



**Sermon-based small groups connect the week to the weekend!**

*Dig deeper into the talk each week, while getting connected, cared for and known. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life and do it with people just like you to support you on your journey.*

**Message Info:** Simmer Down, 12/11/22 - It's hard to see clearly when we're operating in fear and confusion. Calm, logical thinking and functioning can go out the window when reality doesn't match our expectations. The good news is, those circumstances which make us feel lost, confused, or disappointed, are exactly the kind where we find Jesus. It's just that type of place, we need to be interrupted by Him. (*Passages: Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:10-11*)

**Discussion Questions:** Take your time and dig into these questions.

Think of a time things didn't go the way you had expected or planned. Did you contemplate before reacting? Or respond quickly, maybe emotionally? How did your response affect others? Could handling things differently have produced a different outcome?

Read Matthew 1:18-25. What sticks out to you about this passage? Why?

Mary and Joseph were already committed to one another; betrothal in those days was a serious legal contract. But similar to the engagement period of today, couples had hopes and expectations for the new chapter in their life together. Imagine how devastated Joseph must have been when he learned that Mary was pregnant. How *could* he have reacted to the unexpected circumstance that he found himself in? What do you think he kept his focus on that helped him react rationally?

Joseph was able to elevate his perspective because instead of seeing red, part of his character was to weigh & consider before acting. He trusted God before his life got turned upside down; this crazy circumstance did not change who he knew God to be. He was also humble enough to let God change his mind. But the most important decision he made in all of this, was to remain obedient to God.

Get with God, and trust him to help you if you struggle with putting any of these qualities into practice. He sees you, and doesn't expect you to walk alone!

**Group Challenge:** Invite a friend to join you this Christmas Eve at one of our Christmas Eve services.