

Sermon Title: **The Angel and Mary**

Written: **December 9, 2017**

Preached: **December 10, 2017 at WFBC**

Vessel: Russ LaFlamme

Scripture Reference: **Luke 1: 26-38**

Thesis: **The second Angel appears to Mary to announce her coming child of God.**

Purpose: **Today, we see that with God, all things are possible.**

Key Word: **“Trust”**

I) Introduction:

Scripture Reading is: **Luke 1: 26-38**

A) The Setting:

1) **Have you ever faced a seemingly impossible situation?**

- (a) A time in your life when what you were facing seemed so overwhelming that you just didn't know what to do?
- (b) A time when you could see no solution; no possibility that things could work out with a favorable outcome?

2) **Where do you turn and who do you trust when there just seems to be no answer to your problem?**

- (a) Have you ever felt that God was asking more of you than you could deliver?
- (b) Leading you in a direction that seemed to be heading to a dead end or off a cliff?
- (c) In times like this God is giving you an opportunity to test your faith and likely to see God working powerfully in your life.

3) **Last week we started our Advent series with a look at the Christmas story from the point of the Angels.**

- (a) We focused on the role of Angels and How God uses them.
- (b) We were introduced to the Angel Gabriel.

4) **Gabriel was the angel who brought Zachariah the good news that the prayers of Zachariah and his wife, Elizabeth, were heard; and God was going to give them a son.**

- (a) While I am not sure I would think that was good news in my old age . . . having a male son in the Jewish culture meant God was blessing them.
- (b) Zachariah was told that his boy was to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be the one who would announce the coming Messiah, the Christ, the Savior for his people.

5) **Gabriel plays a big active role in the Christmas story as he gets to delivery God's messages.**

- (a) Six months have passed since Zachariah received his message.
- (b) It was a message that he did not believe and so he wasn't allowed to tell anyone.
- (c) Zachariah was struck mute until the birth of his son.

B) **In today's message we will see a different reaction to Gabriel's message.**

- (a) Oh, Mary has her questions;
- (b) But, we will see that her questions were not ones of disbelief?

2) **So, let us turn in our Bibles to Luke 1: 26-38, and look once again at perhaps one of the most famous passages of scripture.**

C) *Sermon Prayer*

D) (The Hook)

1) **Angels have a system of ranks:**

(a) **Like archangels**

- (i) Michael is an archangel whose names means like God or as God
- (ii) Michael's special assignment seems to be the protection of Israel, God's chosen people.

(b) *Some other ranks include cherubs and seraphim.*

2) **Angels usually appear to humans as humans.**

- (a) There are no records in Scripture of angels appearing as humans with two wings.

- (b) Even if that makes for some nice artwork.
- (c) Also, they are never described as fat little babies with wings.
- (d) That picture probably comes from Greek mythology and belief in Cupid.
- 3) **Gabriel is the one angel, more than any other, that is associated with Christmas.**
 - (a) Gabriel's name means "*Strength of God or God Is Powerful.*"
 - (b) Gabriel seems to be an "*interpreter*" of sorts.
 - (c) The term "angel" in Greek can also mean messenger,
 - (d) The fact that the New Testament writers chose to use this word to describe God's heavenly beings implies that one of their main functions is to communicate messages from God.
- 4) **Gabriel has now come to deliver a message to Mary, who will be the mother of God's Son.**

TS: **So, let's look a little more closely at Gabriel's visit beginning with . . .**

II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **Gabriel's Appearance to Mary**

