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*"The Scriptures contain many stories of people who waited years or even decades before the Lord's promises came to pass. ...Waiting upon the Lord has eternal rewards."*

[Charles Stanley]

### ENGAGE & CONNECT ||

Have any of you been to a wedding or big event where things did not go as expected? What happened?

### BEGIN WITH PRAYER ||

Lord, would You loosen our grips on our plans and the way we've decided that things will go—be that in the next ten years, five years, or just this week. We want our plans. But we want You more, so please take our plans and give us more of Yourself instead.

*"Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David."*

[Luke 2:4]

### BIG IDEA ||

Disappointment is really an appointment! God may not give us what we expect, but He is giving us Immanuel. Are we satisfied with this gift?

### PASSAGE & DISCUSSION ||

1. In the sermon we heard, *"God does not always do things the way we think He should."* Why is there a disconnect between how we expect God to act and how He actually acts?

#### Matthew 1:1, 17-25

2. Joseph is called a righteous man. How does his plan for dealing with Mary show who he is as a person?
3. The angel is sent to tell Joseph to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife. What was he probably afraid of?
4. Why did God address his fear instead of just telling him what to do?
5. Read Isaiah 7:10-14. The scripture says that these things happened to fulfill this ancient prophecy. Why does God want Ahaz to ask Him for a sign?
6. When has God made a mess of what you had planned?

7. How can we slow down to God's pace and let Him shift and move us? How do we leave room for God even when we're making plans?
8. How easily is Joseph's mind changed? Would a weird dream with an angel change your plans for your next big life move?
9. Matt mentioned in the sermon that "our expectations will never point us to or take us to the goodness and wisdom of God." What have you been expecting that you might have to hold lightly to?
10. How do you keep yourself open to God, even when you're disappointed?

## STEP OF OBEDIENCE ||

Let go of the life you **wanted or expected**.

*As you consider your next step, reflect on:* 1) How can we refuse to be defined by the times life has told us "no"? 2) How can we be defined instead by the "yes" of God with us through Jesus?

### Step of Faith Ideas

1. See God's disruptions as upgrades, not downgrades.
2. Look at interruptions and ask, "God, are You offering me more of You instead?"

## PRAYER FOCUS ||

### More Immanuel

Don't be surprised to find yourself worshiping Jesus where you did not expect to find Him!

- Don't resist God's interruptions
- Listen carefully for God to address deeper things
- Trade your plans for more of God
- Close your time by reading this prayer together:
  - *Lord, may we have more of You? Will You show us that You are more than enough for us? Even if it means everything we had in mind was not in Your mind, care for us in ways we didn't see coming. We look forward to practicing following Jesus closer than ever before.*