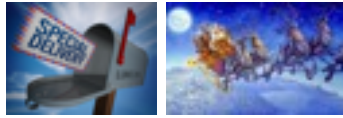


22 December 2013 - 4 Advent. Readings: Isaiah 7:10–16; Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19; Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–25.

Theme: *Special delivery* – Matthew 1:18, “This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about...”



INTRO: This last week my wife and I finished our Christmas letter. This story is about God’s Christmas message/package getting out...



I. SPECIAL PLEDGE.

Matthew 1:18, “This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was **pledged to be married** to Joseph...”

Luke 1:38, “‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May your word to me be fulfilled.’”

Tim Kellar, *The Meaning of Marriage* “Vertical and the Horizontal.” Questions and vows. “Notice they are not speaking to each another.”

DECLARATION OF INTENT: “I therefore ask you: [], will you have [] as your wife, to live together, **as God has ordained**, in the state of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her, as long as you both shall live? **Yes, I will.**”



II. SPECIAL PURITY.

Matthew 1:18, “Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but **before they came together**, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.”

Commentary: “Legally bound to each other, but **not yet living together as husband and wife.**” **Commentary:** “There were **no sexual relationships** during a Jewish betrothal period, but it was a much more binding relationship than modern engagement and could be broken only by divorce.” **Matthew 1:25,** “But he did not **consummate** their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.”

1 John 3:1-3, “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. **All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.**”

Every Day for Every Man (December 16): “You’ve got a decision to make. Do you want sexual purity and the deeper intimacy with God that follows, or do you want to be one of the gang, squeezing in purity only when it’s convenient?”



III. SPECIAL PREGNANCY.

Matthew 1:18, “Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was **found to be pregnant** through the Holy Spirit.” **Isaiah 7:14,** “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The **virgin will conceive** and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

Commentary: “The substitution, which he (Matthew) found in the LXX, of *parthenos* (**virgin**) for *almah* (a girl of marriageable age, or young married woman) in the Hebrew text is to him indication that this prophecy was in fact **more far-reaching** than the prophet himself is aware.”

Luke 1:34-35, “How will this be,’ Mary asked the angel, ‘since I am a virgin?’ The angel answered, “**The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.**”

John 1:12-13, “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— **children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.**”

Galatians 4:19, “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until **Christ is formed in you.**”

Cf. The shock of a husband who discovers his wife’s a Christian...
The shock of a wife who discovers that her husband’s a Christian...



IV. SPECIAL PROPHECY.

Matthew 1:22-23, “All this took place to fulfil 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”).” **Romans 10:14-15**, “But how can people call for help if they don’t know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven’t heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? **And how is anyone going to tell them, unless someone is sent to do it?** That’s why Scripture exclaims, ‘A sight to take your breath away! **Grand processions of people telling all the good things of God!**’”



CONCLUSION: We are God’s SPECIAL DELIVERY people... May God so help us fulfil our calling that many people come to faith.

- Pastor Aldi ☺