

# Mary's Surrender

Luke 1:26-38

## INTRODUCTION:

This morning we will be finalizing our look at the series of surrender. Now I hope we don't finalize our growing recognition of our need to surrender, but allow this to become an ongoing look in which we all need to drill down further in our obedience to the Lord.

Today, we will look and learn from one of the greatest examples of surrender in Mary. People often ask, "How do I surrender? What does it look like?" That is the message this morning in seeing one of the greatest examples of surrender in the servant Mary, the earthly mother of Jesus.

## Scripture:

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. <sup>28</sup> Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

<sup>29</sup> Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. <sup>30</sup> "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

<sup>34</sup> Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

<sup>35</sup> The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup> For the word of God will never fail."

<sup>38</sup> Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

## **I. Surrender is not without Fear and Confusion.**

- A. Mary, when approached by Gabriel, was troubled by fear and confusion.
1. Seeing the supernatural can be very troubling.
  2. She wondered what kind of message the angel would bring.
  3. She wondered how this would alter her life which was already under big plans to be married as she was already engaged.
  4. She wondered about the collateral damage and explanation she would have to give her fiancé and community in such a culture.

### **Andrew Murray**

God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him.

- B. Even in good news such as the case of Mary where Gabriel told her she was highly favored by God, fear had to be addressed.
- C. The two ingredients for fear are unknowns and lack of control which would have been present in this greeting.
- D. To face our need or opportunity to surrender can be very disturbing because God interrupts our plans and the direction of our lives revealing His sovereignty.

### **Andrew Murray**

May not a single moment of my life be spent outside the light, love and joy of God's presence and not a moment without the entire surrender of myself as a vessel for Him to fill full of His Spirit and His love.

## **II. Surrender is not without Question.**

- A. The plans of God may seem a bit overwhelming in the moment or in several moments.

- B. Gabriel told her that she would be with a child, give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name, Jesus. That right there is a lot to take in for a young girl engaged in planning a wedding.
- C. The plans of God may not make sense in the context we presently find ourselves. Mary wondered how she would be with a child when she was a virgin.

### **N.T. Wright, Luke for Everyone**

Let's begin with the obvious point. The story makes it clear that Jesus was conceived in Mary's womb before she had had any sexual relations. Many people today find this impossible to believe, but they often think that this difficulty has only arisen in modern times, because of all we now know about the precise mechanics of conception and birth. Not so. The ancient world didn't know about X chromosomes and Y chromosomes, but they knew as well as we do that babies were the result of sexual intercourse, and that people who claimed to be pregnant by other means might well be covering up a moral and social offence. Yet Mary's story is told by both Luke and Matthew, in versions so different that they can hardly be dependent on one another; in other words, the story seems to have been widely known in the very early church, rather than being a fantasy invented several generations after the fact. Why would these two writers, and devout Jewish Christian congregations that passed on such stories, have done so, giving hostages to fortune in this way, unless they had good reason to suppose they were true?

It's important to stress that the story says nothing about Mary remaining a virgin after Jesus' birth. That's a much later idea. Nor does it say anything about the goodness or badness of sexual identity or sexual relations. Whatever Luke (and Matthew) are trying to say with this story, they aren't saying that virginity is a morally better state than marriage. They are not denigrating sex, women, conception or birth. They are simply reporting that Jesus did not have a father in the ordinary way, and that this was because Mary had been given special grace to be the mother of God's incarnate self.<sup>1</sup>

- D. Asking questions with a willing heart to seek truth, God will always answer. We may not be willing or able to take it all in, but there is an answer.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, T. (2004). [\*Luke for Everyone\*](#) (pp. 9–10). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

- E. Sadly, too many take greater comfort in their desire to understand. Understanding all there is about God is limited in our ability to reason everything out. It is not without reason, but cannot be accomplished simply by reason. Many get stuck in the question rather than seeing the big picture of God's answer.
- F. Faith and reason go together. Reason is the foundation in which to believe and have faith. God has left enough reasons for faith available so that our faith can be rational but has left enough out to force us to trust Him in faith.
- G. It was hard for Mary to understand because she was working with the Logic of Earth, and Gabriel had given her a message that also involved the Logic of Heaven. "For nothing will be impossible with God."
- H. Nothing is impossible with God, therefore, trust Him. This doesn't mean I want God to do something and since all things are possible with God that He will. Nothing is impossible for God in accomplishing His Good will.

### **III. Surrender is not without Response.**

- A. Mary recognized her position...*I am the Lord's servant.*
- B. Notice she did not say,
  - a. I am the Lord's advice giver.
  - b. I am the Lord's consultant.
  - c. I am the Lord's when I want to be.
  - d. I am willing when it fits into the calendar such as could we wait till after the wedding.
  - e. I am going to be famous.
  - f. People will worship me.
  - g. This is going to give me a particularly good position with the Lord.
- C. No, she said, "I am the Lord's servant."

#### **Chip Ingram**

God always has and always will look for men and women who say to Him, 'I trust you so much, I'm all in. I want your way not mine. I am willing to live by faith!'

- D. Notice this faith was not without reason just beyond her earthly reason of understanding.
- E. Then she stated, “Let it be to me according to your word.” In that statement of choice, we find all four ingredients we have discussed in following the Lord.
- a. **Intentional** in her response.
  - b. **Vulnerable** to the experience.
  - c. **Faithful** to the God she knew.
  - d. **Willing** to let her life be used.

## CONCLUSION

### **Saint Augustine**

The world being unworthy to receive the Son of God directly from the hands of the Father, He gave His Son to Mary for the world to receive him from her.

### **Ignatius**

Few souls understand what God would accomplish in them if they were to abandon themselves unreservedly to Him and if they were to allow His grace to mold them accordingly.

Why should we celebrate Christmas? Because a Savior was born to a woman willing to surrender her life unto the will of God. *Someone* more wonderful than we will ever comprehend was born to bear our sins and give us hope beyond death. What gift of the Lord are we hindering or roadblocking the world from experiencing, from ourselves experiencing, by staying stuck on the fence and not saying, “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be done to be according to your word.” The Lord’s will in the end be done, but there is so much He is choosing to do through us.