

Heaven Sent: Mary's First Christmas

Wylie United Methodist Church

Pastor Jeff Hatcher – Nov 27, 2011

Luke 1:26-38;45-49

26 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." 29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. 31 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." 34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" 35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. 37 For nothing is impossible with God." 38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. 39-44 [Elizabeth said] 45 Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!" 46 And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, 49 for the Mighty one has done great things for me- holy is his name.

What can we learn from Mary?

1. FAITH IS NOT AGE DEPENDENT

vv. 26-27 In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

2. FAITH BEGINS WITH A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

v. 47 – "my spirit rejoices in God my Savior"

Mary immediately acknowledges that God is her Savior, and it is that acknowledgment that determines the rest of her response.

Isa 43:1-3

43 But now, this is what the Lord says — he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. 3 For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

3. FAITH PLEASES GOD

v. 28 "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

v. 30 "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God."

When the angel said that God had found favor with Mary, it was before she had done anything.

4. FAITH FOCUSES ON GOD'S KINGDOM

vv. 31-33 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

5. FAITH LEADS TO HUMBLE OBEDIENCE

v. 38 I am the Lord's servant... May it be to me as you have said.

vv. 47-49 "and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty one has done great things for me-holy is his name."

Hebrews 11:6 "without faith it is impossible to please God"

James 2:26 Faith without deeds is dead.