



Sermon Notes: November 29, 2015

Faith to Receive God's Miracle

1 of 5 from the teaching series "The Christmas Miracle"
Luke 1:26-52 • Pastor Paul Bradford

Luke 1:26-52

The Birth of Jesus Foretold – ²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." ³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail." ³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth – ³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

Mary's Song – ⁴⁶ And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me — holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. ⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

1) Never underestimate God's grace to work in ordinary people.

- Truth: God loves to work in ordinary people and ordinary circumstances to do extraordinary things.
- Some have elevated Mary to almost divine status, as someone who was different in every way from the typical person. But the point of the entire narrative is just the opposite - God chose the most humble, ordinary girl to become the vessel to carry and give birth to Emmanuel.

2) Never underestimate God's mercy to work in imperfect people.

- Truth: God washes us deeply so that he can use us greatly.
- Some think that Mary had to be sinless to carry the sinless one. Though she was a godly young woman, she was not perfect - she was human. The miracle is that God chose to enter our darkness to bring light. (*Isaiah 9:2, 1 Corinthians 6:11*)

3) Never hesitate to say "Yes" to the miracle God has for your life.

- Truth: God works in people so that he can work through people in order to transform people.

- When the angel came to Mary and told her she would conceive a son by the Holy Spirit, she said “yes” and opened herself in faith to that miracle.
- God wants to from Christ IN us. (*Galatians 4:19*)
- God wants to reveal his glory THROUGH us. (*2 Corinthians 4:7*)
- God is glorified when he works through ordinary, imperfect people.

OUR RESPONSE

Expect and welcome God’s miraculous, gracious work in and through ordinary, imperfect you.