



CHRISTMAS CHANGE.

Mary's sitting there, innocently and excitedly dreaming of her wedding day. But wouldn't you know it? God shows up with a pretty major change in plans. Before too long, Mary has been miraculously gifted with a child. She gets the privilege of breaking this news to her fiancé. "Hey, I'm having a baby. It's God's. We good?" Wonderful. Still, while we may have been tempted to complain because our schedule got ruined, Mary doesn't. In fact, in the midst of the chaos and the rumors and unknown, she gives one of the greatest praise hymns in Scripture. (Luke 1:46-55)

Mary had a trusting servant's heart. Christmas is all about faith and service like hers. What are we going to do to serve the Lord? This Christmas, as you serve your family meals and your kids gifts, look for ways to serve God as well. Look for opportunities to surrender and to trust Him. After all, He's a better plan-maker than we'll ever be.

IN THE BIBLE.

Luke 1:26:38

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[b] 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.

Matthew 1:18-25

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

QUESTIONS.

- 1.) How does Mary embody Christmas?
- 2.) Has God ever been inconvenient to your schedule?
- 3.) In what ways do you serve God? Does it involve joy? Struggle? Both?
- 4.) How can we better develop a servant's heart?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?