

The background of the image is a photograph of a calm lake at sunset. The sky is filled with soft, orange and pink clouds. In the distance, a dark silhouette of trees lines the shore. The water in the foreground is dark and reflects the colors of the sky.

Into the Deep: The Joseph Standard

A 5-Day Devotional Guide



Day 1: The Lost Art of the Pause

“But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream...” (Matthew 1:20)

The Thought: We live in a "headline society." We see a three-second clip or read a single sentence on social media, and we instantly form a rock-solid opinion. We react before we think.

Imagine if Joseph had done that. He finds out Mary is pregnant. The "headline" is: Betrothed Virgin Betrays Fiancé. If Joseph had reacted instantly out of hurt and anger, the story ends in tragedy. But he didn't. He stopped. He "considered these things." He quieted his heart long enough to let God speak.

God gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason. Often, we miss God's voice simply because we are too busy reacting to the world's noise.

The Challenge: Today, before you respond to a text, a difficult email, or a frustrating situation with your spouse or kids—stop. Count to ten. "Consider" the situation rather than reacting to it. Give God a moment to speak.

Prayer: Father, slow me down. Help me to be quick to listen and slow to speak. Silence the noise of my own emotions so I can hear Your direction. Amen.



Day 2: Grace Over Law

“...her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.” (Matthew 1:19)

The Thought: Under the law of his day (Deuteronomy 22), Joseph would have been fully justified to have Mary stoned. He was the wronged party. He had the "right" to be angry, to blast her publicly, to seek revenge.

How many of us, when we are wronged, immediately look for the nuclear option? We want everyone to know what that person did to us. But Joseph chose the "Option A" of grace rather than the "Option B" of law. He sought to protect the reputation of the one who (he thought) had hurt him.

That is what "Into the Deep" looks like. It looks like loving your neighbor even when you are justified in condemning them.

The Challenge: Is there someone in your life who has wronged you? Instead of "blasting" them (even if just in your own mind), pray for their best interest today.

Prayer: Lord, You showed me grace when I deserved judgment. Help me to extend that same grace to others. Let me be a person who covers shame rather than exposing it. Amen.



Day 3: Input vs. Output

“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matthew 12:34)

The Thought: We used a simple math illustration this week: Input determines Output. If you eat pizza, you don't throw up steak. If you fill your mind with anger, filth, and worldly headlines, Jesus isn't going to come out of your mouth when you get squeezed.

We often wonder why we aren't growing spiritually, why we can't stop using certain language, or why we are so anxious. The answer is usually in our input. If the input doesn't change, the output cannot change. You cannot binge-watch the world and expect to produce the fruit of the Spirit.

The Challenge: Do an "Input Audit." Look at the music you listen to, the shows you watch, and the social media you scroll through. Replace 15 minutes of "world input" with "Word input" today.

Prayer: God, create in me a clean heart. Help me to guard my eyes and ears. Let Your Word be the primary voice in my life so that my life reflects You. Amen.



Day 4: The Front Porch Life

“Go therefore and make disciples...” (Matthew 28:19)

The Thought: We used to be a "front porch society." Neighbors knew neighbors because they sat outside, shared sugar, and did life together. Now, we retreat behind 8-foot privacy fences and garage doors that close the second we pull in.

Evangelism isn't about memorizing a theological dissertation to win an argument. It's about being on the "front porch." It's asking, "How was your day?" and actually caring about the answer. It's a dinner table conversation where God eventually shows up because He is already in your heart. You can't love your neighbor if you don't know your neighbor.

The Challenge: Learn the name of one neighbor you don't know, or reach out to a friend you haven't spoken to in a while. Don't preach at them; just ask them how they are really doing.

Prayer: Father, break down the fences I've built around my life. Give me the courage to open my home and my heart to the people You've placed right next door. Amen.



Day 5: You Have Your Orders

“When Joseph woke from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.” (Matthew 1:24)

The Thought: Joseph had a dream, and he obeyed. Many of us are sitting around saying, "If God would just give me a burning bush, or a dream, or write it in the sky, I would obey Him!"

Here is the hard truth: He already has. You have an entire book (the Bible) filled with commands God has already given you.

Love God. Love your neighbor. Make disciples. Care for the poor.

We don't need a new revelation; we need obedience to the old one. We are waiting on a feeling, and God is waiting on our action. If you want to go "Into the Deep," stop asking God what His will is for your life and start doing the things He has already told you to do.

The Challenge: Pick one clear command of Scripture today (Encourage someone, give generously, pray for an enemy) and do it. Don't feel it—do it.

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for waiting on the sidelines. You have spoken, and I have heard. Give me the strength to be a "doer" of the Word and not just a hearer. I'm ready to dive in. Amen.