

Title: Advent 2025: Unexpected People

Scripture: Luke 1:26–38 - Luke 2:8–20 - Luke 5:1–11 - Acts 4:13 - 1 Corinthians 1:26–31

Main Idea: The measure of usefulness in God's kingdom is not status or ability. It is surrender.

1. God chooses unexpected people for his story

Explanation: We know the Advent story so well that the characters can feel normal. Yet Mary was an unknown young woman from Nazareth. The shepherds were socially insignificant and mistrusted. Peter and the other disciples were blue collar fishermen who called themselves sinners. From Abraham and Moses to David and Mary, God keeps choosing the people no one else would pick. He does this so that when his plan unfolds, it is clear that the story is about him, not about impressive people.

Truth: God delights to use ordinary people so that his power and grace stand out, not their status or credentials.

2. The real qualification is surrender, not status or ability

Explanation: Mary does not understand how it will all work, yet she says, I am the Lord's servant. The shepherds hear the announcement and hurry off, then start sharing what they have seen even without formal training. Peter sees the miracle, confesses he is a sinful man, yet still leaves everything to follow Jesus. Later in Acts, the leaders are astonished that unschooled, ordinary men speak with such courage, and they recognize that these men had been with Jesus.

Truth: In Scripture, God works through people who say yes before they have all the details. Availability matters more than ability.

3. The greatest barrier is our unwillingness to be used

Explanation: The story of Scripture shows that God wants to work through his people, not just around them. The enemy therefore works hard to convince believers that only professional or perfect Christians can make an impact. Yet Paul reminds the church in Corinth that not many were wise, influential, or of noble birth when God called them. God chose the foolish, weak, and lowly so that no one may boast before him and so that the one who boasts will boast in the Lord.

Truth: If a believer never experiences God using them, the deepest issue is usually not lack of gifting but lack of surrender.

Reflection

Advent is the story of God using unexpected people to bring salvation into the world, and the history of the church continues that story. God has always worked through ordinary men and women who simply said yes. Where might he be inviting you to step into his story, not because you feel impressive, but because you belong to an impressive Savior.

Devotion One Scripture: Luke 1:38 “Mary said, I am the Lord’s servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.”

Reflection

Mary did not have clarity, answers, or a plan. She had uncertainties about her future, her reputation, and her relationships. Yet her posture before God was simple and profound. She surrendered. We often imagine that God uses people who are gifted, experienced, or spiritually mature. The Advent story reminds us that God looks first for a willing heart. Mary teaches us that usefulness begins with surrender, not understanding.

Challenge

Where in your life are you waiting for more clarity before obeying what God has already asked of you. Pray today for a heart like Mary. Ask God to help you say yes even before you know the full path ahead.

Devotion Two Scripture: Luke 2:16-18 “They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them.”

Reflection: The shepherds were not trusted, trained, or respected in society. They were not the people anyone would choose to receive the announcement of the Messiah. Yet heaven chose them. They responded quickly. They did not wait until they felt ready to speak. They simply shared what they had been told. God trusted them with the news of Jesus because they were willing to act on what they knew.

Challenge: What simple act of obedience has God already placed in front of you. Do not wait to feel more qualified. Follow the shepherds example. Go where God sends you and speak as God leads you.

Devotion Three Scripture: Acts 4:13 “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.”

Reflection: Peter once told Jesus to leave him because he was a sinful man. Later he denied Jesus in fear. Yet after the resurrection, God used him boldly. The leaders who opposed the disciples could not explain their courage or authority. They noticed only one thing. These men had been with Jesus. That is the consistent story of Scripture. It is not talent or status that produces spiritual impact. It is relationship with Christ.

Challenge: Ask yourself today, am I spending time with Jesus in a way that shapes my courage, my obedience, and my willingness to be used. Choose one intentional step this week that brings you closer to Christ, knowing that he works through those who walk closely with him.