



**December 13/14**  
**Considering What's Most Important**

**John 3:16-21 (Message)**

“This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. 17God didn’t go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. 18Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person’s failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to him.

19”This is the crisis we’re in: God-light streamed into the world, but men and women everywhere ran for the darkness. They went for the darkness because they were not really interested in pleasing God. 20Everyone who makes a practice of doing evil, addicted to denial and illusion, hates God-light and won’t come near it, fearing a painful exposure. 21But anyone working and living in truth and reality welcomes God-light so the work can be seen for the God-work it is.”

**Matthew 1:18-25 (NIV)**

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. 19Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20But 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. 21She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

22All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23”The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel!”--which means, “God with us.”

24When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

### **Matthew 8:23-27 (NIV)**

Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup>Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. <sup>25</sup>The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

<sup>26</sup>He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

<sup>27</sup>The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

### **Matthew 14:22-33 (NIV)**

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>23</sup>After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, <sup>24</sup>but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

<sup>25</sup>During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. <sup>26</sup>When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

<sup>27</sup>But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

<sup>28</sup>"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

<sup>29</sup>"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. <sup>30</sup>But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

<sup>31</sup>Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

<sup>32</sup>And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. <sup>33</sup>Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."