



Luke 1
26-38
New International Version

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, 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 conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him 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 Jacob’s descendants 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 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. ³⁶ 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. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail.”

³⁸ “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

Appointments to be kept. Tight schedules to maintain. Routines established. That’s how most of us try to live our lives. But what happens when life is interrupted with something totally unexpected? What happens when God steps in to redirect our priorities and focus? In October we will look at a couple examples of scripture to see what God does when life is interrupted. We invite you to take in each of these timely messages.

“You cannot go on being a good egg forever. You must either hatch or rot.” — C. S. Lewis



Sermon Notes

Interrupted

To break the continuity or the uniformity of life

There’s Something **WONDERFUL HAPPENING**

God is doing more than you **REALIZE**

“In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy...”

You are capable of More than you **KNOW**

“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

“The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.”

“You who are highly favored! The Lord is with you”

The future will be more **MEANINGFUL** than ever!

“Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.” Lk 2:19

Christmas is only the **BEGINNING**

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.



MARKS OF GRACE

There is a stage in a child's life at which it cannot separate the religious from the merely festal character of Christmas or Easter. I have been told of a very small and very devout boy who was heard murmuring to himself on Easter morning a poem of his own composition which began 'Chocolate eggs and Jesus risen.' This seems to me, for his age, both admirable poetry and admirable piety. But of course the time will soon come when such a child can no longer effortlessly and spontaneously enjoy that unity. He will become able to distinguish the spiritual from the ritual and festal aspect of Easter; chocolate eggs will no longer seem sacramental. And once he has distinguished he must put one or the other first. If he puts the spiritual first he can still taste something of Easter in the chocolate eggs; if he puts the eggs first they will soon be no more than any other sweetmeat. They will have taken on an independent, and therefore a soon withering, life." C. S. Lewis

"You cannot go on being a good egg forever. You must either hatch or rot." — C. S. Lewis

Opportunity comes with so many different faces that we often don't recognize it. That's probably why we sometimes miss its call. A previous generation said that opportunity comes dressed in overalls. And they were largely right, for nothing succeeds like hard work. Our generation thinks that opportunity comes with a college diploma. It may, but there's no guarantee.

The divine opportunity comes in what is, to our human eyes, the most unlikely garb of all. It's no wonder we don't recognize it; or that, recognizing it, we resist it. This Advent season is an especially good time to experience the divine opportunity. Any time is God's season; but because you and I find certain settings and circumstances especially hospitable to religious experience, Advent and Lent are particularly attractive.

The first Advent preacher, John the Baptizer, offered opportunity in a compelling, almost ferocious way. When you read his words, you don't think he's offering opportunity; I expect that if we had heard him in person, we would have been even more doubtful. William Barclay said that John's message "was not good news; it was news of terror" (The Gospel of Luke, Westminster John Knox Press, p. 28). I understand what Professor Barclay was saying, but I see it differently. It seems to me that good news must sometimes come dressed in rough clothing.

You Must Get Past John

(Money is like salt water)