



A Very Vintage Christmas  
Lessons from Mary  
Luke 1:26–38

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**26** In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, **27** to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. **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. **31** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name 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 father David, **33** and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

**34** And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

**35** And the angel answered 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 called holy — the Son of God. **36** And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. **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.

## Lessons from the example of Mary:

### God's plan can be confusing

- “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” (vv. 28–29).
- Mary was the unexpected person
  - “54 and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, ‘Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?’” (Matthew 13:54–56).
- Mary was the perfect person
  - Special Favor
  - Special Presence
  - “Spiritual greatness is not a matter of social class, monetary clout, or degreed background; it is a function of the heart. God's approach stands in contrast to the type of credentials our world looks for and honors” (Darrell Bock, *Luke*, 60).

### God's plan includes us

- “30 And 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 call his name Jesus’” (vv. 30–31).
- Mary had found favor with God
  - “This text is not about Mary and her unique preparation; it is about the power of God to effect the incarnation of his Son” (Gregg Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology & Practice: An Evangelical Assessment*, 139).
  - What this does mean:
    - She deserves acknowledgement and honor.
      - “For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed” (Luke 1:48).
    - She should serve as an example to imitate.
- Mary was to be the mother of Jesus

### God's plan ultimately isn't about us

- “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 father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ 34 And Mary said to the angel, ‘How will this be, since I am a virgin?’ 35 And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. 36 And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God’” (vv. 32–37).
- Mary was overshadowed by God

- “14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).
- Mary was overshadowed for God
  - Who would her Son be?
    - Jesus will be great
    - Jesus will be called Son of the Most High
    - Jesus will receive the throne of David
    - Jesus will reign forever
    - Jesus’ kingdom will last forever

#### God’s plan requires faith and submission

- “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” (v. 38).
- Mary believed God’s plan
- Mary submitted to God’s plan
  - Faith is made real in submission.
  - “Becoming a Christian is not like signing up for a gym; it is not a ‘living well’ program that will help you flourish and realize your potential. Christianity is not another vendor supplying spiritual services you engage as long as it meets your needs at a reasonable cost. Christian faith is not a negotiation but a surrender. It means to take your hands off your life” (Tim Keller, *Hidden Christmas*, 93–94).

#### Reflection:

- God’s plan can be confusing: **Why hasn’t Jesus returned yet?**
- God’s plan includes us: **How are you preparing for Jesus’ return?**
- God’s plan isn’t about you: **Are you more focused on Jesus’ kingdom or your own?**
- God’s plan requires faith and submission: **How will you trust Jesus and submit to his plan?**