

The Angels of Christmas

HEARING GOD'S VOICE IN ADVENT

SERMON NOTES

Week 2 December 4, 2022

“Let it Be”

Luke 1:26-38

I. Introduction

- A. We all experience random events in life that don't go according to _____.
- B. When we are facing a big tragedy and extraordinary pain there is something in us that wants it all to make _____.
- C. Christians believe that God brings _____ out of chaos.

II. The Annunciation

- A. _____ chooses a lowly and humble girl from an insignificant town to do something important.
- B. God showed up in history and said “don't you understand; this isn't about the plans of man; this is about the _____ of God.”
- C. After the angels visit, Mary's life got very, very complicated with _____ events.
- D. God works out all things in conformity with His _____.

III. Mary's Response

- A. God's will for our lives is to have the willingness to say like Mary “Here I am Lord, _____ me according to your will.”
- B. Perfect faith is faith that moves us to _____ God when he doesn't seem to be moving.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *December 5-10, 2022*

INTRODUCTION

The ingredients in the Christmas story seem kind of random: a decree from Caesar, an engaged virgin, an angelic announcement, three wise men, and no room at the inn... doesn't sound like the narrative we'd write if we were God. Some of the circumstances we may be dealing with this year aren't exactly what we'd write for our own stories either. How do we respond to the seemingly random curve balls in our lives the same way Mary did to God's biggest curve ball yet?

Monday: Luke 1:26-27, John 1:45-46

The town where Mary lived was not the kind of place to fill its young people with lofty ambitions. It seems most unlikely that she had any idea we'd be reading about her in the year 2022. Where were you born and brought up? What effect, positive or negative, did the surroundings of your birth and childhood have on your expectations of life?

Tuesday: Luke 1:26-27, Matthew 13:54-55

In Israelite culture, an engagement was as binding as marriage. Mary was pregnant? People (like Joseph at first) "knew" some other man was to blame. Mary might even have been stoned to death (cf. Deuteronomy 22:20-24, John 8:3-5). But Matthew 1:19 said, "Joseph her husband was a righteous man." He wanted Mary safe even if she'd let him down. How have you learned to face distress in a measured way like Joseph's?

Wednesday: Luke 1:26-28, Daniel 8:15-18

Daniel said he met Gabriel when he "needed help understanding the vision I saw" and was praying. Mary, as far as Luke reported, seemed to have been just going about her daily business when the angel approached her with the divine message. In what settings have you had the clearest sense of receiving a message from God?

Thursday: Luke 1:28-33

Mary's blessing was a blessing of purpose, of new life, of relationship, of participation in what God was doing in the world. Her blessing brought hardship, confusion and grief, but it was still a blessing." Do you ever wish God's favor toward you meant not mission, but simply happiness and ease? How did Mary's life exemplify the sacrifices God's favor may call for?

Friday: Luke 1:34-38

Mary's final response was an awe-inspiring model for us: "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." What does it take for you to respond to God's call as Mary did? Do your life experiences help or hinder you from fully believing and trusting the good news about God's incredible love for you? What helps you trust that God is with you and for you through all the ups and downs of life?

MOVING FORWARD

God's will for our lives is to have the willingness to say like Mary "Here I am Lord, use me according to your will." In the face of life's seeming randomness, we can take comfort in the fact that God is active in the world. The Christmas story confirms that he is at work in the midst of darkness. As Christmas approaches, remind yourself of God's extraordinary love of humankind.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) plan, B) sense, C) order. IIA) God, B) will, C) unplanned. IID) purpose. IIIA) use, B) trust.