



OPENING COMMENT

Miracles are challenging in our day. On the one hand, our culture relentlessly drives home the presuppositions of a naturalistic worldview, which undermines our conviction that God can do anything He pleases. On the other hand, we long so deeply to see God move in miraculous ways, but struggle to believe ourselves worthy of His divine intervention, or Him too far removed to care or interject. Yet, when we look closely at God's miraculous intervention in Mary's life it is both more miraculous than we could possibly imagine and costlier than we care to admit.

READ THE TEXT: Luke 1:5-25

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called



barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. Compare and contrast the encounter with the Angel that Zechariah had in the previous section with the encounter Mary has. What are the significant differences and similarities? Why are they important?
2. In verse 34 Mary asks the angel how this prophecy will come to pass. It is a very similar question to what Zechariah asks previously. What is the main difference? (vs. 38)
3. What are the descriptors used of Mary’s future son?
4. Why does Luke include the detail about Mary’s virginity (Literally “I have not known a man)?

APPLYING THE TEXT

1. The Old Testament has several accounts of barren women becoming pregnant by the miraculous work of God, but never has there be a circumstance where one who is a virgin has. This indicates God doing a new thing and requires the reader to be attentive to the wonder of this reality. In what ways have we lost the wonder of Christmas?
2. This text makes clear that Jesus will be king. Not just any king, but a king who will reign forever. How then should we approach the rest of the testimony and teaching of Jesus? How is this difficult? Where have we been successful?
3. The pronouncement of the angel put Mary in a tough spot. She would be a social outcast and regarded as a sinner because of her unexplained pregnancy, yet she humbly accepts the direction from the angel. How does this challenge our disposition toward God’s commands and path for our lives?
4. How might we cultivate a more Mary like attitude towards the commands and purposes of God?

CONCLUSION

God is in the midst of fulfilling his promises. In Luke 1 we see God bringing to fruition the promises of the Old covenant in an unexpected and surprising manner. The call on Mary was to endure the scorn of her peers to usher in a new age of redemption. This was not what the people expected for their messianic hopes. This is not what they prayed for, hoped for, longed for. Yet Mary, in her humility, accepted the call with grace. In the same manner, we who long for God to work in wonderful and miraculous ways ought to anticipate God working in unexpected and sometimes costly ways. He is not done. His promises are new every morning and we anticipate, like the people of Israel, a time when he will come again. In the meantime, we should be prepared to experience his breathtaking miracles no matter the social cost they may have.

SHARE & PRAY



LIFE GROUP VISION:

The goal to meeting together around the word of God is three-fold. First, we want to more clearly understand what God is saying to us through his Word and apply it to our own hearts and minds. Secondly, we want to build a loving community with each other to disciple one another toward maturity in Christ. Thirdly, we desire each of us, as ambassadors of Christ, to look outwards to our community and ask how we can bring the truth of the gospel to bear on those whom God has placed in our lives.

