

Sermon Overview**Title:** Unwrapping the Gift of Christmas**Text:** Luke 1:13, 18, 20, 26–27, 34, 37–38; Luke 2:1, 7; Matthew 1:19**Theme:** We are not here to admire the wrapping of Christmas. We are here to unwrap the gift.**I. The Backdrop: God Breaks the Silence (Luke 1:13–20)**

- A. 400 years of heaven’s silence. No prophets, no visions, no words. Silence in Scripture never means God is absent.
- B. Zechariah and Elizabeth: faithful, obedient, and barren. Years of prayer met with silence.
- C. Heaven interrupts. “Your prayer has been heard and your wife Elizabeth will bear a son” (Luke 1:13).
- D. Zechariah’s unbelief vs. coming faith. Because he doubted, he was silenced for nine months. His son John would become the forerunner of the Messiah.
Key contrast: Zechariah asks “How can this be?” (questioning God’s ability). Mary asks “How will this be?” (trusting God’s power).

II. Mary’s Surrender: All In (Luke 1:26–38)

- E. Gabriel sent to Nazareth, an overlooked town known more for questions than credibility (Luke 1:26–27).
- F. Mary’s response: “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).
- G. Two words describe Mary: All in. She surrendered her body, her reputation, and her future.
- H. Echo of Romans 12: “Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, for this is your reasonable act of worship.”
- I. Mary’s declaration before Bethlehem: “Nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:37).

III. Joseph’s Obedience: Actions Over Words (Matthew 1:19–25)

- J. Joseph hears the news secondhand. His initial response: divorce her quietly.
- K. Gabriel speaks in a dream: “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife.”
- L. Joseph’s response: No debate, no discussion, no questions. Just obedience. No recorded words in all of Scripture.
- M. Mary surrendered her body. Joseph surrendered his reputation. Both are examples of servant faithfulness.

IV. The Journey to Bethlehem: God in the Details (Luke 2:1–7)

- N. Caesar Augustus decrees a census. Rome thinks it is counting people. God is positioning prophecy.
- O. Without the census, Jesus is born in Nazareth, not Bethlehem. But Micah 5:2 says the ruler will come from Bethlehem.
- P. **Application: When life feels frustrating, inconvenient, or not what you expected, God is still working in the details to fulfill His promise for you.**
- Q. No room at the inn. Jesus born in a manger, in obscurity, with no fanfare. “There was no place for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7).

V. The Manger Makes Room: God Includes Everyone**A. The Shepherds (Luke 2:8–20)**

1. Not ordinary shepherds. These were the ones raising sheep to be sacrificed in the temple for the forgiveness of sin.
2. Considered unclean, untrustworthy, unable to testify in a court of law.
3. The angel's announcement: "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people." God makes room for all people.
4. The sign of swaddling cloths. These were the same strips of linen used to protect sacrificial lambs from bruising so they would be presentable as a perfect sacrifice. The sign communicated: this is the Lamb of God.

B. The Wise Men (Matthew 2:1–12)

5. Persian astrologers from the days of Daniel, holding on to a prophecy from Numbers 24:17 for hundreds of years: "A star shall come out of Jacob."
6. Different backgrounds, same hunger. They followed the star to Jesus and fell down and worshiped Him.
7. Three gifts, all intentional. Gold (for a king). Frankincense (for a priest). Myrrh (for death and sacrifice). The gospel was declared through the gifts before a sermon, before a miracle, before a cross.

VI. Mary's Pondering: She Knew (Luke 2:19)

- R. "Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart." She was not surprised. She was not hoping. She was declaring.
- S. She knew: this child is Savior, Messiah, Emmanuel. Fully human. Fully God. Without sin.
- T. **Key verse on the mirror: "For nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).**

VII. Application: Will You Unwrap the Gift?

- U. Your past is not stronger than the grace of God.
- V. Your failure is not final.
- W. Your marriage is not beyond repair. Your heart is not too far gone. Your sin is not too deep for God to cover.
- X. God does His best work when things seem impossible. He chose a virgin womb. A forgotten town. A manger. Shepherds. Wise men from the east. Outsiders and insiders and seekers.
- Y. Illustration: The wrapping vs. the gift. When children play with the box instead of the present, that is religion. Do not hold the box. Say yes to the gift. His name is Jesus.