Daily Devotion For December 18, 2021

"The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means "**God is with us."** Matthew 1:23

As we remember the birth of Jesus during this season of advent, we remember that in the days of Joseph and Mary, betrothals were almost like being married.   Betrothed couples were treated as though they were husband and wife. So when Mary revealed to Joseph that she supernaturally had the Messiah in her womb, Joseph didn't know what to do. He loved her, but didn't want to go ahead with the marriage.

The Bible tells us that Joseph was a righteous man. He wanted to do the right thing, but he basically had only two options. 1.) Publicly tell everyone, which meant Mary could have been stoned to death, or 2.) Put Mary away privately and terminate their relationship.

Joseph chose the 2nd option. But God had different plans. Matthew's Gospel tells us in Matthew 1:20-21 **20** But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,[f] because he will save his people from their sins."

In other words, the child in Mary's womb was the very Messiah. Matthew continues in verses 22-23, **22** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: **23** "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"[g] (which means "**God with us**").

Thought For Today: The essence of the Christian faith is that God is with us.   Because of this we are never alone. How does the knowledge that God is with you help you in your daily life?

Today's Prayer Focus: Thank God that He is always with you and will never leave you or forsake you. Deo Volente.