



Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV)

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Courage is received through presence

1. We experience the PRESSURE of CULTURE.

Cultural pressure drives us towards *fusing* or *fleeing*.

2. We need the POWER OF PRESENCE.

How we respond to cultural pressure is linked to how we view God.

The mission of God is directly tied to the presence of God with his people.

John 1:14, Matthew 28:19-20

3. We receive the POSTURE of COURAGE.

Where do we receive courage?

- We receive courage to *honour God privately when we do not receive credit publicly.*
- We receive courage to *give up being the hero of our own story to participate in a greater story*

