

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, December 10, 2017

**There's Something About Mary
A Study of Luke 1:26-38**

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Adults: If you found out that you were to have a child this year, how would you react? Youth: If you found out that your parents were to have a child this year, how would you react?

Today we begin a series called “Christmas Through Mary’s Eyes.” We start today with the angel’s announcement that she will give birth to the Messiah. Pastor Tom said this can teach us a couple of lessons.

First:
**God can use the most unlikely people
in the most unlikely places**

Read Luke 1:26-33.

This is actually the second birth announcement in the first chapter of Luke. Before the angel Gabriel came to Mary, he came to Zechariah. Mary was told she would give birth to the Messiah, while Zechariah was told his wife would give birth to the Messiah’s herald. Compare the announcement to Mary in verses 26-33 with the announcement to Zechariah in verses 5-17. What’s different about them? Consider the ages of Mary and Zechariah, the importance of their towns, and the importance of the setting where the announcements took place.

What opinion did people tend to have of Mary’s town of Nazareth? (Read John 1:45-46 to find out.)

Read I Corinthians 1:26-31 and answer the following questions:

- ❖ What did Paul have to remind the prideful Corinthians about themselves?
- ❖ Did Paul use the phrase “not any” or “not many”? What’s the difference?
- ❖ What does it mean to “boast in the Lord”?
- ❖ How is that better than boasting in our own importance?

We tend to think that only important people from important places can do great things for God. When we think that way, are we more likely to...

...let our commonness be an excuse for not attempting great things for God? Why or why not?

...explain the success of someone's ministry totally in terms of human ability? Why or why not?

In Luke 1:32-33, what claims did the angel make about Mary's son? After you list them, discuss the meaning of each of these claims.

**Second:
When God gives us a part in his work,
he challenges our limits and
he expects our obedience**

Read Luke 1:34-38.

Two thousand years ago was a pre-scientific age. So do you think people in that day believed that a virgin birth could happen because they didn't know how babies were made? (Matthew 1:18-19 may help here.)

Explain why the following statements are good or bad reasons why a virgin birth is part of the Christmas story:

- God thinks sex is yukky
- It was to leave no question that Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14
- The guilt of Adam passes to the next generation through the father, so "no human father = no original sin"
- To elevate Mary in later Christian devotion
- It was yet another biblical instance that nothing is impossible with God

Mary did not understand *how* she could be a virgin mother, but did that stop her from saying “yes” to God?

What did Mary risk by accepting God’s will?

The story of Jesus began with a teen-aged girl willing to risk. What is God calling on you to risk today?

In what area of your life do you need to believe that “nothing is impossible with God”? What keeps you from believing this?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests