



Under the Mistletoe: A Better Marriage by Christmas

Part 4: *Staying Together* - *Sermon Study Guide 12|18|16* - Pastor Eric Huffman (@pastorerichuffman), **The Story Houston**

Staying Together in Marriage

In your opinion, or based on your experience, what makes staying together in marriage so hard?

1 Corinthians 13:7 "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

What does it mean for love to "bear, believe, hope, and endure _____" in marriage?

Staying together in marriage is about _____ between
_____ and _____.

Every day, you get to choose either to _____ about your spouse,
or to _____ about him/her.

The Way Your Mama (or Daddy) Taught You

What did you learn about marriage (or life, in general) from your mom?

What about your dad - what did you learn from him about love and relationships?

How do you think your mom and/or dad influenced your marriage (or if you're not married, how did your relationships with your parents impact your dating life and other key relationships)?

The Marriage of Joseph and Mary

What do we know about Mary from the Bible? What kind of person was she?

Luke 1:35-40, 56 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled."

At that time, Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then went home.

What do the Gospels tell us about Joseph? What kind of person was he?

Matthew 1:18-19 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.



Under the Mistletoe: A Better Marriage by Christmas

Part 4: *Staying Together* - *Sermon Study Guide 12|18|16* - Pastor Eric Huffman (@pastorerichuffman), **The Story Houston**

What explicit challenges did Joseph and Mary face in their marriage?

1. Unexpected _____ (Luke 2:1-20)
2. Lack of _____ (Luke 1:39, Luke 2:5)
3. Nasty _____
4. Extraordinary _____ (Matthew 2:13-23)
5. _____ (Luke 2:41-48)

Have you ever experienced any of these challenges in your relationship(s), specifically in marriage? How did you deal with these challenges?

Attention, Gentlemen

What kind of husband did Joseph _____ to be toward Mary? How did his character as a man and a carpenter inform his role as husband to Mary and father to Jesus?

What difference did Joseph's choice to stay with Mary and protect her really make?

The Mission of Marriage

Joseph and Mary were on a mission together to raise Jesus and keep him safe. The mission they shared got them through life's many challenges.

Does your marriage have a mission? If so, what is it? If not, what do you think your mission might be?

How did the characteristics of Joseph and Mary come through in the life of Jesus - the most influential life ever lived? What words or actions of His can you potentially trace back to his mom and step-dad?

Practically speaking, how can a strong marriage today make Jesus known to the world? And more specifically, how does _____ tell the world about Jesus and His love?