

Readings

Scripture

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

- Luke 1:26-38 (English Standard Version)

Reflection

It is humbling to accept that God came, in the person of Jesus, to live the way that we were created to live, but would never live, to die the death that each one of us deserves to die, and to rise out of the tomb, defeating sin and death because there was simply no other way. God knew that our condition was so desperately grave that he was willing to go to this extent to reach and rescue us. Ponder the fact that God was willing to control the events of world history to bring this world to the place where conditions were right for Jesus to come, simply because we had no power whatsoever to help ourselves out of our desperate state. Humanity was so incredibly messed up that there was only one solution for us: God himself!

- Paul David Tripp, *Come Let Us Adore Him*, December 5.

Sermon Outline

Has Grace Found You?

Luke 1:26-38

Remembering His Promise of Mercy

Brad Anderson

The grace of God found Mary in a startling way... (Luke 1:28-31)

What does it look like when the grace of God finds anyone?

It looks contextual (Luke 1:26-27)

It looks connective (Luke 1:32-33)

It looks confirmational (Luke 1:34-38)

It looks congregational (Luke 1:36-37)

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- What is the most unusual birth announcement you have ever received? If God told you that you were to be a parent 9 months from now, how would you feel?
- What does Gabriel say to Mary? How does that compare with what he said to Zechariah (Luke 1:13-17)? How are the responses of Mary and Zechariah unique?
- How does Elizabeth's pregnancy encourage Mary toward living in a wider congregational community of grace?
- Compare Luke's account to Matthew 1:18-25, what else do you learn about Jesus? About Joseph?
- How does Mary's life reveal the gracious heart of a servant?
- How has the grace of Jesus found you today?