

Small Group Questions - Read Matthew 1:18-25

1. How do we usually respond or deal with the sharp, surprising, and even shocking turns in our lives and in the journey of faith?
2. As Joseph's own life and plans were upended by divine interruptions into the shock and surprise of grace, how can we as Christians "buckle in" for those sharp and surprising turns in our own lives?
3. By naming Jesus, Joseph legally adopts Him as his own child. If Joseph had not chosen to adopt Jesus, Mary and Jesus would have been socially cut off from Israel. Jesus was only counted legally as David's descendant through adoption, even though He was genetically from David's line through Mary. Knowing that Jesus Himself was adopted by our humanity and into our humanity, how does the Christmas Story of the adoption of God's only begotten Son into our world inform our own adoption into God's family?
4. God was with us -- Immanuel -- in this way: that God chose to enter our world fatherless in regards to His humanity, and to bare Himself open to be received or to be rejected, to be deemed illegitimate, ultimately to be chosen and adopted Himself by a sinful and wayward human father. How does the promise of "God with us in Jesus" help us navigate the sharp and surprising turns of life?