

# Christmas Devotion #3

---



## Ask:

- When things happen in your life that are not part of your plan, how do you respond?
- Do you get mad and pout? Do you become sad? Do you obey right away, with a happy heart? Are you thankful?



**Dialogue:** Maybe your mom or dad tells you it is time to go. Maybe they pick you up early from your friend's house or a fun activity and you thought you had more time to play. Or maybe they tell you it is time to leave go to somewhere or to eat dinner and that you need to stop playing with your toys. Do you obey with a happy heart, the first time? Or do you whine, complain, pretend you don't hear them, and get mad?

In our devotion today, we will read about someone who did not have the right heart attitude when something happened that was not part of his plan.



**Look Up:** Matthew 2:1-16



## Ask:

- What happened that upset Herod in vs 2? *The wise men came and asked, "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?" Herod thought that a new king had been born that threatened his kingship.*
- What did the chief priests and scribes tell Herod? *That the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem.*
- What was Herod's heart attitude when something happened that was not part of his plan? *Jealousy, anger, hardness of heart, etc.*



**Dialogue:** Instead of rejoicing that the Christ had come in his lifetime, and in his kingdom, he hardened his heart to the God's plan and committed a great sin – murdering all the male children in Bethlehem and the surrounding region that were two years old and under.



## Ask:

- What unexpected message did Joseph receive? *That he needed to flee with his family to Egypt.*
- When did he receive this message? *In the middle of the night.*
- When did he obey God? *Immediately.*
- What would have happened if he would not have obeyed God? *From man's perspective, Jesus would have probably have been killed.*
- Even though this sudden move was not part of Joseph's and Mary's plan, how do you know that this was part of God's plan? *Because it fulfilled the prophecy "Out of Egypt I called my son" in Hosea 11:1 (read this verse to the kids).*



**Dialogue:** Joseph is a really good example of someone that trusted and obeyed God, especially when things were not part of his plan. Every time Joseph received new information that helped him to see more of the truth, he trusted God and adjusted accordingly. For example, when Joseph received the news about needing to flee to Egypt, he could have done nothing and justified himself by saying, “But God just led me here to Bethlehem. And after all, the prophet Micah said that the Savior was going to be born here.” If he would have hardened his heart, like King Herod did, things could have been disastrous for him, Mary, and Jesus! The choice that he made to go to Bethlehem was what God wanted him to do before, but now God was showing more information that required a different action and was a different part of God’s plan. So instead of stubbornly holding on to the decision that he had made in the past, he was willing to act accordingly with the new information he had received.

Sometimes when unexpected things happen in our life, we see them as a detour. The Christmas story seems full of detours and changed plans. Perhaps Joseph and Mary felt like all the traveling they were doing were detours, yet that was the map God had already drawn for them as parents of the Savior. When we reflect on Bible prophecy, we see how much of what happened during the Christmas account was just what God had planned along. The same is true in our life; God has a plan for our lives and we can trust him with all our heart because his plans are ultimately good because God is good. You can trust God with the twists and turns of your story!



**Look Up:** Proverbs 3:5-6



**Ponder and Pray:**

- When someone shows you new information are you willing to change your mind about something? It is good to make decisions, but our decisions need to be based on truth. Often times we will receive new information and we must adjust, make new decision, or be flexible based on the new information received. In every step of our journey though, we can trust God like Joseph did. Ask the kids to think about a time when they received new information and had to make a different decision based on the new information they received. Was this an easy or hard choice? What was their attitude? How could they do differently in the future or what kind of circumstances might happen like this in the future that they could prepare for?
- Ask the kids if they can think of a time that they need to have a happy heart when things don’t go as expected. It might be as simple as when you tell them it is time to clean up or when they go to their friend’s house and you tell them it is time to leave. Encourage them to ask God for help to respond correctly to change, ask forgiveness (from God or others) when they have the wrong attitude, and then praise them when you see them making steps to have the right attitude and do the right thing.
- Ask the kids if there is something in their life that was not part of their plan—something that felt like a detour. Talk with the kids and help them to process and pray about this situation. Maybe share a testimony from your own life. Encourage them to memorize certain Scripture to help them.



### **Further Study - Character Qualities:**

- Obedience - <https://iblp.org/discipleship-tools/biblical-character/obedience>
- Flexibility - <https://iblp.org/discipleship-tools/biblical-character/flexibility>
- Wisdom - <https://iblp.org/discipleship-tools/biblical-character/wisdom>
- **FREE PDF download** of additional Christmas devotionals in this series:  
[www.networkerstec.com/christmas-resources.html](http://www.networkerstec.com/christmas-resources.html)