

Scripture and Background Information for September 16-22

After Sunday, September 16, we would like each group to discuss **Matthew 1:18-25**. To prepare for that discussion, group members should use the **Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns, and if possible, to watch **Episode 2**. (All of the episodes are here: bit.ly/mckinneyflow.)

Background Information for Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew, one of Jesus' disciples, is the author of this Gospel account. Evident in his account, he would have been present for the majority of the events about which he writes. In places where Matthew would not have been present, he is close to those who would have been present such as the birth and family details of Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25 provides the background of Jesus' birth and his family. Though this is most often read as a Christmas story, this account is an example of how God uses different families throughout Scripture to bring his message of redemption.

The culture of Mary and Joseph would have made their unique situation scandalous. Typically during this time of engagement or betrothal (normally lasting a year), those who were engaged were living separately in order that they remain pure until marriage. Mary's pregnancy would have put the couple's morality in question, but Joseph's trust in the message of the angel prevents him from leaving Mary.

Mary & Joseph's faith set the stage for God's most important act of redemption – bringing the Savior into the world. So our families (both our biological families and our spiritual families) can together carry the powerful message of God's love and grace to the world!

Here are the Scriptures for group discussion for the rest of the series:

Week of September 23-29	CREATIVE SERVICE	Genesis 1:28; 2:8-9, 15-16
Week of September 30 - October 6	ORDER	Psalms 146:5-10
Week of October 7-13	WISDOM	Proverbs 8:1-3, 33-36
Week of October 14-20	WONDER	Psalms 65:4-8
Week of October 21-27	CHURCH	2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Background Information is posted weekly at <http://www.mckinneychurch.com/leaders>.

Weekly episodes can be streamed or downloaded at bit.ly/mckinneyflow

