



session 3

GOD'S BAFFLING CHRISTMAS DECISIONS



YES:

1. When we find favor in God's sight, our lives become less complicated.
2. Beyond my great grandparents, I don't know much about my genealogy.
3. God's choice of Jesus' mother was more important than the choice of the earthly father.
4. I naturally try to avoid tasks that are complex and have the possibility of disrupting my plans.

NO:

5. If an angel appeared to me and said that God had a special task for me, I would think he had stopped by the wrong house by mistake.

NOTES

READ Luke 1:26 & 27 (NRSV)

26 In the sixth month [of Elizabeth's pregnancy] the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, **27** to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

° What do we know about Mary?

∞ What does her name mean?

» How has this story been foreshadowed in the Exodus Story (see Exodus 15:22-27)?

∞ What clues do we have as to whether Mary was wealthy or poor?

» The sacrifice for Jesus' circumcision and presentation (Lk 2:21-24).

» Mary's hometown, Nazareth (Lk 1:26; 2:39,51).

READ Luke 1:28-37 (NRSV)

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

29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. **30** The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. **31** And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. **33** He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." **34** Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. **36** And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. **37** For nothing will be impossible with God."

dig deep (continued)

- How would you feel, having a child who was holy?
- What can you find from within Mary's response that might demonstrate the character that God was looking for? What do we need to do as a community to replicate that?
- What does it say about God's character that he would choose to come down as a baby, instead of a fully grown person?

READ Luke 1:38 (NRSV)

38 *Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.*

- What are all of the things that Mary was committing to?
- What does God's choice of Mary as his earthly mom tell you about the character of God?
 - ∞ If this is one of the types of people that find favor in God's sight, what does this say about God's character?

embrace life

TALK WITH GOD THIS WEEK ABOUT:

1. What am I actively doing that would be favorable in God's sight?
2. How willing am I to do the more challenging tasks of the Lord?
3. What new aspect of God's character does He want me to know?