

Intrude (Luke's Epiphany)

Luke 1:26-38

Birth of Jesus Foretold

Sunday Class (12/15/24)

Read Luke 1:26-38

The angel's announcement came to Mary in Nazareth, in the region of Galilee. Read John 1:46 and John 7:41, to get a sense of how Galilee was generally disrespected.

Why do you suppose God chose a young woman in such a remote, non-prestigious location?

The angel calls Mary, "O favored one."

By whom is Mary favored? Peers, neighbors, nation? Or God?

Do you think that Mary is favored because of who she is? What she's done? What she brings to the table? Or because of God's action? God's attitude toward her? God's presence with her? Why?

The angel goes on to speak of the greatness of the child to come.

Based on the angel's words, is there any doubt that Mary's child is truly God?

Do you think Mary believed this? Do you truly believe this?

Do you think Mary fully understood at this time what it meant for her future baby Jesus to be Son of God?

Do you think all of Luke's readers knew what it meant?

In v. 34, is Mary expressing doubt? Disbelief? Or just struggling to comprehend?

The angel then gives a sign to help Mary recognize what God is doing in these extraordinary events. He mentions that her elderly relative Elizabeth will bear a child, too.

How is this comment helpful, or encouraging, to Mary?

Which do you think was hardest for Mary to comprehend? The fact that she was favored by God, or the fact that she was pregnant before marriage?

Which do you think was the greater mystery for Mary, as she listened to the angel and pondered his words? Who her child was to be, or how all of this fit into God's plan?

Read again v. 38.

What does Mary mean by saying, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord?" How does she see her relationship with God?

In saying, "Let it be to me according to your word," what risks was Mary taking on?

What can we learn from God's choice of Mary, about how God measures greatness?

Do you agree or disagree with this comment? "God can do great things through those, like Mary, who entrust the journey with him to his care."

What can modern-day Christians like us learn from Mary's response to the angel's message?

Have you ever said, or thought to yourself, something like this? "I'm going to refrain from serving because I don't feel qualified, capable."

Take some time to reflect on what one wise Christian wrote, inspired by Mary's response: "Behind the availability to service is an attitude that trusts God for direction and enablement."

Do you think that God wants for that attitude to develop in you? Is God working to bring about that attitude in you?

The angel told Mary that the Lord is with her (v. 28), and the Bible tells us repeatedly that God is always with us.

How is the Lord's presence an encouragement for us, in responding to God's call to service?

- *God can use even me, despite my flaws*
- *Serving him will bring me joy and fulfillment*
- *God will guide me each step of the way*
- *He will carry me through my time of struggle*
- *He has the power to carry out his plan*

