

Mens du tænker ...

Prædiken på juleaftens dag 24.12.2025 i Aarhus, LGJ

Matthæus 1,18-25

Med Jesu Kristi fødsel gik det sådan til: Hans mor Maria var forlovet med Josef, men før de havde været sammen, viste det sig, at hun var blevet med barn ved Helligånden. Hendes mand Josef var retsindig og ønskede ikke at bringe hende i vanry, men besluttede at skille sig fra hende i al stilhed. Mens han tænkte på dette, se, da viste Herrens engel sig for ham i en drøm og sagde: "Josef, Davids søn, vær ikke bange for at tage Maria til dig som hustru; for det barn, hun venter, er undfanget ved Helligånden. Hun skal føde en søn, og du skal give ham navnet Jesus; for han skal frelse sit folk fra deres synder." Alt dette skete, for at det skulle opfyldes, som Herren har talt ved profeten, der siger: "Se, jomfruen skal blive med barn og føde en søn, og de skal give ham navnet Immanuel" - det betyder: Gud med os. Da Josef var vågnet op af søvnen, gjorde han, som Herrens engel havde befalet ham, og tog hende til sig som sin hustru. Men han lå ikke med hende, før hun fødte sin søn. Og han gav ham navnet Jesus.

1. MENS VI TÆNKER

Mens han tænkte på dette ...

Nogle gange handler vi impulsivt og får ikke tænkt os om. Det kan gøre ondt. Da er det godt at mærke andres tilgivelse og kærlighed, så vores tankeløshed ikke fik lov til at skille os ad. Tilgivelse er en stor gave!

Andre gange tænker vi grundigt om, fordi vi skal træffe en tung beslutning. Vi ser ikke nogen god vej ud af problemet. Da fyldes tanken med frygt. Vi frygter at miste og skade andre. Vi frygter, hvad der vil ske, uanset hvad vi beslutter os for.

Josef stod i en vanskelig situation. Hans trolovede Maria var gravid. Der måtte jo være en anden mand. For han havde ikke selv ligget med Maria. De var jo kun trolovet. Der var sket noget med hende. Han vidste ikke hvad. Han tænkte. Skulle han bryde trolovelsen og i stilhed skille sig af med Maria. Han tænkte jo, at hun havde været ham utro. Han forstod ingenting. I tankerne var nåede han frem til at skille sig fra hende, selv om det var en umulig tanke. Han

While you're considering ...

Sermon on Christmas Eve Day 24.12.2025 in Aarhus, LGJ

Matt 1:18-25 ESV: 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

1. WHILE WE THINK

As he considered these things

Mens han tænkte på dette ...

Sometimes we act impulsively and don't think about it. It can hurt. Then it is good to receive the forgiveness and love of others, so that our thoughtlessness was not allowed to separate us. Forgiveness is a great gift!

Other times, we think consider carefully because it so difficult to make the right decision. We do not see a good way out of the problem. Then the our mind and thoughts are filled with fear. We fear losing and hurting others. We fear what will happen no matter what we decide.

Joseph was in a difficult situation. His betrothed Maria was pregnant. He thought that there had to be another man, because he hadn't slept with Mary himself. They were only betrothed. Something had happened to her. He didn't know what. He considered what to do. Should he break off the betrothal and quietly get rid of Mary. He thought that she had cheated on him. He didn't understand anything. In his mind, he had decided to divorce her, even though it was an impossible

havde besluttet sig. Og nu gik han og tænkte over sin beslutning, før han førte den ud i livet.

Sådan kan der også komme noget ind i vores liv med vore nærmeste. Utroskab, svigt, misforståelser og hårde ord. Det kan splitte ægteskaber og familier. Hvad kan vi stille op? Vi tænker. Men vore tanker viser os jo aldrig hele sandheden. Vi ser det mest fra vor egen synsvinkel. Åh, bare dog vi kunne få talt med hinanden!

Mon Josef talte med Maria om at hun var gravid? Det fortæller teksten os ikke noget om. Men vi ved fra Lukas-evangeliet, at Maria besøgte Elisabeth og Zakarias i Judæas bjergland, hvor de boede. I hele 3 måneder. De forstod hende fuldt ud. Kunne Josef måske have rejst ned og talt med dem? Men måske han stolede alt for meget på sin forstand og mente, at han måtte være mand for at træffe beslutningen uden hjælp fra andre.

Josefs kærlighed til Maria var blevet til frygt. *Kærligheden, som udholder alt, tror alt og håber alt*, var drevet ud af hjertet. Han stolede mere på sine egne tanker end på sin kære Maria. Og vi forstår hans dilemma.

Vore tanker kan også spærre for kærligheden, når der kommer noget ondt ind imellem os og andre: Mellem forældre og børn. Og det er meget skidt, når vi træffer beslutninger på grund af frygt.

