

**Harmony of the Gospels**  
Part 3  
**“When Your World Falls Apart”**

Right after Church one Sunday morning, after hearing the story of How Jesus was born, a little boy asked his mother “*Mom, what is A Virgin*”.

“*Oh no*” **she thought**, “*the time has finally come when I am going to have to answer those questions....*”

His mother sat him down and began to tell him all of the facts in detail.

After she finished, the tiny boy said to his mom: “*No Mom, **not that kind of virgin**. I was talking about **the King James Version**”.*

Try to imagine how you would feel if you were engaged to someone that you loved very much, and were looking forward to your life together, when suddenly one morning, you find out that she is pregnant with someone else’s baby.

- ☞ **This was the reality** that Joseph was faced with.
- ☞ **Or suppose that you are a young woman** and your family suddenly finds out that you are pregnant, **but it is not with your future husbands baby**. You go to your parents and tell them, “*I am pregnant by the Holy Spirit*.”
- ☞ **How would you like to be Mary** and have to tell your parents that?.
- ☞ **Sometimes, life** feels like it is falling apart.
- ☞ **Even been there**, done that?

As we are going through the 4 gospels together and looking at the events of Jesus life as they happen, we might forget that Jesus had a mom and dad that went through days and nights when their whole world seemed like it was falling apart.

If you have ever had your world collapse around you, then you know what I am talking about...

**I have had these kinds of things happen to me, and I still remember how it feels....**

- ☞ **In 2002**, Elsie and I lived up in Heber in an old house that we had been remodeling for the past 7 years.
- ☞ **We were just a few days away** from finishing the complete remodel, and were excited about putting it up for sale so that we could move to Winslow and live here full time.

- ⌘ **Up to that point** we had been living in Heber and commuting between the Holbrook Calvary Chapel and the Winslow Calvary Chapel, for the past 6 years.

### Show Slides of Holbrook Church

**That particular Night, We had not gotten home from the Bible study on Wednesday night in Winslow until about 2 am,.**

- ⌘ **The next morning I awoke at 9 am** and began studying for the Sunday service.
- ⌘ **Elsie** was still asleep.
- ⌘ **I looked outside** to see smoke all around us.
- ⌘ **I called my Dad** who also lived in Heber and he told me that there was a Wildfire coming up from the southwest, headed in our direction.
- ⌘ **About 20 minutes later** the Sheriff came by and told us that we had to evacuate immediately.
- ⌘ **What do you grab from your house** when you have 30 minutes to get out?

We grabbed our dogs,... try to grab 2 cats **when they know** you are trying to get them...

**We grabbed the church records, a change of clothes and we left.**

- ⌘ **The following Monday** a wall of flames **200 feet high, 2, 500 degrees** came over the top of the hill where our home was and burned it to the ground, along with everything we owned, and 17 other homes in our neighborhood.

Bobby Dixon was there with us afterward, he saw it, all that we had in the world now lay in an ash heap 2 feet high.

### Show Slides of Heber house.

- ⌘ **This was** our home.
- ⌘ **We had many, many celebrations** with people from the Holbrook and Winslow churches there.
- ⌘ **Our two boys** grew up there.
- ⌘ **We had family** reunions there.

**Then one day it was nothing but a heap of ash and twisted metal.**

- ⌘ **This slide is where my office used to be**, one of my music books burned up, but look at the page that was facing up when I went to it.
- ⌘ **“Your Mercy flows like a fountain.**

In all of that heap of ashes, Elsie and I stood right in the middle of what was once was our home, and we held each other and cried, and then we prayed and we said to the Lord:

*“The Lord Gives and the Lord takes away, Blessed be the name of the Lord...”*

**In spite of loosing everything we had in our life, we still knew that the Lord was Good, and that He Loved us and still had better things ahead for us...**

**You see, just a year before the house burned to the ground, Elsie went into the hospital for a routine surgery.**

- ⊕ **After the surgery**, sometime in the middle of the night, **she died**.
- ⊕ **Elsie had Bled out internally** all of her blood, into her own body cavity.
- ⊕ **She was rushed into surgery**, the doctor told me that he didn't expect Elsie to make it.
- ⊕ **I walked down a long hall** at the hospital to a room, and there all by myself I had a long talk with the Lord.

