's life with new quality, life with a new dimension, life that is eternal, you must accept the gift of Jesus Christ.

You do that by faith, which means that you basically trust him, that you believe in him, that you put your faith in him. Some people will say, well, that faith stuff, I can't handle that faith stuff. We act on faith all the time. You came into this building by faith that the roof wouldn't fall on you. You sat down on a pew in faith that the pew would hold your weight. You didn't get underneath it and check the screws. You get on an airplane by lots of faith. Remember, the first time I ever flew on an airplane, I've never been on a plane. Plane took off, starts to level up about 30,000 feet, and the pilot walked by. Pre-9/11, obviously. Now, who's flying this thing? We eat at restaurants by faith. You haven't gone back there to check how they prepare your food. You open up food and eat it by faith.

You get in your car, you put the brakes on by faith. You start the engine that faith tells you that it will start. Faith is simply saying, I believe in Christ by trusting him. The Bible says not by our good works that we're saved, but by his grace and by his mercy, he's forgiven us. By grace, you have been saved, through faith, trusting Christ and that not of yourself, it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. It's so simple, people stumble over it. Just as you open your gifts at Christmas, God wants you to open this gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Realize you're a sinner, repent of your sins and receive Christ tonight as your Lord and Savior. If you haven't done that, then you'll have Emmanuel, God with you. Amen.