

"Just Jesus!"
Could It Really Be That Simple?
Matthew 1:18-25
December 21, 2025

BIG IDEA

In a world that feels complicated, heavy, and full of substitutes for hope, the message of Christmas is breathtakingly simple: Jesus came to save us from our sins. The miracle announced to Joseph—God taking on flesh, entering our world, and becoming “God with us”—is the greatest gift humanity has ever received. He came not to burden us with religious demands but to offer us salvation, peace, and the assurance that we will never be alone.

The invitation God gave Joseph is the same one he extends to us today: Do not fear—trust me. I am with you. Knowing Jesus begins with simple faith. Receiving salvation is wonderfully uncomplicated. And the presence of “Immanuel” means that we never walk through life by ourselves. Everything we long for—grace, forgiveness, belonging, and eternal life—is found in one person: Just Jesus.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV)

(Encourage readers to read the entire passage prayerfully.)

Key moments include:

- Mary found to be with child from the Holy Spirit (vv. 18–19)
- Joseph's heartache, confusion, and honorable plan (v. 19)
- The angel's announcement of God's miraculous work (vv. 20–21)
- The prophecy of “Immanuel — God with us” (vv. 22–23)
- Joseph's simple obedience of faith (vv. 24–25)

MAIN THEME

The Christmas story told in Matthew 1 is not just a historical event—it is a window into the heart of God. Joseph finds himself crushed, confused, and unsure of what to do. The life he had envisioned with Mary is falling apart. And right in the middle of heartbreak, God steps in with a message Joseph could never have imagined.



The angel reveals what Joseph could not possibly fix: God himself was working a miracle. The Messiah long promised through the prophets had finally come—not through human effort, but through divine intervention. Joseph is told to take Mary as his wife, to trust the Lord, and to name the child **Jesus**, “for he will save his people from their sins.”

This is the core of the gospel: Jesus came to rescue us from the sin we cannot overcome. And just as important—he came to be *with us*. Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14 to show that the baby in Bethlehem is Immanuel, God in the flesh, entering into the messiness of human life so that we would never have to walk alone.

Simple faith is the doorway. Joseph believed and obeyed. The same invitation is extended to every person: Will you trust him? Will you believe that salvation really can be that simple? Will you take Jesus at his word?

When a church embraces this simple, beautiful truth—Jesus saves, Jesus is enough, Jesus is with us—it becomes a beacon of hope to a weary world that desperately needs the Savior.

DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

1. Simple Faith Is the Key to Knowing Jesus

Matthew 1:20–21; John 6:29

- Joseph is asked to believe something overwhelming. Why does God often begin his work in us through simple trust?
- What fears or circumstances tend to make faith feel more complicated than it really is?
- Think of a time when God asked you to trust him in a situation you could not fix. What happened?
- What would it look like this week to practice the “Joseph kind of faith”—obedience born out of trust?

2. Jesus Came to Save You From Sin and Death

Matthew 1:21; Romans 6:23

- Why do you think Scripture emphasizes so clearly that Jesus came “to save his people from their sins”?
- In your own life, what evidences remind you that you need ongoing forgiveness and grace?
- Why is it essential to recognize that we cannot save or clean ourselves up?
- How does the simplicity of the gospel bring relief, freedom, or clarity to your walk with Christ?

3. Jesus Is “Immanuel”—He Will Never Leave You Alone



Matthew 1:23; Hebrews 13:5–6

- What does the name *Immanuel* teach us about the nature and character of Jesus?
- Which moment in your life most reminds you of God's faithful presence?
- How does the promise "God with us" bring comfort when you face grief, fear, betrayal, or uncertainty?
- Where do you need to intentionally lean into Jesus' presence this week?

4. Salvation Really Is That Simple—Just Jesus

Isaiah 7:14; 53:5–6; John 14:6; Acts 4:12

- Why do people often assume salvation must be complicated or performance-based?
- How do the prophecies of Isaiah confirm God's plan to send a Savior who would suffer and redeem?
- What false hopes or substitutions are most tempting to rely on instead of Jesus alone?
- What would it look like for Ridgewood Church to live and proclaim the simplicity of the gospel in Minnetonka and the world?

PRAY

Dear Father, thank you for sending Jesus—our Savior, our Redeemer, and our Immanuel. Thank you that salvation is not based on our ability but on your grace. Thank you that Jesus came to rescue us from our sins and to walk with us through every season of life. Teach us to trust you with simple, childlike faith. Help us to believe your promises, follow your voice, and rest in your presence. Make Ridgewood a church that lifts high the name of Jesus and offers hope to those who feel lost, lonely, or overwhelmed. Use us this Christmas season to point many people to the Savior who came for them. Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:

- **Isaiah 7:14** — The promise of Immanuel
- **Isaiah 53:5–6** — The Savior who bears our sin
- **Micah 5:2–5** — The prophecy of Messiah's humble birth
- **Romans 5:6–11** — Christ died for us
- **John 1:14** — The Word became flesh and dwelt among us

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

"See What God Has Done at Ridgewood Church!"

