

Luke 1:26-31

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin betrothed^[a] 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!"^[b] 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.

"God help me to keep saying, 'Yes.'" Mary said, "Yes." She called it the scariest "Yes" of her life. Imagine what Mary felt some 2000 years ago. Here's a young lady from a small town called Nazareth. A quiet...unassuming...nothing-really-special kind of town...common. Well, on the outside looking in...maybe that's what someone would have said about Mary. Mary, just common...a Jewish girl, oh...yes...a GIRL. Scholars tell us there is no question that she would have been a teenager...most likely in her mid-to-late teens. And an angel shows up.

Have you ever seen an angel? Me neither. I doubt Mary had ever seen one either. The angel spoke of things she couldn't comprehend. She would give birth to the Son of God. Try to fathom that...if you are a poor, peasant girl from the district of Galilee...living in a small town...nowhere special...and you have no pedigree...no royalty...no claim to fame. **"Me?" "You're talking to me?"** You know Mary had to think that. Otherwise the angel would have never come to her. If she would have said, "It's about time...I've been waiting for God to recognize, ME!" No...Mary was humble...she was gracious, kind...faithful. And that's why Gabriel came to her, and that's Mary said, "Yes," to the Lord...for she saw herself as a servant. See it with me now...

Luke 1:31-38

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?"^[d] 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^[e] 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^[f] of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

You know, when it comes to Mary...people tend to go to one of two extremes. They either magnify her, like they do in the Roman Catholic Church, so much so, that Jesus takes second place and must bow to her, or people are apt to almost ignore her totally and fail to give her the credit she deserves as the hand-chosen servant of God that she was. In Luke 1:43, her close relative Elizabeth called her: "the mother of my Lord." Elizabeth recognized that Mary was carrying in her womb the Son of God and that dear friends is astounding! This teenage girl would give birth to the Son of God.

But here's the problem she's going to be pregnant, but she's not married. Hmm... That's not good in first century Nazareth. She's going to begin to show and she and Joseph aren't married. You

say, "Why do they call them 'husband and wife' in Scripture?" Well, because their idea of betrothal is much different than our idea of engagement today. You see, today we would say they were engaged, but in that day...betrothal was a binding contract...much like marriage...except for two things...#1 you didn't live together and #2 you didn't come together physically, until you were married. It's much different today isn't it? But, that's God's design...because that's His Word.

So, you see, when Mary said "Yes to God," when she said, "Let it be to me according to your word..." she was saying, "yes" to public ridicule, embarrassment and shame. She could have been killed...did you know that? Joseph, according to the Law, could have had her stoned for being unfaithful to her. But, he chose to believe... Gabriel appeared to Him, just as Gabriel appeared to Mary and he believed. Joseph said, Yes too.

But, think about this...it's seldom discussed...but, Mary said "yes" to even potentially being ostracized by her family. Have you thought about Mary's family? There's no indication that they kicked her out... If they had kicked her out...she would have likely been destitute. Teenage girls didn't get jobs in that day. She would have been left homeless and helpless. But, you know what I think...THEY BELIEVED HER. I believe her mom and dad believed what Mary told them. And to protect her they sent her to see Elizabeth in Judah for three months (Luke 1:39). I believe this gave time for things to settle down.

But she would eventually have to return to Nazareth, and you can imagine the searing pain of how MANY looked at her and gossiped. Mary would deal with this for the rest of her life because there would be some who would never let her past go.

Indeed, obeying the Lord is often walking down a path that's scary and filled with ridicule. The Lord wants us to trust Him and have faith in Him, but that often means doing things that go against common sense or what seems reasonable to the world. Mary had to trust her future to the Lord and not anyone else. Are you trusting the Lord tonight? What is He asking you to do? What is it that requires faith from you tonight? Will you say YES?

Indeed, there WOULD BE more yeses required of Mary in her life... But, Mary exhibited faith and trust in her Son.... Mary would have to believe in Jesus in order to go to heaven herself. She didn't get a free pass. And I believe she believed that her Son could do anything and she exhibited this faith...this belief in Cana at wedding.

Jesus has just selected His apostles and He has gone to Cana from Nazareth to a wedding...just a 6 mile walk to the north of Nazareth, just 12 miles west of the Sea of Galilee.

John 2:1-5

¹On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. ³When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

"Do whatever he tells you." What does that say to you? It says to me that she trusted in her Son. She believed He could do anything. She said, "Do what He tells you to do?" That advice from Mary still works well today. WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU TO DO, DO IT! Will you? Are you?

Eventually Mary would end up at the cross with John.



She would hear her Son say, “Woman, Momma...you’ve got a new son to take care of you.” Jesus said, “Woman behold your son, John (Son) behold your mother.” Can you imagine the pain Mary felt at the cross...her Yes had led to a cross! I’m certain that’s not what she had expected.

You know, when Jesus was eight days old,



Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to have Him circumcised. They brought two doves...just as the Law required. Joseph and Mary were devout in their faith. How cool is that for a young couple. Are you a young couple here tonight devout...sold out in your faith to Jesus? We know there was there named Simeon...



an old man, a man who had been granted by God the privilege of seeing the Messiah, the Savior of the world, before he died. And Luke records this scene for us...

Luke 2:34-35

³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

Simeon prophesied Mary’s pain... “And a sword will pierce your own soul...” That piercing was at Calvary:



Imagine the pain. But, Thanks be to God, Mary said, “Yes.”

Do you know who else had to say, “Yes?” God. God said Yes to send His Son to this earth and God said Yes...to turning His back on His Son in His greatest time of need. Our Heavenly Father knows what Mary felt when she said Yes...because He said Yes...to pain and suffering and so did Jesus...

Jesus said Yes...where? In the Garden of Gethsemane...



Sweating drops of blood, He said, “Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.” Jesus said Yes...because of you! He saw you! He totally surrendered to His Father. He gave up His life for you... Will you give up your life for Him? Jesus said, “

Luke 9:24

²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

Mary lost her life...to gain it...from the time she was teenager (teenagers, are you listening) she was so committed to God as a teenager, that she said “yes.” And a yes to God means one thing and thing only: total surrender, total obedience and it still means that today, for you and for me.

At the end of the monologue...the actress on the stage said, God help me to keep saying yes. I love that line...but, that line scares me... Because the yeses to God can be scary...but listen, with Jesus...we can **rest in the yes**...

We can do what He’s telling us to do, even tonight. It might be for you sitting her tonight...you need to say yes...to stop lying...or to stop cussing...it might be to say yes to going to that person who hurt you terribly or you hurt them...and making it right. It might be saying yes...and swallowing your pride. It might be yes to stop getting ahead of God in that relationship...and you stop having intimacy that’s meant for marriage...outside of marriage. Maybe it’s time to act like Joseph and Mary and withhold until marriage. Maybe for you tonight, you need to say yes...and stop cheating, stop rationalizing your sin, stop lying to yourself.

Mary said, Yes. She said, “Let it be to me according to your word.” May we too, say YES. Bow with me, please.
