

Joseph's Reputation A Manger Invitation

Highs and Lows from past week

Community Group Questions:

1. Perception is reality. What do you think of this phrase? Does it resonate with you or does it not? Why?
2. Read Matthew 1:18-25. What factors are impacting Joseph's decisions throughout this story, emotionally and logically? How difficult of a decision do you think this was for him?
3. Have you ever had to make a hard decision that you know others wouldn't understand? What was that like for you?
4. How does it help us to know that Jesus allowed himself to be misunderstood to the point of public execution to save us?
5. Do you have people in your corner in life, to understand and support you? If so, what does that support look like? If not, who might you ask to play this role for you?

Close in prayer

Perception is reality.

Question: Which do you care more about, perception or reality?

Cognitive Dissonance: a psychological state that occurs when a person holds conflicting beliefs, values, or attitudes, or when their beliefs don't align with their actions.

Apart from knowing and accepting yourself, you will never have **PEACE** with yourself.

Matthew 1:18–19 *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

Matthew 1:20-21 *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, because he will save his people from their sins."*

He can do the **WRONG** thing and appear right for it, or he can do the **RIGHT** thing and appear wrong.

Matthew 1:22-25 *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” (which means “God with us”). 24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.*

QUESTION: Have you ever realized that you’re not as **GOOD** as you thought you were?

Question: What does love require?

SMCC Value: We measure maturity by how well we love God and others.

To love well, you need **SOMEBODY** to know and support you.

BOTTOM LINE: Love and peace are produced out of love and peace.