

## Unforeseen Christmas 2 When Your Assignment is Beyond Your Ability Believers Statesboro 12-02-18

We've all had those moments in life when we said, "I didn't see that coming."

Christmas can be like that too. It's full of great expectations and great disappointments as well. Things don't always go the way we thought they would. Some things are just unforeseen.

Last week, we saw that the first Christmas was full of unforeseen events too. Christmas is the story of God doing things His way and according to His plan, even if it wasn't how others saw it going.

Even though most of the Christmas story events were prophesied years before they took place, in real time the events that transpired on that first Christmas were totally unforeseen by those involved.

### Mary's Unforeseen Christmas

*Luke 1:26-27 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, Gabriel ("Mighty Man of God") – Ministry of proclaiming God's plans.*

- o Daniel 8:16 Gabriel spoke of end times.
- o Daniel 9:21-25 Gabriel foretold of the Messiah's coming.
- o Luke 1 – Gabriel told Zacharius of the birth of John the Baptist.
- o Luke 1 – Gabriel tells Mary about Christ Jesus.
- o 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Tradition holds that Gabriel will be the angel who will blow the trumpet at Jesus' return.

*<sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*

Now, this is a "I never saw that coming moment!" Mary may have known of the prophecies of the long-awaited Messiah, but she had no idea that she was going to bring the Messiah into the world.

### What Do You Do When Your Unforeseen Assignment Is Beyond Your Ability?

Often, when we have an unforeseen moment with God, a new direction, plan or assignment, what leaves us shaking our heads saying, "I never saw that coming," is the fact that we feel totally unprepared- insufficient to do what God is telling us to do, or maybe even impossible as in Mary's case.

*Luke 1:31-33 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.*

Jesus- "Joshua" - "The Lord is Salvation" <sup>32</sup> *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, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."*

Mary knew the OT scripture, and she knew what this meant.

*Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

- A. Mary's assignment was totally impossible – in the natural. This would require a creative miracle. (Like raising Jesus for the dead.)
- B. If you can't believe in the virgin birth, you can't believe in the Gospel, because both required a creative miracle.

### When Your Assignment is Beyond You; Understand You Are Favored by God

*Luke 1:28-30 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."*

*<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.*

1. Mary had favor because she was a natural candidate.
  - o A **Jewish Girl** with the correct family descent (House of David, Kingly line)
  - o **Pure and physically a virgin** – to fulfill Prophecy.

If God has asked you to do something you are a natural candidate too, He knows what He is doing.

2. Mary had favor because of God's timing.

*Galatians 4:4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.*

When God gives you an assignment, His time is perfect. Trust Him, trust His timing.

3. Mary was highly favored for the Lord was with her. She had the favor of God upon her.

*NKJ - Favored One* – **Filled with Grace. She would be filled with God's enabling power!**

In the Greek "favored one" is used one other time in the New Testament, and its referring to you.

**FAVOR** *Ephesians 1:6 ...to the praise of his glorious grace,* (acceptance, favor, to pursue with grace, compass with favor; to honor with blessings) *which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*

*Ephesians 1:7-8 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding If you are born again, then you are "The Favored One of God."*

### **When Your Assignment is Beyond You; Believe Without Understanding**

You don't have to fully understand it to believe and do what God has asked you to do!

*Luke 1:34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"*

"How can this be? I believe but I don't understand."

- Mary was saying, "I believe what you are saying, Gabriel, but how will God make it happen to me since I am a virgin?"
- Mary's attitude was one of faith and belief even though she didn't understand how God was going to do it.
- She couldn't pull out the rest of the New Testament and read it to make sense of it all.

Compare Mary's statement with Zechariah's statement in Luke 1:11-20. Both are very similar.

*Luke 1:11-20*

- Zechariah's reply to Gabriel— Luke 1:18 "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."
- Mary – Luke 1:34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"
- Same Angel, Gabriel.
- In Luke 1:20, Zechariah was made mute. Why? "Because you did not believe my words!"

**Note:**

- It's OK to believe and pray and question God about the how's and detail's.
- It's not OK to have an attitude of doubt and unbelief and question God's assignment.