I asked him not to take my best friend from me, I told Him how I could not go on without her...

- ⊕ **Then I hear Him say to me clearly**: *“Rob, If I want to take Elsie home today, will you let her go?”*

**I said “No Lord”, as I stood there all alone...”Lord I need her, I don't thing I can live without her...Then after a long cry I surrendered her to the Lord, and said “Lord whatever you want to do it is OK with me...”**

- ⊕ **I realized** that as much as I thought that I loved Jesus, I really had place Elsie above Him.
- ⊕ **I needed to get her back** in her proper place.
- ⊕ **Jesus first**, then Elsie.

Well of course it was a mighty miracle, because she survived and is here today...

**I have said all of these things to you, not so you will have feelings for Elsie and I, but so that you will know, that I know how you feel when your world collapses around you.**

I say these things, so that when we look at Joseph and Mary this morning, you will understand how they must have felt, as Jesus was about to be born.

- ⊕ **Sometimes your world just falls apart** all around you, and there is nothing that you can do except make a decision whether of not you are going to trust the Lord.
- ⊕ **Whether or not** you are going to serve Him even if everything else is gone.
- ⊕ **You have to decide** just how much you really do love the Lord, When you world is falling apart.

**So, this morning, here in the Harmony of the Gospels, Joseph has his world fall apart all around him as he learns of Mary pregnancy...**

### **Matthew 1:18-25**

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.

A Jewish man and woman were usually betrothed or “Engaged” to each other, ten or twelve months prior to the marriage.

- ⊞ **“Betrothed”** means “Engaged”.
- ⊞ **The Jews considered the engagement so binding**, that if one of the couple were to be unfaithful during the Betrothal process, it was considered “*Adultery*”, punishable by being stoned to death.

The engagement was so binding that those betrothed were already regarded as husband and wife, and could only be separated by divorcement

### **Matthew 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.

Joseph was a good man, he knows what people are going to say if Mary is found to be pregnant by someone else, before they are married.

**Joseph knows what this is going to do for his own reputation.**

*“Oh your Joseph, the guy who’s wife became pregnant by another man...”\*

- ⊞ **Instead of damaging Mary’s reputation**, Joseph chose instead to damage his own.
- ⊞ **The truest sense of the word love** is when **we are willing to suffer our self for something we didn’t do, rather than to permit someone else to suffer for something that they did.**

This is what Jesus did when He came, He took all of the wrong that we have ever done, and took the punishment for us, so that we will never face judgment for it our self

- ⊞ **Now, According to the law**, Joseph could have divorced Mary for this.

### **Deuteronomy 24:1**

“When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house,

Joseph knows that if he does divorce Mary, that **the reason for the divorce would have to be put on the certificate**, and he did not wanting to disgrace Mary, so instead he chooses to stay with her.

- ☞ **Joseph could have hardened his heart** and taken the easy way out for himself.
- ☞ **When Jesus spoke on the subject of divorce**, he said that the reason that Moses permitted divorce in the first place, was not because it was the Fathers will for people, but because of how hard the human heart can become and unwilling to work things out..

### **Matthew 19:8**

He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so

Joseph chose instead to do what Paul would later give as the ideal way that we who follow Jesus should act towards people who have sinned and fallen...**In love, help them get restored.**

**The heart of all of Gods law is Mercy:**

### **Matthew 9:13**

But go and learn what this means: “I desire mercy...

Listen, If the Lord wanted to wipe us all out for the things that we have done, then He would already have done it.

- ☞ **This morning**, the Father wants to show you Mercy.
- ☞ **He wants to forgive** everything that you have ever done in your life.
- ☞ **At the moment that you understand what Jesus has done for you, that when Jesus died on that Cross, He was dying for you.**
- ☞

At the moment that you realize Jesus was dying for you, and accept His death for you as the payment for your sins, then according to the Bible, you are free and have every sin you have ever committed erased from your record, forever.

