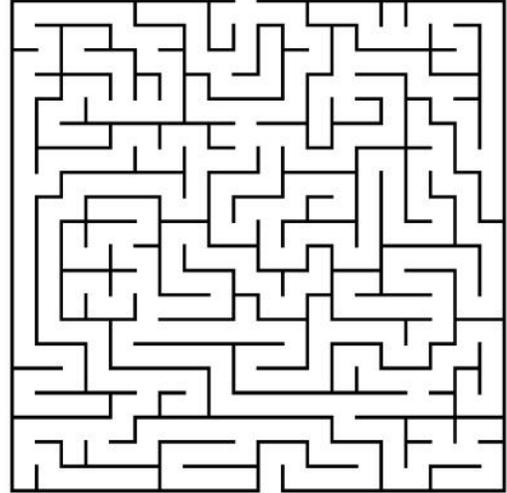


### Doing a Maze...

Mazes come in various forms:

- Paper and pencil



1

### Doing a Maze...

Mazes come in various forms:

- Paper and pencil
- Corn maze

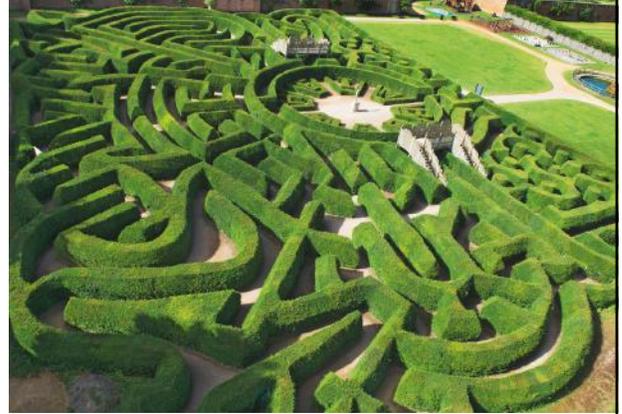


2

## Doing a Maze...

Mazes come in various forms:

- Paper and pencil
- Corn maze
- Garden maze



What makes a maze a bad maze?

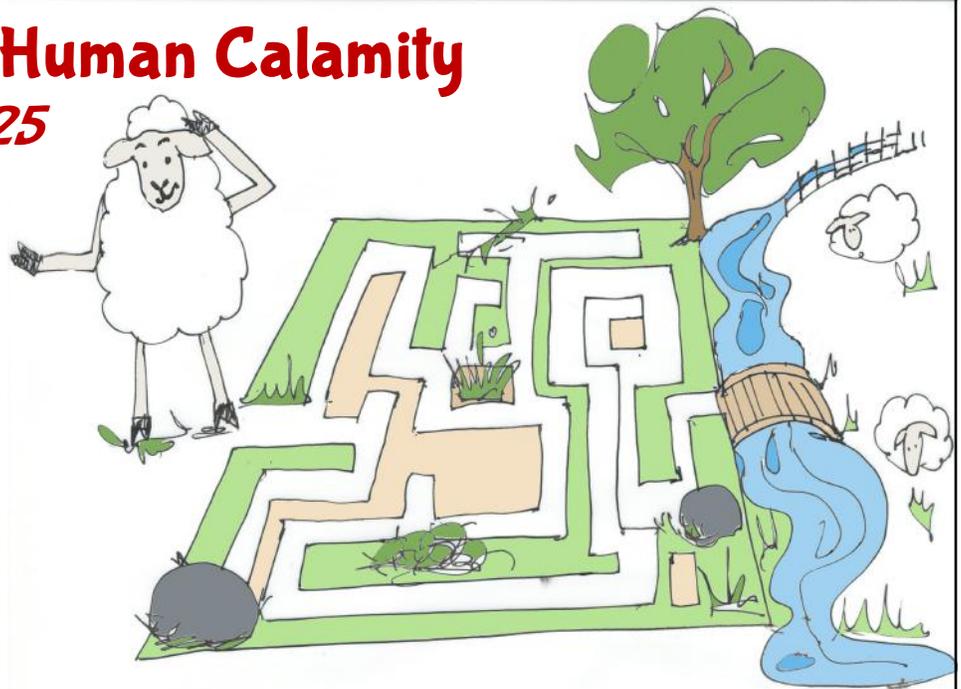
Where might life feel like a bad maze for you today?