### **When Your Assignment is Beyond You; Allow the Power of the Holy Spirit to Overshadow You!**

*Luke 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on 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."*

#### **How did God do the impossible in Mary's life and how will God do the impossible in your life?**

The Holy Spirit will come upon you! This is the answer to Mary's question of how.

You must be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit!

- **"Overshadowed"** The Greek word is the same word used at the transfiguration of Christ when the cloud spoke. *Matthew 17:3-6*
- Also, the Hebrew word is used in Exodus 40:34-38 referring to the cloud that manifested the Glory of God.

How the Holy Spirit Overshadows a Believer

- *John 20:22* "Receive the Holy Spirit" (At Salvation)
- *Acts 1:8* "But you shall receive POWER when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.
- *Romans 5:5* "By the Holy Spirit, the LOVE of God has been poured out in our hearts."
- *Ephesians 3:17-20* "... that you being rooted and grounded in LOVE may be able to comprehend...Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

**Next Life Transformation Step: When my ability is not enough, I will ask the Holy Spirit to overshadow me.**

### **When Your Assignment is Beyond You; Believe that Nothing is Impossible with God**

*Luke 1:36-37 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."*

*NKJV "For with God nothing will be impossible."*

*NLT "For the word of God will never fail."*

God's word will never fail: written or spoken.

Believe God's Word spoken about you for your future, and know that nothing is impossible!

Are we going through life with a defeatist attitude?      Improbable      Impossible      I can't do that.  
I'm just not able.      I don't have the will power.      I don't have the faith.

**If God said it, HE CAN AND WILL DO IT!**

What limits have you placed on God due to doubt and unbelief?

## TRUTH - "For nothing is impossible with God!"

*Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." NKJV*

*"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." NIV*

God can favor you; you can believe that God can do the impossible; the Holy is living inside you and ready to empower you but...

### When Your Assignment is Beyond You; Choose to Surrender to God's Plan

*Luke 1:38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.*

*NKJV 38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."*

*NLT 38 Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true."*

We've talked time and time again here at Believers Church about our choices. God can surprise us in an unforeseen way, give us a task that is beyond us, and enable us to get it done. But, we have to be willing. Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant." Are we? Her statement indicates total submission.

Will you, like Mary, say, "I Surrender ALL!"

Think about it. She was essentially saying, "LET ME BE PREGANT"

- Lose Reputation
  - Lose Husband
  - Family Outcast
  - Shame
- All my hopes for my marriage (Hope Chest)
  - Death

- o Remember Mary had no promise of future Glory.
- o Mary couldn't read the NT to see what would happen.

Mary's willingness to surrender her will led to a life of surrender, to God's plan for her life and the life of her son, Jesus.

*Luke 2:35* How did Mary feel when Simeon prophesied of her baby's suffering?

*Luke 2:49-52* Mary still didn't fully understand when Jesus was 12 years old.

*John 2:4* At the wedding in Cana, Mary didn't fully understand the timing for the start of Jesus', public ministry.

*Matt 12:46-50* Mary misunderstood Jesus and felt rejected when He had no time for her.

*John 19:25* Mary is seen faithfully standing at the feet of Jesus as He hung on the cross.

*Acts 1:14* Mary was obedient to the words of Jesus to wait and pray.

*Acts 2* Mary was filled with the Holy Spirit and overshadowed for the second time and certainly not the last time. This time the Holy Spirit was there to stay. Living in her! Empowering her daily!

### **Next Life Transformation Step: No matter what God asks me to do, within my ability or not, I will surrender to His will.**

In this unforeseen moment, Mary was being invited to accept an assignment beyond her ability.

- o God was extending an invitation to take part in an event that would bring salvation and hope to everyone in the universe from that day forward!
- o God was inviting her to be a part of something that would change and touch all of eternity.
- o Nothing would ever be the same again.
- o One day, Mary's story would collide with my story, her story would collide with your story, and we would have to make a decision to accept the invitation of God.

### **Life App Group and Family Devotional Application**

1. Has God ever asked you to do something that you never saw coming? Was the assignment within or beyond your ability? Explain.
2. What does it mean to be favored by God?
3. Have you ever had to believe God, even though you didn't understand what He was doing?
4. What does it mean to be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, and why would you need that?
5. When God gives you an impossible assignment, are you willing to surrender to God's plan?