

## The Man God Chooses

Joseph - Substance of Character

### Key Verse:

*“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weakness, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet he did not sin.” -*

Hebrews 4:15

### Key Terms:

**Influence** - The power to have an important effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone.

**Tekton** - A craftsman; a mason; stone maker (We often translate the word carpenter...but not so fast).

When we think of the Christmas story, our minds are quick to go to Mary or to Jesus. Very rarely do we think of Joseph and the influence he would have had in Jesus' life. As the earthly father of the Son God, Joseph would have performed the duties of a father during this time. He would have had Jesus circumcised at eight days old (Luke 2:21). Joseph would have taught Jesus Torah as well as teaching him the trade of being a **tekton**...Jesus' teachings often involved stone and building.

It is easy to see how Joseph would have influenced Jesus' teachings especially when it comes to building, but we can also imagine how Joseph's life would have influenced some of Jesus' other teachings. In Joseph, Jesus would have seen an amazing act of love and protection toward the vulnerable: women and children. Did Joseph's protection of Mary influence Jesus' reaction to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). Or, maybe Jesus' teaching on children came from the value he received as a boy from Joseph. How did Joseph's character influence Jesus when he told the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). Had Jesus experienced this kind of love and forgiveness by Joseph. When Jesus taught the disciples about humble service equalling greatness (John 13:1-17). Was Jesus describing something that he had seen his carpenter father do? What about Jesus' desire for mercy (Matt. 9:13)? Mercy was undoubtedly a characteristic of Joseph.

In Joseph, Jesus would have seen a man of character, faith, love, mercy, and humble service. Seeing these qualities in Joseph would know doubt have influenced and shaped Jesus and his understanding of who he is. Joseph would have influenced how Jesus understood God and what God is like. It is no mistake that God chose Joseph to be the earthly father of His son. In Jesus' life, no other man would have had a greater influence in his life than Joseph.

In Joseph we see a man of character, fatherhood, grace, love, and mercy. All of these would have been witnessed by Jesus and would have influenced his life. However, our lives are influenced by these as well.

**Table Time:**

1. What has influenced the character of your life?
2. Whose life are you influencing and imparting character in?
3. Where are the things that you're not necessarily proud of that you are passing on to the lives around you?