

# The True Gift of Christmas

2 – Saving Power

**Matthew 1:18-25**

Grace Fellowship Church, Sunday, Pastor Peter LaRuffa

## 1. We need to understand the significance of the Jesus' virgin birth. Without it, we'd not have a Savior in Christ!

**Matt. 1:18** “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.”

The fact that Jesus was born of a virgin isn't just a “fun fact” or secondary circumstance surrounding His entrance into the world. It's just as serious as His substitutionary atoning death, His resurrection from the grave, His ascension into heaven, and His return. All of these stand or fall together!

A. The virgin birth fulfills Old Testament prophecy concerning the Messiah.

**Isa. 7:14** “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son**, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

B. The virgin birth means Jesus has a sinless human nature.

**Rom. 5:12** “Therefore, just as **through one man** sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—”

Remember—it is Adam that is credited with the Fall of Man. Therefore, if Jesus had a human father, He would be a sinner just like us, and wouldn't have been the sinless Savior we desperately needed!

## 2. We need to learn from Joseph's initial reaction to the situation at hand. Even when he thought he was wronged, he responded in a way that reflected the grace of his stepson—and Savior—Jesus Christ.

**Matt. 1:19** “Then Joseph her husband, **being a just man**, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.”

Initially, Joseph would've thought Mary's pregnancy was the result of a sinful act on her part. So...why would a “just” man not want to see sin punished under the full weight of the law as God has prescribed?

**Deut. 22:23,24** “<sup>23</sup>If a young woman *who is* a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, <sup>24</sup>then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones...so you shall put away the evil from among you.”

The word “just” refers to the fact that Joseph has been “justified.” He was a just man, not because of his impeccable record of obedience, but because of his faith in God. Joseph was a believer. Therefore, he sought to deal with the matter in a way that honored God, and showed compassion to Mary.

**How do you respond to someone when you believe (or know) you have been sinned against?**

**John 8:7** “So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, ‘He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.’”

Since Joseph was “just,” and the recipient of God’s favor, his initial response was one that reflected the compassion he’d received from One much better than himself.

**3. We need to remember the meaning of Christmas that goes beyond the manger scene and straight to the cross. What’s in a name? Jesus’ entire purpose...to save us from our sins!**

**Matt. 1:21** “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Jesus is a form of the Hebrew “Joshua,” or “Jeshua, or “Jehoshua,” which means “JEHOVAH will save.”

From the very beginning of Christ’s earthly life, even before He was born, His purpose was crystal clear: “He will save His people from their sins.”

Jesus’ very name fulfilled the latter part of Isaiah’s prophecy! In Joseph’s dream, the angel references the Son saving His people from their sins, and then goes on to instruct Joseph to name Him “Jesus,” meaning “Jehovah will save,” which therefore means God is with us in Christ!

**Matt. 1:22-25** <sup>22</sup> So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: <sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” <sup>24</sup> Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, <sup>25</sup> and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.