

Tis the Season for Compassion: A Compassionate People

December 13, 2020

Luke 1:26-38 English Standard Version (ESV)

26 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.

Discussion/Journal Questions

Read Luke 1:26-38. Spend some time imagining this scene in your mind. Which aspect of the scene stands out most in your mind? Why?

Why do you think Mary was so quick to submit to God's will? How would you have handled the situation?

In the sermon, John said, "As followers of Jesus we must be in the habit of pondering things in our heart. Why? Because if we learn anything from the life of Mary, we learn that we do not belong to ourselves." What is your initial reaction to those words? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Why do you think this idea is hard for many people to accept?

Read 1 Peter 1:18-20. In your own words, what is Peter saying here?

How does freedom to do whatever we want end up in slavery? How does serving God end up in freedom?

Read Romans 6:22-23. What does it mean to serve God?

In the sermon, John said that in order to surrender ourselves to God's will you must learn to "make decisions against yourself." What does he mean by this? Can you think of some examples?

In what areas can your group help you surrender to God's will?

Who are you praying for to accept Jesus, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?

Who are you currently discipling, and what specifically did you do this week to help them know, love, and follow Jesus?

Who are you considering for future discipleship relationships, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?