- 1) **The first thing we notice about Gabriel's appearance to Mary was that she was most likely at home alone.**
 - (a) The description of her town and household seem to indicate she is at home.
 - (b) Here, Mary is alone and it must have been somewhat frightening to be approached by a stranger, angel or not.
- 2) **Luke makes a point to emphasize that Mary is a virgin.**
 - (a) Not only is this important to Mary's purity and right standing before God.
 - (b) The prophet Isaiah wrote, "***Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. (which means 'God is with us')***". **Isaiah 7:14** (NKJV)
 - (c) Luke wanted to make it perfectly clear that Jesus arrival met the first sign of prophecy.
 - (d) Mary was a virgin; a woman who had never been intimate with a man.
- 3) **Gabriel greets her in **verse 28** "*Rejoice, most favored one, the Lord is with you,*" (NRSV)**
 - (a) The New King James version says "***highly favored one***" and goes on to say "***Blessed are you among woman!***"
 - (b) Mary is confused by this greeting wondering what he could mean by this.
- 4) **But this is exciting news; Rejoice, have great joy, for God is extending His great grace upon you.**
 - (a) God has chosen Mary for a huge blessing.
 - (b) This indeed was a great blessing; for among all the women of Israel, Mary, has been chosen to be the mother of God's Son.
- 5) **If you think someone who wins the lottery shows a lot of joy; Mary should be doing cartwheels, and jumping for joy.**
 - (a) She has been picked to be the mother of God's Son.
 - (b) And yet, at the same time . . . what a frightening thought?

TS: **Next we have . . .**

B) Key Point #2: **Gabriel's Message to Mary**

- 1) **Again, the first words Gabriel brings are words of comfort, "*Don't be afraid.*"**
 - (a) This is not a message of judgment; but a message of hope and joy.
 - (b) God is pleased with you and is extending His grace upon you.
- 2) **Grace is never earned or it wouldn't be grace.**
 - (a) Grace is unmerited or unearned favor;
 - (b) The next part of the message is the heart of the Good News.

- 3) **Mary, you will have a Son and name Him Jesus, whose name means salvation.**
 - (a) Salvation is coming to the people of Israel through the Son of God.
 - (b) **This is the only way anyone can be saved from the judgment of God.**
 - (i) Jesus said "***I am the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me!***" (John 14:6)
 - (ii) Jesus is the only way we can be made right with God; there is simply no other way.
- 4) **Not only is Mary going to bear a Son; but He will be great; the greatest in fact!**
 - (a) And this Son will be called the Son of the Most-High (GOD!)
 - (b) He will sit on the throne of David and His Kingdom will never end!
- 5) **Yet, we all know that Jesus has yet to fulfill this part of the prophecy.**
 - (a) He has not yet sat down as ruler over Israel.
 - (b) **In fact, it was Israel who rejected Him as their king and had Him crucified.**
- 6) **But Isaiah prophesied that an ancestor of David would one day rule as King! (Isaiah 9:6) For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of His government and peace there will be no end.**
- 7) **The first line of this prophecy was fulfilled at Jesus' first Advent.**
 - (a) His coming as ruler will be fulfilled at His Second Advent.
 - (b) Jesus will one day come to establish true peace on earth and good will toward men.
- 8) **He will sit on the throne of David and rule the entire world.**
 - (a) From the heart of Israel, Jerusalem, one day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord!
 - (b) There will be no more "*I will's*" . . . There only be Thy will!
- 9) **Mary now asks the question "how this can be?"** since she has never been with a man.

