

Chosen Father

Proverbs 20:7 A righteous man walks in his integrity. His children are blessed after him.

God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother and chose Joseph to be Jesus' earthly father or guardian. God honored Joseph in choosing him. Mary and Joseph were engaged (betrothed) when the Holy Spirit overshadowed her and she conceived.

"Betrothal in ancient Judaism was unlike modern-day engagements. It was a temporary period (up to one year) between the covenant of marriage itself and the time when spouses lived together. Because couples were legally married during this intervening phase, a betrothal could be terminated only by death or divorce. This explains why Mt 1:19 refers to Joseph as Mary's "husband," and why Joseph would have had to divorce Mary to end their betrothal. You cannot divorce someone unless you are married to them. According to Jewish law, Mary was married to Joseph at the time she conceived Christ."

"Was she in danger of being stoned to death? Execution by stoning was the prescribed punishment for adultery in those days. And if Joseph had decided to make public the fact that his wife was pregnant, and that he was not the father, then yes, Mary's life would have been forfeit. But the Biblical text specifically says Joseph did not want to do that. That's why he resolved to divorce her quietly. As far as anyone would be aware, there would have been nothing illegitimate about the child she carried. But of course that's not what happened. Joseph was visited by an angel in a dream and convinced to remain with Mary and take her into his home. Mary was never in danger of being stoned."
(<https://testeverythingblog.com/please-stop-calling-mary-an-unwed-mother-b141d85db500>)

It's no wonder that God chose Joseph to be the earthly father (guardian) of Jesus. Joseph had many extraordinary qualities that the young boy Jesus could learn from as He prepared to fulfill His destiny as Savior of the world. Joseph was:

1. A man of integrity & compassion – Did not want to embarrass or expose Mary to ridicule, so he would divorce her quietly. This action would save her life. (Matthew 1:19)
2. Obedient to God's word – He always obeyed the instructions he received through dreams. (Matthew 1:24, 2:14,21)
Joseph named the baby Jesus as the angel had instructed. (Matt. 1:21,25)
3. Discerning – Didn't make rash decisions, but thought through matters before acting. (Matt. 1:20)
He was able to recognize that the dreams and messages he received from the angels were from God. (See #4)
4. A Dreamer – Four times God spoke to Joseph through dreams, using angels 3 times. (Matthew 1:20-23, 2:13-15, 2:19- 21, 22)
5. A Courageous Protector – Protects Mary's reputation (Mt. 1:19) Protects young Jesus from those seeking his life. (Mt. 2:13-15, 2:22- 23)
6. Patient & reverent– Did not consummate his marriage to Mary until after Jesus, the Savior of the world was born. (Mt. 1:25)
7. A working man – Joseph was a carpenter by trade and taught Jesus the craft. (Mt. 13:55, Mark 6:3)
8. A conscientious guardian – Joseph & Mary searched for 3 days for 12-year-old Jesus who was found in the temple in Jerusalem "sitting in the midst of teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. (Lk. 41-51)

Fatherhood is one of the most awesome, rewarding, and honorable assignments God has given men as we see in God's choice of Joseph, Mary's Husband, Jesus' earthly father. Thank God for our fathers who have found their identity in Christ and embraced their assignment. Pray for others who haven't realized the awesome, honorable opportunity God has granted to them. Pray they discover who they are in Christ and recognize the opportunity and privilege they have to guide lives in the ways of the Lord. Pray for our fathers.

Abundant blessings,
Pastor Vanessa