

Advent prt 4 – Mary  
Luke 1:28-36

What would be the best gift you could get? If your parents gave it to you would you agree to a few things they asked?

Will you take care of it?

Will you share it with others whenever you can?

Every time you look at it will you remember that, as good as this gift is, God gives a greater gift – salvation.

- Something similar happened to Mary:

**Luke 1:28–30 (ESV) 28** *And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” 29* *But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. 30* *And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.*

- Favor = *Charis* in GK – it can be translated ‘full of grace.’

**The same word is used In Eph 1:6**

**Ephesians 1:6–7 (ESV) 6** *to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7* *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*

**Favored people say yes to God**

### **1. Favor is a gift of God’s Grace to the undeserving**

- This portrays Mary as a recipient, not a dispenser, of divine grace.
- She had done nothing to deserve this favor – this grace from God.
- The gift of God’s grace is God’s favor freely given to those who did nothing to earn it.

**Romans 3:23–24 (ESV) 23** *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24* *and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

- Mary could do nothing deserving to be the mother of Jesus – it was all God’s grace
- The same is true for you and me; we can do NOTHING deserving to earn God’s favor - it’s a gift to us despite us.

- Grace is not only a quality in the nature of God, it's His favor that overflows in powerful, practical helpfulness from God in your daily life where you most need it.
- That help is also called *grace* because it's free and it's undeserved.

**1 Peter 4:10–11 (ESV) 10** *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: 11 ...whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*

**2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV) 9** *But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

### Favored people say yes to God

#### 2. The appropriate response to God's grace is "Yes, Lord."

**Luke 1:37–38 (ESV) 37** *For nothing will be impossible with God."* **38** *And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

What is God preparing you to say yes to next year?

Keep doing what you're doing  
 Serve  
 Love your neighbor  
 Baptism  
 Steward your body  
 Steward your finances  
 Put a particular sin to death

- Saying yes will most likely be harder than easier –
  - She's going to be accused and suffer ridicule
  - She ends up watching her son's execution
- It won't be easy, but it will be worth it

#### What's roadblocking your obedience?

##### a. Shame game

Do you feel like you're not really good enough to serve God in anyway?

Do you feel like you've done too much wrong for Him to use you?

You're the kind of person God desires to work through

**1 Corinthians 1:27 (ESV) 27** *But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;*

- ...just like he did with the others in the genealogy – nothing impossible with God.

- **God's grace reverses our shame**

b. Blame game

- Are you bitter at God or God's people? I really don't want to say "yes" to God as many times as He has said "no" to me.
- You need His grace today –

**Hebrews 12:15 (ESV) 15** *See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;*

NIV says... See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God...

- **God's grace smothers our bitterness**

c. What if game

- What if He calls me to something I don't want to do
- What if I fail?
- What if I'm rejected?
- Fear? *"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."*

- **God's grace overpowers our fear**

d. When/then game

- When the kids are a little older
- When they are out of the house
- When I retire
- When we get on top of our finances
- When we get out of this season (busy season, sickness season, holiday season)

**2 Corinthians 9:8 (ESV) 8** *And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.*

- This is in the present tense

- **God's grace ruins our procrastination**

### **Favored people say yes to God**

- **What do I do? How do I get grace?**

**Hebrews 4:16 (ESV) 16** *Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

- When you get grace, you give a yes and your yes brings forth joyful praise.

**Luke 1:46–50 (ESV) 46** *And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.*

- My hope for you is that your saying yes brings forth joyful praise for 2024.

### QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS

1. What has God's favor/grace meant to you?
2. In light of that, what is He asking of you?
3. How will you prepare yourself to say "yes" to what He is asking of you?