TS: **This brings us our third point . . .**

C) Key Point #3: **Gabriel's Sign for Mary**

- 1) **This is not the same as Zachariah's question to Gabriel.**
- 2) **Gabriel INFORMED and EXPLAINED what was to happen to Zachariah**
 - (a) But Zachariah INSULTED Gabriel and God with his UNBELIEF.
 - (b) Therefore, Gabriel Announced a DISCIPLINE on Zachariah.
 - (c) Zachariah didn't ask how will it happen, he asked, "*How will I know this will happen?*"
 - (d) In other words, Zachariah was saying "***How do I know what you are telling me is true?***"
- 3) **We have a tendency to excuse ourselves as unable to understand, when, in reality, we are unwilling to believe.**
 - (a) **Even with the appearance of an Angel; Zachariah showed he distrusted the message.**
 - (b) He and Elizabeth were past the age of having children.
 - (c) If God spoke to one of our senior members and said you were going to have a child . . . Would you believe it?
- 4) **Refusing to open our minds to new possibilities and embracing the real truth of God's Word when it is presented may not just be a weakness, but a sin.**
 - (a) Zachariah was not disciplined for showing weakness, but for his sinful attitude.
 - (b) Are our minds open to the Word of God, or have we stopped thinking?
 - (c) **God's Word teaches us that "nothing is impossible with God!"**
 - (i) God's Word is God's truth;
 - (ii) It has been given to us so that we can understand and believed!
- 5) **Gabriel now comes to INFORM and EXPLAIN to Mary.**
 - (a) I want you to notice the contrast between Mary's belief and Zachariah's unbelief...

- (b) It's the same angel; but the response is entirely different.
- (c) **The difference is in the way it was asked.**
 - (i) Zachariah asks the angel, "**How can I be sure of this?**" (Luke 1:18)
 - (ii) Mary on the other hand asked "**How will this be . . . since I am a virgin?**" (Luke 1:34)
 - (iii) Zachariah's question was one of unbelief,
 - (iv) While Mary's was one of belief only asking **HOW** it will happen.
- 6) **Gabriel's response shows the difference in their questions.**
 - (a) In the written Word we don't hear the subtleties of the spoken inflections.
 - (b) We can't always easily tell the difference between what is unbelief and a question of how.
 - (c) But Gabriel's response tells us exactly what was going on here.
- 7) **Each was given a sign to show God's answer;**
 - (a) For Zachariah it was that he would remain mute until his child was born;
 - (b) For Mary it was the news that her aged relative was also going to have a son.
 - (c) The sign for Mary was that she could go and see the miracle growing in Elizabeth.

TS: What is important for us to learn for our study this morning?

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

- A) **God's Word is God's truth: It is to be believed and understood!**
 - 1) In some ways, the most important things about you and I are:
 - 2) What do we believe and understand?
 - 3) This is the reason we need to dig deeply into God's Word.
- B) **Mary believed the message of the miracle that was explained to her.**
 - 1) Like Mary, we are asked to believe the message of Christmas
 - 2) Jesus is God who came to earth as a baby to die as a man to pay the penalty for the sins of the World.
 - 3) "**For God so loved the world, that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.**" (John 3:16)
 - 4) Gabriel proclaimed the same message; "**God will save His people from their sins.**"
- C) **If we are going to accept that message we first need to be honest with ourselves.**
 - 1) **No matter how much we try to be good; we can't be good enough to earn God's favor.**
 - (a) We have to accept what Jesus did when he faced the cross.
 - (b) He paid the price for our sins so that we could be made right with God.
 - (c) If you haven't accepted Jesus as your Savior I pray you will do it today.
 - 2) **Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce her coming child of God.**
 - (a) The story within the story is that "**with God all things are possible.**"
 - (b) Someone beyond the age of child bearing can have a child!
 - (c) If God says HE can produce a child through the Holy Spirit He can do it!
 - (d) If God wants to make a way for us to be restored into a right relationship with Him by sending His Son to do it; it is possible!
 - 3) **My God is big enough, powerful enough, and great enough to make it happen.**
 - (a) God is also able to handle all our impossible situations.
 - (b) Just trust that God has got this and watch for the answer to come.
 - (c) We are just asked to demonstrate our belief by putting our trust in His Son, Jesus.
 - (d) As Jesus taught His disciples to pray; trust in "**Thy Will be done.**"
 - 4) **God can provide what is needed be it a job, a shelter, a meal, or whatever we need.**
 - (a) What takes real trust is when God doesn't provide what we think we need.
 - (b) We then need to trust that God has a better plan in mind.
 - (c) Do you believe the message of Gabriel; that "**with God all things are possible?**"

IV) Invitation: **Let us pray!**