

# Be Still

December 4, 2016

## I. Introduction: The beauty of Christmas.

- Christmas is a time of great anticipation.

## II. The burden of Christmas.

### A. *Our burdens may be magnified by the season of Christmas.*

1. Christmas magnifies our loss.
2. Christmas magnifies our loneliness.
3. Christmas magnifies our lack.
4. Christmas magnifies our limits.

**Luke 1:26-28** In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

### B. *God works through our burdens to bring us His blessings.*

1. *The greatest thing God ever did looked like the worst thing that could possibly happen.*

**Luke 1:29** Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

2. Even in the midst of joy, times of challenge may come.
  - When the external pressure is greater than our internal limits, we are prone to emotional responses.
3. Transformation comes from agitation.
  - We are troubled by too much information.
  - We are troubled by too little information.

*C. God desires to direct our hearts and minds away from our situation and on to His certainty.*

**Luke 1:30-33** But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

1. Fear does not have to control you.

- God has favor for you.
- God has a plan for you.
- God has power for you.

**Luke 1:34** “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

2. We question what we do not understand.

- Sometimes, we question ourselves.
- Sometimes, we question God.
- The challenge is not in asking the question but in receiving the answer.

*D. God can work in ways that go beyond our understanding and imagination.*

**Luke 1:35-37** The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

1. A confidence in God provides the answer to life's greatest questions.

**Luke 1:37 (ESV)** For nothing will be impossible with God.

2. Many of life's challenges come from wrong thinking.

**Luke 1:38** “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

- Wrong thinking about ourselves
  - Wrong thinking about God
3. Peace can be found for myself when I think right about myself.
- My purpose is His praise.
  - His presence is my peace.

**Luke 1:45** Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!

**Luke 1:46-55** And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”