

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia @10:10 Message...

Responding to the Greatest Gift

With Ryan Dawson, Lead Pastor
Christmas Eve, December 24, 2019



How will you respond to the gift of Christmas?

Luke 1:26-37 (NLT) In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. ²⁸ Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favoured woman! The Lord is with you!" ²⁹ Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favour with God! ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" ³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." ³⁵ The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. ³⁷ For the word of God will never fail."

- Respond Thoughtfully.

- Respond in Wonder.

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Luke 1:47-51 "Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.

⁴⁷ How my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!

⁴⁸ For he took notice of his lowly servant girl,
and from now on all generations will call me blessed.

⁴⁹ For the Mighty One is holy,
and he has done great things for me.

⁵⁰ He shows mercy from generation to generation to all who fear him.

⁵¹ His mighty arm has done tremendous things!

- Respond in Willing Surrender.

Luke 1:38 Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

Big Idea: Respond to the gift of Jesus by opening your heart to His presence.



**Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
live out our identity as a
Family of Servants on Mission.**

To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

**Responding to the Greatest Gift
#5 of 5 - Dec. 24, 2019**

1) Take some time to discuss how your IC has been and will live out the Kingdom of Jesus together.

- In what ways have we been living like family recently? How will we live out our family identity in the coming week?
- How have we lived as servants to one another or to our world this past week? What needs or opportunities to serve is God asking us to lean into?
- How have we lived on mission where we live, work, play, or went this past week? Who do we know that needs to hear the good news of Jesus?

2) How did the message resonate with you? What questions or comments did it raise for you?

3) Read Luke 1:26-37. What do you find surprising about Mary's encounter with the angel? Describe in your own words why Mary was "confused and disturbed." Has God ever asked you to do something that you found very confusing?

4) How would you describe the doubts you have about God and Jesus? Do your doubts drive you towards God or away from God? Explain. What is one question you have that if answered would really help you take a step towards Jesus?

5) Read Luke 1:46-55. How does Mary respond with wonder at the reality of Jesus? In what ways can you identify with Mary? In what ways do you need to marvel at Christ's birth?

6) Read Luke 1:38. How does Mary respond to this shocking news that she will carry and give birth to Jesus, God's Son? How does Mary's response challenge and encourage us in our faith journey. How does Mary's response mirror that of Jesus as He approached the cross?

7) In what way is God asking you to open your heart to His presence today? What action step do you need to take?



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