**“God is with us – love”**

Going deeper in Matthew 1:18-25

**INTRODUCTION**

Mary has been visited by an angel who has told her that through the work and power of the Holy Spirit she will have a child even though she and her husband Joseph have not physically consummated the marriage. She has told Joseph and this is what happens.

**READ** – *Read (passage) aloud. Read it several times. Listen for what the Spirit of God is saying, don’t just think about it.*

18 The birth of Jesus the Christ took place like this. After his mother, Mary, was pledged to be married to Joseph and before they enjoyed their wedding night Joseph found out she was pregnant (It was by the power of the Holy Spirit, but he didn’t know that.). 19 Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man, but he did not want to expose her to public disgrace so he decided to secretly divorce her. 20 But as he was considering all this, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. The angel said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because Mary’s pregnancy is Holy Spirit-conceived. 21 She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus – ‘God saves’ - because he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this happened to bring to fulfillment what the Lord said to the prophet, 23 “The virgin will be pregnant and bear a son; They will call him Immanuel (Hebrew for “God is with us”). 24 Then Joseph got up and did exactly what the angel of the Lord told him and he took her home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate the marriage until she had the baby. He named the baby Jesus.

**ENGAGE** – *Questions for going deeper. God is speaking… to you.*

1. What do you think Joseph was feeling like before the angel appeared to him? If you were in his shoes what would you be feeling?

2. From his reaction to the circumstances what kind of person do you think Joseph is? What are his characteristics?

3. What does the angel tell Joseph about the child Mary is carrying? Why will He be born?

What do you think Joseph felt as he listened to the angel?

4. How has God been Immanuel for Joseph? How has God been Immanuel for you lately?

**PRAY** – *God has spoken. So, reply.*

\*Thank the Lord that He is Immanuel for you.

\*Ask the Lord to give you faith to trust that He is Immanuel for you.

\*Pray for people you know who need to see that God is with him or her.

**LIVE** – *This is where the rubber hits the road.*

Joseph makes a courageous and faith-filled decision to believe that what the angel has told him is true. He shows his faith by loving Mary. Will you choose to trust that God is with you and that He has placed certain people (spouse, family, friends, neighbors, co-workers) in your life at this time for a reason? He has called, equipped, and empowered you to show His love to them. How will you do that this week?