

Sermon Outline - Sun, Dec 12, 2021- Are You Ready to Be a Transformative Gift?
John 1:26-38

Overview: This week was supposed to be the overview for the month, but during yesterday's retreat it was clear that the second sermon in this message was the one that many of us need to hear today. So while this month is about Transformative Giving – last week we focused on the question – Are you Ready to Receive A Transformative Gift? This week we lean into the question – Are You Ready to Be a Transformative Gift?

Exegesis –

- Last week we learned about Gabriel going to Zechariah to tell him that he would have a son
- This week we look at Gabriel's visit to Mary in Luke 1:26-38 and see how she responds
- Zachariah should have been overjoyed to parent
- Remember that Mary is a teenager – she is not yet married and at the beginning of her life rather than in late age
- Mary's posture was different –
 - He was terrified and she was perplexed and pondered
 - Like Zachariah she does have a few questions – how is this going to work
 - But with a bit of explanation her response is clear – I'm Down
- While this is an honor in terms of her relationship with God, Mary was not dumb – it couldn't have taken her long to realize it was going to cause her social drama

Her Posture –

- It was about God and less about her
 - Mary wasn't caught up in her life and all the plans that might be upended by this call
- It was about God and less about the husband
 - There was a real risk that Joseph would leave her. And if you think being a single parent is hard now – it was dangerous back then.
- It was about God and less about the haters
 - Folks spread rumors. One was that Jesus was the product of rape by a soldier. Rape was a very real issue particularly for a young Jewish girl under Roman occupation.

Her Response –

- Here Am I - I am present and in the moment
- the servant of the Lord – I am ready to be used
- let it be with me according to your word – I'm down with your plan whatever

Questions

1. What fears block you from being available to be used by God? How can you get so excited about God's plan that your excitement overwhelms or displaces your fear and anxiety?
2. What people or positions are so important to you that they make you unwilling to follow God's plan for your life?
3. In this coming week, how can you lean into the story of Mary to begin gaining the courage and sense of possibility that is evident in this teenage girl from Nazareth?