Det er måske kun små ting. Men små misforståelser vokser sig store, fordi man ikke får talt om det. Eller der opstår noget med vanskelig kollega på arbejdet. Kollegaen har det måske svært med sygdom eller andet, som du ikke ved om. Du tænker ud fra det, du ser, men forstår ikke kollegaens vanskelige baggrund. Eller samtalen mellem ægtefæller er gået i stå. De deler ikke længere deres tanker med hinanden.

Mens du tænker på det og overvejer, hvad du skal gøre, taler Gud til dig, som han talte til Josef:

2. GUD TALER

Se, da viste Herrens engel sig for ham i en drøm og sagde: "Josef, Davids søn, vær ikke bange for at tage Maria til dig som hustru; for det barn, hun venter, er undfanget ved Helligånden. Hun skal føde en søn, og du skal

thought. And now he considered his decision before he put it into practice.

In this way, something can also come into our lives with our loved ones. Infidelity, betrayal, misunderstandings and harsh words. It can tear apart marriages and families. What can we do? We think. But our thoughts never show us the whole truth. We see it mostly from our own point of view. Oh, if only we just could talk to each other!

Was Joseph talking to Mary about her pregnancy? The text does not tell us anything about this. But we know from the Gospel of Luke that Mary visited Elisabeth and Zechariah in the hill country of Judea, where they lived. For a full 3 months. They understood her fully. Could Joseph have perhaps visited them and listened to them? But perhaps he relied too much on his own wits and thought that he had to be a man and make the decision without the help of others.

Joseph's love for Mary had turned to fear. *Love, which endures all things, believes all things, and hopes all things*, was driven out of his heart. He trusted his own thoughts more than his dear Mary. And we understand his dilemma.

Our thoughts can also block love when something evil comes in between us and others: between parents and children. And it is very bad when we make our decisions out of fear.

It may only be small things. But small misunderstandings grow big because you don't get to talk about it. Or something arises with a difficult colleague at work. The colleague may be having a hard time with illness or something else that you don't know about. Your thoughts are based on what you see, but you do not consider the colleague's difficult background. Or the conversation between spouses has stalled. They no longer share their thoughts with each other.

As you think about it and consider what to do, God speaks to you as He spoke to Joseph:

2. GOD SPEAKS

Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call

give ham navnet Jesus; for han skal frelse sit folk fra deres synder."

Marias barn var ikke en anden mands barn. Barnet var Guds Søn, Messias, Kristus. Det fortalte Herrens engel Josef i en drøm. "*Josef, Davids søn, vær ikke bange for at tage Maria til dig som hustru.*" Giv dig trygt til hende som hendes som ægtemand. Frygt ikke!

Det barn, som han havde tænkt sig frem til var problemet, blev nu løsningen på problemet, ja endda alle menneskers frelser. *For barnet er undfanget ved Helligånden.* Gud, din Herre, er selv er på vej til at lade sig føde af en jomfru. Nu giver Gud Josef og Maria det barn, han havde lovet på syndefaldets dag. Kvindens afkom. Ikke en mands, men kvindens! Jomfruens. "*Kvindens afkom skal knuse slangens hoved*" (1 Mos 3,15). Det havde Gud lovet. Og det vidste Josef fra Den hellige Skrift. Giv ham navnet JESUS. *For han skal frelse sit folk fra deres synder.* Nu fattede han det!

Den stolte mand, som var på nippet til at forlade sin trolovede, måtte ydmyge sig. Han havde taget fejl. ... Hvad ville hans familie og venner mon sige? De vidste jo, at barnet ikke var hans. Han måtte bære skammen på grund af barnet og Maria. Men nu var hans egne tanker gjort til skamme. Hans frygt var forvandlet til fred. For barnet skulle frelse sit folk fra deres synder. Han ville bære skammen sammen med Maria.

Det er også vores redning, at Jesus blev født. Han kom for at frelse os fra vore synder. Det betyder helt enkelt, at han har frelst os fra alt det, der kan komme ind imellem os og skille os fra hinanden og fra Gud. Syndens væsen er jo, at den adskiller mennesker fra hinanden og fra Gud. Men Jesus forener, fordi han frelser os fra vore synder!

Når vi i vore tanker anklager hinanden og giver hinanden skyld, da taler Gud til os og siger: Al den synd og skyld, som sætter dig i et dilemma lige nu, den er Jesus kommet for at frelse dig fra. Din ægtefælles og dine børns urimelige opførsel har Jesus taget sig af. Også dine forældres måde at være på. Ja, også din arbejdsgivers og nabos synd er lagt på Jesus. Også den synd, som du ser hos dine brødre og søstre i menigheden, har Jesus taget på sig. Plus dine egne mange synder. Dem alle.

