



LESSON 3 // SEEK DILIGENTLY—THINK DIFFERENTLY

Big Idea: In the Christmas story we see Joseph as a man who sought God’s will diligently and, because of this, was able to think differently in making decisions. We learn from Joseph that it’s better to be a responder rather than a reactor, that our values and motives matter most in making decisions, and that we need to give God a place and space to adjust our thinking as part of the process.

Matthew 1:18-24 (NIV) *This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. 19 Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. 20 As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet: 23 “Look! 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.’” 24 When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.*

James 1:5 (NIV) *If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

Matthew 7:7b (NLT) *Keep on seeking, and you will find.*

Romans 12:2 (NLT) *Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

Start Talking:

What’s a hard decision you had to make recently? How did you arrive at your decision?

Start Thinking:

Read Matthew 1:18-25. What do you learn about Joseph and his decision-making from these verses?

Read James 1:5. Why is it so important to ask God for His wisdom in making decisions?

Read Isaiah 55:6 and Matthew 7:7-8. What does it mean to “seek the Lord” diligently?

Read Romans 12:1-2. In what ways should we think differently as followers of Jesus than the world around us? What difference should this make in your life?

Start Praying and Doing:

Pray for the wisdom to make godly decisions in every area of your life. Look for opportunities this week to make decisions that honor the Lord, even in the small, “ordinary” matters of your day.