- Will you place that before God this morning?
- We ask God for His merciful help

3

## Solving the Human Calamity

*Matthew 1:18–25*



[bib.ly/Mat1.NIV](https://bib.ly/Mat1.NIV)  
[tiny.cc/cmchandouts](https://tiny.cc/cmchandouts)

4

## The birth of Jesus from another perspective...

We've been looking from Mary's family's perspective

Now from Joseph's perspective (the Gospel of Matthew)

5

### *Matthew 1:18-19*

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

**Joseph's options:**

- 1) ~~Marry Mary: break the law~~
- 2) Divorce her publicly: follow expectations & save his honor
- 3) Divorce her privately: follow the law & save Mary's honor by damaging his own

6

*Matthew 1:18-25*

**18-19:** Joseph's hard and good choice:  
save Mary's honor by giving up his own

- A great and hard choice: righteous **and** merciful
  - History is full of people who did one or the other but not both
  - Joseph's plan was the best in an impossible situation
- Yet it wasn't God's plan
  - Joseph was the means by which Jesus would "sit on David's throne" (the son of David)

20-23: • What will happen?

24-25:

7

**Boldly, with confidence** *Matthew 1:20-23*

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

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him **Immanuel**" (which means **"God with us"**).

8

*Matthew 1:18-25*

18-19: Joseph's hard and good choice:  
save Mary's honor by giving up his own

**21-23: God revealed His plan and called Joseph to join it**

- God chose to have Joseph wrestle with what to do when the path wasn't clear to him
  - God wants us to grow, not merely do the right thing
- God's plan
  - Jesus will save people from our sins (**our** mess)
  - Jesus is "God with us"

24-25:

9

*Matthew 1:24-25*

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

10

*Matthew 1:18-25*

18-19: Joseph's hard and good choice:

save Mary's honor by giving up his own

21-23: God revealed His plan and called Joseph to join it

**24-25: Joseph reversed course in faith-filled obedience**

- There is no record of Joseph requesting proof or a sign or explanation
  - Simply: he got up and obeyed
  - ...again and again and again!

11

**The Big Idea**

**and is**  
**God was steering the course of human history**  
**through individuals and nations**  
**to bring about salvation through the Son of God made flesh**  
**for all who will trust in Him**

12

**How we want life to work out...**

**We pray that God will make our lives look like this!**



13

**What it sometimes looks like to us...**

**And we wonder why God has let us down...**



14

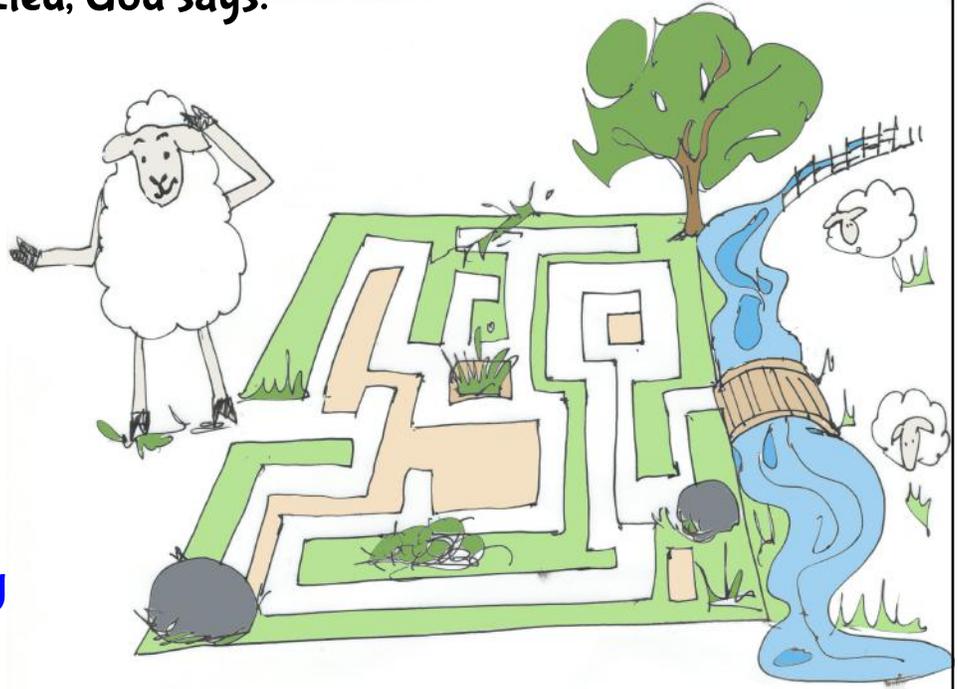
When we are puzzled, God says:

“Will you trust me  
and follow  
as I lead?”

