

# The Privilege and Price of Partnering with God. Pt 2

## ***“Immanuel...God with us!”*** Mt 1:23

### **Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Christmas Eve, 2023**

Christmas has a way of shifting our focus away from ourselves and toward others (perhaps even toward God) as we reflect on the Wonder of the Incarnation. Maybe that's why there's so much effort to “distract” us during this season! While our concept of “Wonderful” may not fit Mary and Joseph's experiences, they were filled with “Wonder” at the birth of the Son of God, whose very name and nature inspired “Wonder”. (Is 9:6) Luke 2:17 is clear that the Shepherds **“made known abroad the saying”** and that **“all they that heard it wondered at those things”** (vs 18) Scripture is silent about whether any of those who heard and wondered ever bothered to wander over to the stable to see for themselves what God was doing. Other than the brief visits from Anna and Simeon (Lk 2) as well as the Magi, (Mt 2), we have no record of anyone else being interested or concerned. Eventually everyone who welcomed or even noticed the Christ Child “returned” to their own lives. The shepherds returned to their flocks, Anna and Simeon returned to their homes and The Wise Men made the long trip back to their countries, leaving Mary and Joseph alone to face their new roles and responsibilities of raising Immanuel. Modern Christmases are still like that. Most miss its significance entirely, Distracted by the traditions or celebrations of everything but Jesus! Others may be challenged with the revelation and reflection of the “reason for the season”, usually followed by eventual resignation as the season passes and we get back to life as normal. Perhaps grateful for the experience/memories, but effectively, no different than they were before.

### ***What made Mary and Joseph “Different?”***

#### **1. While Some were Challenged, *They were Changed!***

##### **A. The Birth Of a Child Changes Us!**

Friends may “check in,” but Families “change.”

1) Wherever They Went, They Brought Jesus.

2) As soon as they realized that they had left him behind, they immediately changed their agenda. (Luke 2:42-50)

Billions acknowledge, and even celebrate the birth of Jesus. The vast majority will acknowledge: "That was nice" and then simply get on with “their” life ultimately: **“because there was no room for them...”** Lk 2:7 Relatively few, who having “met” Jesus Christ, will determine to make the adjustments necessary to “make room” for him in their lives.

#### **2. While Some “Noticed” Christ, *They Nurished Christ !***

##### **A. Raising Children Is A Growing Experience!**

1) You must love as well as “learn” the child.

2) As they grow up, they change, and so do you, so your relationship requires constant care.

##### **B. Growing Relationships Requires Growing People! 2 Pt 1:5-7; 3:18**

***“Grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord (kyrios: supreme authority) and Savior (soter: deliverer) Jesus Christ”***

**C. Relationships That Aren't Nourished Deteriorate!** Eph. 5:25,28-29

*“Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it...  
He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth  
(Ektre'phō: cherish, value, mature) and cherisheth it, (Thal'pō: to warm, foster growth.)  
even as the Lord the church:”*

Titus 2:4 **“teach them to love their husbands, to love their children”**

**1) Entropy deteriorates and will eventually destroy!**

(physically, emotionally, relationally, spiritually)

**2) Energy (effort) is required to resist/reverse it!**

2 Pt 1:5-7 **“giving all diligence, add to your faith...”**

Gal. 6:7-8 **“whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap... vs 9 ... and let us not grow  
weary in well-doing for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. vs 10 As we have therefore  
opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”**

**While others eventually “returned” to their lives, Mary and Joseph rededicated  
themselves to nurture and develop their relationship with Jesus! (Lk 1:46,47)**

**Lk 1:46,47 “My soul doth magnify the Lord, And My spirit hath rejoiced in God my savior!”**

## **Conclusion:**

### **What made Mary and Joseph Different?**

- **They allowed their relationship with Jesus to not just challenge,  
*but to Change them!***
- **They Nourished their relationship with Him!**

## **Application:**

### **The secret of their difference is in their devotion!**

**Lk 1:38 “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.”**

**Mt 1:24 “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had  
*bidden him.*”**

**For them, their relationship with Immanuel Changed Everything!**

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y0\\_wNPSOaw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y0_wNPSOaw)**

### **What about for us?**

**Are you willing to let Christ Change you? (2 Cor 3:18)**

**Are you willing to Nourish this relationship? (Jn 14:21)**

**What are you doing to Nourish your relationship:**

**With Jesus? (Jn 14:21)**

**With your Family? (Eph. 5:22-6:4)**

**With God's Family? (Heb. 10:23-25)**