

POV: A Christmas Perspective3 “The Painful Privilege”

Christmas is arguably the most widely celebrated of the world’s holidays. It involves more people and nations than any other. It is also the most misunderstood of all major holidays. Christmas honors a divine person and remembers a divine event. It does not celebrate human achievement, but divine achievement. There is nothing man-made about the real story of Christmas.

The central figure in the story of Christmas is Jesus, but Jesus hasn’t appeared yet in this story. We know the OT prophets had foretold of what (rather, Who) was to come, but to this point, there was only word of a coming Savior. The prophets were inspired to write of a future Savior, and we’ve seen that Joseph had a dream in which an angel explained Mary’s (his wife to be) pregnancy. We know Mary was Jesus’ mother, but what else do we really know about her? Why did God pick her for this role of mother of the Promised One, the Messiah, the Savior of the world? If it’s any comfort, she was more perplexed than we are curious. Or maybe you’ve never really wondered about it much. But if we are going to have real Christmas perspective, we can’t have it without looking at Mary’s perspective of what God was doing in her and what God was doing in the world.

Luke 1: 26-38 NAS

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.

28 And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

29 But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was.

30 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 name Him Jesus.

32 "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."

34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

36 "And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month.

37 "For nothing will be impossible with God."

38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bond slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

What do we know about Mary?

- We know that she was probably a young teen, but engaged.
- She seemed to be an ordinary Jewish girl from a small town.
- She was a virgin.

What do we learn about Mary?

- That she was visited by an angel (Gabriel).
- She was favored.
- The Lord was with her.
- She was confused for a bit.
- We learn about her future son.
- We learn that her son's Father was the Holy Spirit.
- We learn that she trusted the angel's words.
- That eventually, she would be the only person to witness both Jesus birth and death.

What can we learn from Mary?

- To be available to be used by God.
- To trust Him in being utilized (at some point, you will have to trust).

Bottom Line – Saying “yes” to God’s request will never end in regret.