- ☞ **And then when we see someone else** who is also struggling with their own sin, Jesus wants for us to show them Mercy...

### **Galatians 6:1**

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one **in a spirit of gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

**The heart of Gods law is always Mercy, and so when Jesus was faced with someone caught in the very act of adultery, he said to those seeking to stone her to death:**

### **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.”

Jesus wasn't excusing the woman's sin, in fact according to the law, both the man and the woman should have been immediately stoned to death.

### **Deuteronomy 22:23-24**

23 "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,  
24 then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones

- ⊞ **The question in this situation is** "*Where was the man that was also caught*", how come his good old buddies didn't bring him with the woman, was he one of the Pharisees?
- ⊞ **Jesus doesn't excuse the woman's sin**, but he gives to her something that she needs most of all, Mercy.

**There are many of us here this morning that have been through a divorce, either due to our fault, or the person we were married to, or both.**

- ⊞ **Jesus is here this morning** to tell you that he looks at your situation with Mercy.
- ⊞ **He doesn't condemn you** for the mistakes you have made.
- ⊞ **Instead he says to us**, what He said to the woman caught in adultery:

### **John 8:10-11**

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"  
11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

**Haven't we all made mistakes in our life?**, you bet, there is no one here today that has not.

- ⊞ **By all means**, everyone of us is guilty of breaking Gods law.
- ⊞ **According to His law**, we are worthy of death.
- ⊞ **But instead, Jesus came** and died for your mistakes, so that you could be free this morning.
- ⊞ **Are you grateful for that?** **Then go and sin no more**, live the rest of your life you appreciate what Jesus did for you.
- ⊞ **And even when we do sin again**, Jesus love is right there with us, to cleanse us again and again, every time we ask Him to...Man that's Good News!

### **Matthew 1**

20 But while Joseph **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.

Notice that as Joseph is seeking to do the righteous thing and take shame for himself rather than allow Mary to endure shame, the Lord intervenes and sends the angel Gabriel to Joseph.

- ⊕ **In your present situation, if you will do the right thing**, and **you know what that right thing is**, then the Lord will intervene and help you.
- ⊕ **Although we will suffer ourselves when we let other people get off for what they might have done to us**, **the Lord takes notice**, and He will bless your life for your goodness and your mercy to them.

### **1 Samuel 2:30**

...' But now **the LORD says**: 'Far be it from Me; for **those who honor Me I will honor**, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed

### **John 12:26**

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. **If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.**

- ⊕ **When you do things in your life that honor the Lord** above even your own reputation, or your own wants or needs, **the Lord takes notice**, and He will honor you in your life.
- ⊕ **The angel tells Joseph** "*Don't be afraid Joseph, even though your situation seems hopeless, I am with you and I will work it out for your good...*"

Try to imagine how great the suffering of Mary and Joseph was, just because the Lord wanted to use their lives to bring Jesus into the world...

- ⊕ **Mary was under suspicion by her family and friends** that she had become pregnant by someone unknown, while she was engaged to be married to Joseph.'
- ⊕ **She knows how this happened**, but her family and friends don't know.

*"I am pregnant by the Holy Spirit"*

- ⊕ **"Sure you are Mary**, how did it really happen?"
- ⊕ **Can you imagine what your family would say** if you told them that you were pregnant by the Holy Spirit?"

**Josephs anguish was no less than Mary's**

- ⊕ **The very one** that he wanted to spend his entire life with, is not found pregnant.
- ⊕ **Remember that up until this point**, Joseph didn't know how it had happened for sure, He must have thought that Mary was pregnant by another man.
- ⊕ **Imagine how you would feel** if your future wife became pregnant in the middle of your engagement?

**Sometimes things happen to us as we are doing our best to follow Jesus, that don't seem fair.**

- ☞ **When those things happened to Elsie and I**, we were just trying to serve the Lord and serve all of you.

