

Joseph the Carpenter - A Father

Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew 2

Luke 1:26-38

The Bible does not give a detailed description of Joseph's day-to-day parenting, but from the Gospel accounts we can see several important attributes of Joseph as a father to Jesus.

As I was getting this message the main thought of my spirit was that I did not want to heap condemnation upon any of the fathers here today. If there is any task that I am most blessed to have done it is the calling of being a father. I know the difficulties of being a father, but I can say by the grace of God, he helped me. First, because of the father that he was to me and secondly, because of the earthly father that I had. God has always been in all things, good to me. My father, Hank Kelly, though flawed, showed me what it was to make an effort at doing your best, and what that meant to me, the child, to have a father that was doing his best with what he was given.

As human beings we all start at a point of being damaged by sin. We all do not have the same beginning. Many have every obstacle stacked against them from the start.

The message of hope that the Gospel gives is; “If you are willing to come to God and admit that you do not know how to live, and throw yourself on the mercy of God, He will restore you and show you how to live.”

Step one is to repent - which means to turn. Turn from doing things your way, and turn to God. You need to hear me this morning. If you do not get this part, nothing else will make sense or work. You must stop doing things your way.

Step two - You must follow Jesus. Follow means to go where he goes, do what he does.

If you will do this you will have great success. When Joshua was taking over for Moses to lead the people of Israel (A fatherly role). God said to him in Joshua 1:5-9

Joshua 1:5-9 (NASB)

5 No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. 8

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Under the New Covenant we are to be led by the Spirit.
Galatians 5

Lets look at Joseph, the man tasked with being Jesus' earthly father/guardian.

1. Joseph was righteous and godly

Joseph is described as "a just man" or "righteous man" in Gospel of Matthew 1:19. He sought to obey God and live according to God's law.

Fatherly attribute: A good father leads his family through a life of integrity and obedience to God.

2. Joseph listened to God's guidance

When an angel appeared to Joseph in dreams, he obeyed God's instructions without hesitation:

- He took Mary as his wife.
- He fled to Egypt to protect Jesus.
- He returned when God directed him.

(See Gospel of Matthew chapters 1–2.)

Fatherly attribute: A father seeks God's wisdom and follows it.

3. Joseph protected his family

Joseph acted quickly when Herod sought to kill the child Jesus. He took Mary and Jesus to Egypt, ensuring their safety.

Fatherly attribute: A father provides security and protection for his family.

4. Joseph provided for his family

Joseph was a carpenter (or craftsman) and worked to support Mary and Jesus (Matthew 13:55).

Fatherly attribute: A father takes responsibility for providing for the needs of his family.

5. Joseph was faithful and dependable

Joseph consistently fulfilled his responsibilities. The biblical record shows him carrying out every task God entrusted to him.

Fatherly attribute: A father is reliable and committed to his family.

6. Joseph taught by example

Jesus grew up in Joseph's household and likely learned the trade of carpentry from him. Joseph's example would have shaped Jesus' human development (Luke 2:52).

Fatherly attribute: A father teaches not only with words but with his example and daily life.

7. Joseph participated in the family's worship

Joseph and Mary regularly traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover feast (Luke 2:41).

Fatherly attribute: A father encourages spiritual growth and worship within the family.

Summary

Joseph's fatherhood was marked by:

- Righteousness
- Obedience to God
- Protection
- Provision
- Faithfulness
- Teaching and mentoring
- Spiritual leadership

Although Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, he demonstrated the qualities of a loving, responsible, and godly father who cared for the child entrusted to him by God.

Joseph had obstacles to overcome in being a father to Jesus. It was not easy.

I think that it is safe to say that Joseph was just an ordinary, working man who let his faith in God help him in playing the hand he was dealt.