



Joseph the Carpenter

You know, as a baby the Lord Jesus was as weak and vulnerable as any other child ever born. And so in the wisdom of God, a man was chosen as a protector of the Christ-child and His mother. That man was Joseph the carpenter. I want to talk about Joseph for a few minutes.

There's a principle that says, "Where much is given, much is required. Joseph was blessed with the love and the hand of the most beautiful maiden in all the land. She was a precious and chosen young woman, Mary. Yet he was also entrusted to protect her, and shepherd the development of God's only Begotten Son. It was not a small trust. Now, consider the following the next time you read the story about Joseph.

Obedient to the angel, Joseph married Mary and named her child Jesus. What if Joseph had been an extremist and decided to have her stoned as an adulteress? And obedient to the law, Joseph returned to Bethlehem to be taxed with Mary his wife, and thus he fulfilled prophecy. What if he'd refused, and the trip was never made?

Devotedly, upon arriving in Bethlehem, Joseph sought the best for Mary in the delivery of her child, going to numerous inns. But since no one would make them room, at least he found a stable. And – and faithfully, Joseph brought Jesus and Mary to the Temple to do for them, after the Savior's birth, according to the requirements of the law of Moses. It was there that Simeon and Anna met them, and thus fulfilled God's promise to the aged Simeon. What if Joseph had never come?

And the wise men: Humbly and appreciatively, Joseph accepted the gifts offered by them. What if he had been too proud to take charity – what then?

And just imagine how the course of history would have been altered if Joseph had been slow to wake up, and slow to obey when the angel came and warned him of the approach of Herod's murderous soldiers?

Glenn Rawson Stories

Joseph was submissive to God. He fled into a strange land taking Mary and the baby, and remained there until the angel bid him return?

And true to his role, through the Savior's boyhood Joseph taught Jesus the trade of a carpenter, and loved Him deeply enough to seek Him sorrowing for many days when He disappeared in Jerusalem at the age of twelve.

Now consider this: When the Savior hung upon the cross at the end of His life, He committed the care of His beloved mother into the hands of John the Beloved, one of the apostles. So, where was Joseph? Well, we don't know for sure. But maybe it was the death of Joseph that perfected the Savior's empathy sufficient to bring Him to tears at the death of His friend, Lazarus, or moved Him to restore the life of the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Nain, and enables Him now to comfort us when we lose those that we love. He understands perfectly.

Isaiah spoke of the Savior as "... a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief..." (Isaiah 53:3) Surely Joseph who loved Him could no more have escaped the pain that his son suffered than a parent who sees their [his] child suffer now.

Joseph the carpenter blessed not only the lives of Jesus and Mary with his faith and devotion, but indeed all of history. Thanks be to God for the man Joseph and the gifts he gave. May we all so live and return such gifts to the Savior now.

Merry Christmas to you.