**One of my all time favorite verses is:**

### **Philippians 3:10**

...that I may know Jesus and the power of His resurrection, and **the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death,

That I might know how awesome Jesus love for me is, by the fellowship of His suffering.

- ☞ **Hey, I don't know about you**, but when I see Jesus up there on that Cross suffering for what I did.
- ☞ **Knowing that He is the Creator** of everything that exists.
- ☞ **Knowing that His love for me** compelled Him to leave heaven and become a man like me.
- ☞ **Then to take upon Himself**, every filthy, vile, evil thing that every person that has ever been born on this earth has done.
- ☞ **It is then, when I am suffering**, that **I remember how much Jesus has loved me**, and all that He went through so I could be free and forgiven and know that I have heaven.

**And sometimes, We might suffer for things that we didn't even do.**

- ☞ **People might blame us** for things we didn't say.
- ☞ **We might suffer** when we don't deserve to suffer.
- ☞ **Did you know** that there is great learning and growing in this times of suffering.
- ☞ **For some reason**, it is in those moments of great suffering, that we learn the most about ourselves, and the most about the Lords love for us.

### **Hebrews 5:8**

Even though Jesus was Gods Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

If Jesus learned how to trust the Father more through what He suffered, how much more do I need to also suffer sometimes so that I can learn?

- ☞ **Hey I wish that I could learn the easy way**, you knew, by just trusting the Lord and living for Him all of the time.
- ☞ **The reality is**, that none of learn nearly as much when everything is going just peachy.
- ☞ **It is when things are the worst** that I really run to and cling to the Lord with all my heart.

I want to tell you that when our house burned to the ground, and When Elsie was dying in the hospital, it was in those moments that **I felt the Love that the Lord has for me, stronger than I have ever felt it in my life.**

- ☞ **Those moments standing in the pile of ashes**, and having my heart broken in the hospital, **changed me in more ways that I have ever been able to change in my life**, And I thank the Lord for that suffering...

So will you trust the Lord to make whatever is happening in your life right now, to work out in His time and His way.

- ☞ **Will you trust Him** all the way through this?

Then, Gabriel tells Joseph the most amazing thing:

### **Matthew 1**

21 And Mary will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, **for He will save His people from their sins.**

All of the anguish that Joseph had been suffering through, now the Lord gives him and answer why.

- ☞ **You and Mary are suffering** because the Lord is going to use you to bring His own Son into the world.
- ☞ **This is great news for Joseph** because it gives him some answers as to why.
- ☞ **But remember**, Joseph still cannot tell his friends and family about this.
- ☞ **Can you imagine telling your family:** *“Oh today an angel told me that Mary was pregnant by the Holy Spirit and she is going to give birth the Son of God.”*
- ☞ **“Sure Joseph”**.

Joseph has the most wonderful news in the world, and he has had his sadness lifted, but he can't even tell anyone about it, because they will never believe him

And all of this happened to you Joseph so that Jesus could come and SAVE US...ALL of us...

- ☞ **That's is why Jesus came**, to Save, To forgive, To heal, to give you Eternal life.
- ☞ **That if you would just surrender your life to Him** this morning, He will give you all of these things.
- ☞ **But Jesus will not** force Himself upon you.
- ☞ **He died for you**, then He offers forgiveness and eternal life to you.
- ☞ **But he leaves it** up to you to decide.
- ☞ **Can you feel The Holy Spirit tugging** on your heart right now?

That is Jesus saying, “*Do you know how much I love you?*”

- ☞ **He wants to come inside** and live in you.
- ☞ **But He will not do it**, unless you invite Him.

### **Matthew 1**

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.”

**This is one of the most incredible verses in the Bible.**

*“All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord, through the prophet...”*

**700 years before Jesus was born, the Lord spoke through Isaiah and said:**

### **Isaiah 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.

About the year 740 B. C. While Ahaz was king of Judah, his land was threatened with an invasion by the united armies of Syria and Israel.

