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Those Who Missed Christmas: The Parents Who (almost) Missed Christmas

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Two Obstacles That Draw Our Attention Away from the True Meaning of Christmas and Two Choices We Have About How to Respond to Those Obstacles

Obstacle #1: Anxiety About the Future

Luke 1:26-27 (NIV): In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

Luke 1:28-33 (NIV): The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Luke 1:34 (NIV): "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

Luke 1:35 (NIV): The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on 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."

Luke 1:38 (NIV): "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Our Choice: When faced with anxiety about the future, we must choose to trust God and surrender our worries.

Obstacle #2: Resentment Over a Hurt

Matthew 1:18 (NIV): This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph...

Matthew 1:18 (NIV): ...but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:19 (NIV): 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.

Matthew 1:20-23 (NIV): But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Matthew 1:24 (NIV): When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Our Choice: When faced with resentment over a hurt, we must choose to forgive and extend grace.