



Courageous Faith In a Confusing Season

December 22-23, 2018

Big Question: How do you manage confusing seasons that challenge your faith?

I. Three Confusing Challenges Mary and Joseph Faced

1. **Moral** Confusion (They had to make a moral decision?)
2. **Relationship** Confusion (They had to make relationship decision?)
3. **Financial** Confusion (They faced tough financial times?)

II. Three Confusing Challenges They Lived Through

1. There was no **family support**
2. There would be a lot of **public shame**
3. There would be a long **season of isolation**

III. A Confusing Encounter With An Angel

Luke 1:26–38 (NKJV)

An Angel Celebrated Her Before Announcing Her Out of Wedlock Pregnancy

- **26** Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, **27** to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. **28** And having come in, the angel said to her, "**Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!**" **29** But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and **considered what manner of greeting this was.** **30** Then the angel said to her, "**Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.**

IV. Mary's Moral Confusion

Luke 1:31-36

Mary Had Clear Non- Negotiable Moral Boundaries That Did Not Support This Announcement

- **31** And behold, **you will conceive in your womb** and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. **32** He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. **33** And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." **34** Then Mary said to the angel, "**How can this be, since I do not know a man?**" **35** And the angel answered and said to her, "**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.** **36** **Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her** old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

V. Joseph's Moral Confusion

Matthew 1:18–25 (NKJV):

1. Joseph Had to Make a Painful Moral Decision (This was not his baby)

- **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. **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.**



2. Joseph Had to Fight Through Fear and Confusion During His Engagement (Imagine that)

- 20 But **while he thought** about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, **do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife**, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

VI. Joseph’s Courageous Faith

Joseph Was Willing to Be Obedient (His whole life he would be branded a fornicator, cp. John 8:41)

- 24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, **did as the angel of the Lord commanded him** and took to him his wife, 25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

Note: Three Interesting Facts About Jesus Family

1. In the end Mary and Joseph had at least six other children (4 boys plus sisters)

- **Mark 6:1–6** Then **He went out from there and came to His own country**, and His disciples followed Him. 2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! 3 Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of **James, Joses, Judas**, and **Simon**? And are not His **sisters** here with us?” So they were offended at Him.
- 4 But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” 5 Now **He could do no mighty work there**, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And **He marveled because of their unbelief**. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching. (NKJV)

2. In the early days of ministry his brothers did not believe in him (*Sisters not mentioned*)

- **John 7:1–5** After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. 2 Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. 4 For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.” 5 **For even His brothers did not believe in Him.**

3. At the end of his ministry his brothers believed in him (*Sisters not mentioned again*)

- **Acts 1:12–14** Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey. 13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. 14 **These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.**

Conclusion: Four Interesting Facts

1. Joseph and Mary believed even when confused
2. Joseph is not mentioned by the time Jesus is 30 years old (cp. Luke 3:23)
3. Mary pressed through confusion watching the life of Jesus as a mother for 33.6 years
4. Mary was 15 at Christ birth and approximately 48 years old when he died (Amazing)

Source: <https://www.gotquestions.org/how-old-was-Mary.html>

Next Time: How to Put Courageous Faith In Action?

Read Ahead: James 2:14-26