- ☞ **Isaiah came to Ahaz**, and promised him help from the Lord
- ☞ **The Lord told King Ahaz to seek from God a sign** confirming that He would keep His promise to help him.
- ☞ **Ahaz refused to ask** the Lord for a sign.

He refused because he knew that if he asked the Lord for a sign, that he would be obligated to serve the Lord, and he didn’t want to surrender his life to the Lord.

- ☞ **So, Isaiah replied** that God would grant a sign anyway.
- ☞ **The sign was that a virgin should have a son**, and that son is the one that Mary is going to give birth to.

And Jesus will save you from your sins, if you will let Him...

- ☞ **King Ahaz would not ask the Lord for a sign**, even though he was full of fear of the things that were going to happen to him as the armies were gathered all around him.
- ☞ **All he had to do was ask**, and the Lord would have helped him.
- ☞ **But he wouldn’t ask**.

**Is that us this morning?**

- ☞ **There are things in our life** that have broken our heart.
- ☞ **People have done things** to us.
- ☞ **We have** made so many mistakes...
- ☞ **We need forgiveness**, we need the guilt taken away.
- ☞ **We need some help** right now...

But if I ask Jesus to help me, I am obligated to follow Him.

**Let me see your hands**, How many of you have surrendered your lives to Jesus Christ and have found that at the moment that you did, and every day since, **living for Jesus has been the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to you?**

The one thing that people always say after they realize how wonderful Jesus is and they surrender their lives to Him is, **WHY DID I WAIT SO LONG?**

- ☞ **Jesus is unique** among every other person on the earth.
- ☞ **He is God**, and He is Man.
- ☞ **“Immanuel**, God living with us”.

**This is why we follow Jesus and no other religion, No church, no person, Only Jesus was born of a virgin.**

- ☞ **Only Jesus raised Himself from the dead**, 3 days after they crucified Him.
- ☞ **There is not one other person in all of history** that can make that claim, and back it up with fact, except Jesus.

**Do you need help In your life this morning?, Only Jesus has the power to make things that are dead, come back to life!**

### **Matthew 1**

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.

**Joseph did not have intimate relationship with Mary, UNTIL after Jesus was born.**

- ☞ **Now I know that it is the tradition of the Catholic church** that Mary was a virgin forever, **but that is not what the Bible teaches.**
- ☞ **Mary, as this verse describes** was only a virgin till Jesus was born.
- ☞ **Mary and Joseph** had many children together,

### **Mark 6:3**

Is this not Jesus 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

The Catholic churches official position is that these children listed here are Josephs children, by a previous marriage. **Which is not what the Bible teaches...**

- ☞ **The bottom line** is that it really doesn't matter anyway.
- ☞ **Jesus was born of a virgin**, Jesus rose from the dead, Jesus loves you, and Jesus want to give you a brand new life.

### **Matthew 1**

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.

**Verse 25 is very clear that after Jesus was born, Joseph "Knew" Mary intimately.**

Next Sunday, we will switch back over to Luke, who picks up the story with the Birth of Jesus

I wanted to take some time with how Joseph and Mary must have felt when all of this began to happen to them, because I think that sometimes in telling the story of Jesus birth, we don't spend much time on how Joseph and Mary must have felt.

- ☞ **Serving the Lord** does not always mean that everything is going to go smoothly.
- ☞ **In fact, very often**, when we make a firm commitment to really serve the Lord with out entire life, things can become very difficult.

The difference is **HOW everything is going to turn out**, the one who fully commits their self to Jesus, has the confidence that everything is going to turn out **Awesome...**

I can tell you after 30 years of knowing Jesus that He has always made everything turn out awesome...

### **Ephesians 1:11**

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who **works all things according to the counsel of His will**

### **Genesis 50:20**

But as for you, **you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good**, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive

### **Jeremiah 29:11**

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

### **Romans 8:28**

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

- ☞ Comunion...
- ☞ Invitation to accept Jesus.
- ☞ Invitation to commit yourself to a deeper relationship
- ☞ Invitation to ask Jesus for help