God, our Good  
Shepherd, says:

**I** know the plans  
I have for you...”

“Do not be afraid  
to follow” **Boldly**



15

And here is the plan:

In this world,  
we will have trouble

But **be confident!!**

Jesus **has done**  
the work of salvation

Jesus **is doing**  
the work of salvation

God **is with us**  
until we are with Him



16

### The Big Idea

**God is steering the course of human history  
through individuals and nations  
to bring about salvation through the Son of God made flesh  
for all who will trust in Him**

**The plan was a mystery to Joseph! and to us as well  
God guided when necessary to make it all work out  
and He will guide us as well → often “just in time”**

- **Jesus is the God who saves us from our sins (our mess)**
- **Jesus is God with us**

17

### Application

**Rejoice: Through Jesus, God saves and God is with us!**

- Our lives will **always** have mystery
- Our lives will **always** include trouble
- Yet God knows the His good plan, and He is working all things together for the good of those who trust Him in the darkness
- So trust and follow with boldness and confidence
- Because...
  - Jesus is the One who saves
  - And Jesus is God with us

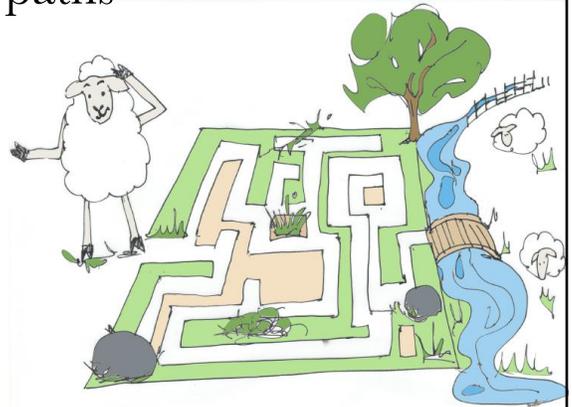
18

## The Big Idea

**God is steering the course of human history  
through individuals and nations  
to bring about salvation through the Son of God made flesh  
for all who will trust in Him**

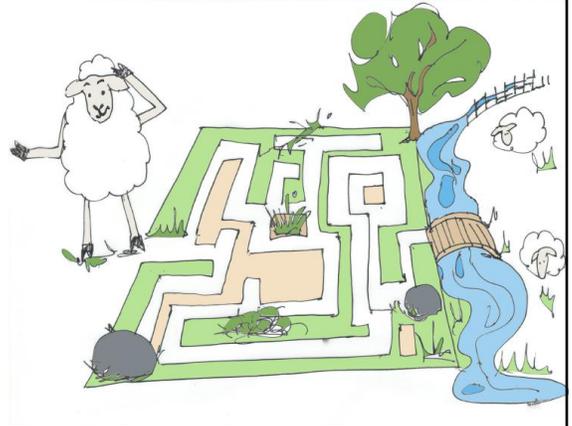
19

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.



20

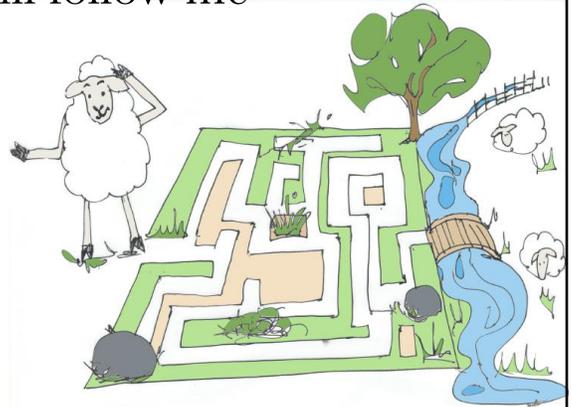
Even though I walk  
 through the darkest valley,  
 I will fear no evil,  
 for you are with me;  
 your rod and your staff,  
 they comfort me.



21

You prepare a table before me  
 in the presence of my enemies.  
 You anoint my head with oil;  
 my cup overflows.  
 Surely your goodness and love will follow me  
 all the days of my life,  
 and I will dwell  
 in the house of the Lord  
 forever.

## **Psalm 23**



22