



## Today's Message

Date: December 17, 2023  
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas  
Title: *What Child Is This?*

Text: Matthew 1:18–25 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup> but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Introduction: As we celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus, we must remember that remarkable birth of Jesus was only one element of the story of Jesus. That element was neither the beginning of the story, nor the end.

This year we will retell the details of that first Christmas through the eyes of Joseph and consider the larger story by taking a close look at the names an angel gave to the baby.

**I. The story: Christ Jesus entered the world in a unique way.**

A. Joseph faced a painful dilemma. 18-19

1. He was committed to marriage.
2. He made a terrible discovery.
3. He made a careful decision.

B. Joseph received a messenger from God. 20-23

1. The angel gave him instructions and an explanation regarding Mary. 20
2. The angel gave him instructions and an explanation regarding Jesus. 21
3. The events that the angel explained occurred according to God's eternal plan. 22-23

C. Joseph submitted to the plan of God. 24-25

1. He obeyed the instructions of the angel.
2. He preserved the virginity of Mary until the birth of Jesus.
3. He named the child Jesus.

**II. The significance: God the Son bridges the gulf between God and humanity.**

A. As "God with us," he restores the broken fellowship.

B. As "Jesus," he removes the offending obstacle.