



***Joseph the Hero—Part One***  
**Matthew 1:18-25**

***Objective Sentence:*** Everyone can become someone's hero by walking in the footsteps of Joseph as God used him to bring His Son Jesus into the world.

***Introduction:*** It is important that we remember the acts of those present and past, who have made or may be making a positive impact on our lives. There is one hero that emerged during the revolutionary war, an insignificant schoolteacher who never wrote anything important, never owned any property, never married or had children, never fought in a battle but in the last few seconds of his life he said something that has influenced generations. This young man showed great potential from the beginning. He was very well educated for his day—a Yale graduate in an era when very few went to college. The accounts from classmates, friends, relatives, fellow soldiers, teachers, and students all carry the same general theme: that he was kind, gentle, religious, athletic, intelligent, good looking and as one contemporary testified, “the idol of all his acquaintances. In 1775, he accepted a commission as 1st lieutenant in the Connecticut Regiment and later served under General George Washington as the commander of a ranger company whose mission was forward reconnaissance. One evening in September, 1776, he was captured as a spy. After making a “sensible and spirited speech” to those few who were there, he was executed by hanging—an extremely disgraceful and horrible fate to one of his time and class. Before being hanged he spoke the words that have made him famous (Nathan Hale), “I regret that I have but one life to give for my country.” *One* of my favorite and underrated heroes of all time is deserving of our mention today. This poor carpenter had a part to play in changing the world. **(Read Matthew 1:18-25)**

**#1. Chosen** (Matthew 1:18 NIV This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph)

**A. *Pastor Dan:*** *Mary was chosen to be the mother of Christ and Joseph was chosen to be the husband of Mary; without him God's salvation plan would not have been possible. You have been chosen to be hero to others.*

1. **God Has Chosen You** (*Jeremiah 31:3 NLT* Long ago the LORD said to Israel: "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself")
  - a. **Psalm 139:13-18 NLT** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. <sup>15</sup> You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. <sup>16</sup> You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. <sup>17</sup> How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! <sup>18</sup> I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!
  - b. **Jack Hayford:** We are sometimes tempted to think we might be that one person God regretted creating. Or that He was surprised at our birth. Or that we have such a broken past that there is no hope for our future. But in God's system of things, nothing is beyond His gracious plan of redemption!
  - c. **Jeremiah 29:11** for I know the thoughts that I think ...
  - d. **Philippians 3:10-12** Not that I have attained but I press
  - e. **Author Unknown:** The chosen heroes of this earth have been in a minority. There is not a social, political, or religious privilege that you enjoy today that was not bought for you by the blood and tears and patient suffering of the minority. It is the minority that have stood in ... moral conflict, and achieved all that is noble in the history of the world.
  - f. **John 15:16** (you did not choose me) and **John 6:44, 65** (no one comes to me unless the Father draws them and **John 12:32** If I be lifted up I will draw all people to me
  - g. **Pastor Dan:** Joseph had a mission; his calling was to be the husband of Mary, and nurture and care for Christ with his whole being.
  - h. **1 Peter 2:9** a royal priesthood **Pastor Dan:** Somewhere in eternity past God looked into the mirror of His need and saw reflection of Your face and my face; then He decided upon our existence.

**#2. *Caring*** (*Matthew 1:19 NLT* Joseph the fiancé of Mary, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly [after she had become pregnant by the Holy Spirit], so he decided to break off the engagement quietly [put her away secretly]).

**A. *Peter T. Forsythe:*** *The first duty of every soul is to find not its freedom but its Master. **Pastor Dan:** Joseph was a man of character because he served the Lord by keeping the Law. He was one that the Lord could entrust with the responsibility of caring for Christ.*

1. **A Good man** (*Ephesians 4:30-32 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*)
- a. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Unless he or she obeys, a individual cannot believe. (John 14:15-18 if you love me keep My commandments.... John 14:21, 24 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them they are the ones that love me. They that love me shall be loved ....)*
  - b. *Pastor Dan: Joseph was a man of integrity and strength because he was obedient to the Lord. He was not weak and refused to be used or taken for granted. Eph. 6:10*
  - c. *Pastor Dan: Joseph was not a wealthy man but what he did possess made him a hero for the ages following. He had character, faith and Mary.*
  - d. *Jospeh a just man (NKJV) Joseph a good man (NLT) Strong's 1342 (Di- kah-yoss): Upright, blameless, righteous, conforming to God's laws and man's. The word was originally used to describe people who lived in accordance with rule or custom. In the NT it is used primarily of persons who correspond to the divine standard of right made possible through justification and sanctification.*
  - e. *Hebrews 11:6 Joseph didn't understand everything that had happened but he had faith in the revelation God gave to him. Without faith it;s impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*
  - f. *Pastor Dan: We must center our lives around God and not center God around our lives. It is impossible to be disobedient and obedient at the same time.*
  - g. *2 Cor. 6:14 (fcapa) Come out from among them*
  - h. *Pastor Dan: Living for God can be compared to exercise or working out. At first it is hard and difficult and even hurts. We experience discomfort and struggle emotionally until we become conditioned. Once we are conditioned working out makes us feel good. We are get stronger. After we are conditioned it hurts more not to work out than it does to work out.*
  - i. *Pastor Dan: When we obey, even in the smallest matters, we are empowered to obey more. When we disobey, even the smallest matters, we are empowered to disobey more. Every promise is a seed and produces after its own kind. Obedience is a seed we are planting in our inner being and that will grow up and produce a harvest.*
  - j. *1 Samuel 15:22 Obedience is better than sacrifice*

**Introduction; Edmond Ross:** Doing the right thing is not always easy, as a matter of fact when a man or woman decides to do what is just and good he or she often stands alone. There are times when those who stand for truth find themselves swimming against the current of public opinion. John F. Kennedy spoke of one such person, paying him a great honor, "Ross's vote may well have preserved for ourselves and posterity constitutional government in the United States." John Kennedy spoke of courage in his book *Profiles in Courage*.

America was trying to heal itself of the deep wounds inflicted upon it during the long and brutal Civil War which claimed 620,000 lives through battle and disease. And because of the hostilities that were still brewing after the war ended one of our greatest Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, the man who saved the Union, was assassinated. Andrew Johnson was sworn into office on April 15, 1865. His presidency was plagued with problems from its inception and in 1868

impeachment charges were brought against him. Republican senators rallied the party, making sure they had enough support to convict the president on three charges. At the time there were 54 senators; 36 of them had to vote guilty in order to achieve the two thirds majority needed to remove Johnson from office. The republicans had the support they needed but one man Edmund Ross, a first-term senator from Kansas—sided with his conscience and not his party and Johnson retained the presidency. “I almost literally looked down into my open grave,” said Ross as he rose to announce his not guilty vote. Friendships, position, fortune, everything that makes life desirable to an ambitious man were about to be swept away by the breath of my mouth, perhaps forever.” Radical politicians made sure that Ross’s national political career ended that day. George Washington University's Jonathan Turley, wrote an article for the *Wall Street Journal* and said, “Ross was "shunned, physically assaulted and ruined both politically and financially." He knew the ramifications of his action. The next day he sent a letter to his wife, “Millions of men cursing me today will bless me tomorrow for having saved the country from the greatest peril through which it has ever passed, though none but God can ever know the struggle it had cost me”. Edmund Ross faded into the shadows and died broke, losing everything. But the one thing he retained that no one could take from him was a good conscience and peace of mind for doing the right thing. For his sacrifice Ross has been honored through the centuries as an American hero. Many historians regard his courage to have saved the Constitution from being rewritten by Congress.