

I. INTRO

A. Picture perfect

- Everyone has a picture of how life is supposed to go
- Often, we're disappointed because life isn't how we pictured it would be

B. Where did you get the picture?

Hebrews 11:1-3 (ICB) Faith means being sure of the things we hope for. And faith means knowing that something is real even if we do not see it. ² People who lived in the past became famous because of faith. ³ It is by faith we understand that the whole world was made by God's command. This means that what we see was made by something that cannot be seen.

C. When God creates He often does so in a manner we haven't seen before

II. AN UN-APPRECIATED FATHER

A. It wasn't what they thought

Matthew 1:18-19 (NIV) ¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ 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.

B. What we have "in mind" is often the result of what we see

Matthew 1:20-25 (NIV) ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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."

- Why would the angel appear AFTER Mary is pregnant?
- When Joseph had made up his mind in how he needed to handle this situation, God interrupts Joseph's plan to fulfill a greater purpose

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) For we walk by faith, not by sight.

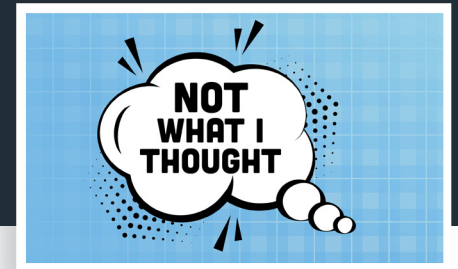
- If I try to make sense of my life only by what I see, then I'll be frustrated because God see's things differently than I do

C. We walk by faith and not by sight

- **If you only go by your picture, you'll only consider your plan**

D. Joseph did you know?

Hebrews 11:3 (ICB) ³ It is by faith we understand that the whole world was made by God's command. This means that what we see was made by something that cannot be seen.



III. GOD WITH US

A. The message of Christmas isn't just for Christmas

Matthew 1:22-23 (NIV) ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

B. God isn't building your picture, He's building your purpose

Isaiah 43:18-19 (NLT) ¹⁸ "But forget all that—it is nothing compared to what I am going to do. ¹⁹ For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.