Herren reddede Josef ved at vise ham, at det, han tænkte om Maria, var forkert. Det gjorde han ved

his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Mary's child was not another man's child. The child was the Son of God, the Messiah, the Christ. The angel of the Lord told Joseph in a dream. "*Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife.*" Give yourself to her as hers as a husband. Fear not! Do not be afraid!

The child he had thought was the problem now became the solution to the problem, and even the Savior of mankind. *For the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit.* God, your Lord, is about to be born by a virgin. Now God is giving Joseph and Mary the child He had promised on the day of the Fall. The offspring of a female. Not a man's, but a woman's! Virgo's. "*The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*" (Genesis 3:15). That was God's promise. Joseph knew this from the Holy Scriptures. *Name him JESUS. For He will save His people from their sins.* He got it!

The proud man, who was on the verge of leaving his betrothed, had to humble himself. He had been wrong. ... What would his family and friends say? They knew that the child was not his, or that it was his, but conceived before they were married. He had to bear the shame because of the child and Mary. But now his own thoughts had been put to shame. His fear had turned into peace. For the child was to save his people from their sins. He wanted to bear the shame with Mary.

It is also our salvation that Jesus was born. He came to save us from our sins. It simply means that He has saved us from everything that can come between us and separate us from each other and from God. The essence of sin is that it separates people from each other and from God. But Jesus unites because He saves us from our sins!

All the sin and guilt that puts you in a dilemma right now, Jesus has come to save you from. Jesus has taken care of the unreasonable behavior of your spouse and your children. Also your parents' way of being. Yes, even the sin of your employer and neighbor is laid on Jesus. The sin that you see in your brothers and sisters in the congregation has also been taken upon Himself. Plus your own many sins. All of them.

The Lord saved Joseph by showing him that what He thought of Mary was wrong. He did this

at fortælle ham om hendes barn, om Jesus, der vil frelse fra sit folk fra deres synder. På samme måde redder Herren, vor Gud, også vort fællesskab med hinanden. Når vi kun lytter til os selv, og når det er ved at gå galt i vort forhold til hinanden, forkynnder Gud om Jesus. Da kommer frelsen og tilgivelsen ind i vore tanker og hjerter Og da skal vi i ikke mere gå rundt i vore egne tanker, men i Guds tanker. Derfor er det afgørende for os, at høre Guds ord og Guds tanker og beslutninger. Derfor går vi til gudstjeneste om søndagen og læser i Den hellige Skrift i ugens løb. Sådan hjælper Gud os, ligesom han hjalp Josef. 3. DERFOR GØR VI, HVAD HERREN BEFALER OS <i>Da Josef var vågnet op af søvnen, gjorde han, som Herrens engel havde befaleet ham, og tog hende til sig som sin hustru. Men han lå ikke med hende, før hun fødte sin søn. Og han gav ham navnet Jesus.</i> Josef hørte, hvad Gud sagde til ham. Sådan fik han tilliden til Maria tilbage sammen med troen på, at det lille barn var Guds egen Søn og folkets frelser. Derfor gjorde han, som Herrens engel befalede: Han tog Maria til sig som sin hustru, og han gav sig til Maria som hendes ægteemand og som barnets beskytter. Det blev hans liv. Vi kan ligesom Josef påtage os alle opgaver, som er lagt hen til os i det liv, Gud har givet os i ægteskab, familieliv, arbejdsliv og i den kristne menighed Det kan vi gøre, fordi Jesus har frelst os fra vore synder, som ellers ville splitte os ad. <i>Bøn: Kære Far i Himmelen, fortæl os om din tilgivelse, så den må leve i vort hjerte og i vore tanker denne jul og altid (Fil 4,7). Amen.</i>	by telling him about her child, about Jesus who wants to save his people from their sins. In the same way, the Lord our God also saves our fellowship with one another. When we only listen to ourselves and when things are about to go wrong in our relationship with each other, God is talking to us about Jesus. Then salvation and forgiveness come into our thoughts and hearts. And then we will no longer walk around in our own thoughts, but in God's thoughts. Therefore, it is crucial for us to hear God's Word and God's thoughts and decisions. Therefore, we go to worship on Sundays and read the Holy Scriptures during the week. This is how God helps us, just as He helped Joseph. 3. THEREFORE, WE DO WHAT THE LORD COMMANDS US <i>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.</i> Joseph heard what God said to him. That's how he got his love for Mary back. He came to believe that the little child was God's own Son and the savior of the people. Therefore, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded: He took Mary as his wife, and he gave himself to Mary as her husband and as the protector of the child. It became his life. Like Joseph, we can take on all the tasks that are assigned to us in the life God has given us in marriage, family life, work life, and in the Christian congregation. <i>Prayer: Dear Father in Heaven, tell us about your forgiveness so that it may live in our hearts and in our thoughts this Christmas and always (Philippians 4:7). Amen.</i>
---	--