

## A Thrill of Hope

### Luke 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup> Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled<sup>[a]</sup> among us, <sup>2</sup> just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. <sup>3</sup> With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

- This is the reason Luke wrote his Gospel account.

### Luke 1:26-38

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> 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, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> 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. <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."

<sup>38</sup> "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

### Transition

#### Big Idea

- God is present - God is sovereign – God is able – God is at work – God is active – God speaks and I can hear his voice – God is not done – God is not finished with you – How do you acquire the favor of God.
- God has a purpose and plan for your life – Submit to God's plan
- God requires faith. Faith moves the needle

#### **I. I will accept God's sovereignty.**

God is sovereign.

Appearance of the Angel

God is not finished with you.

God wants to use you  
 God wants to involve you in his plan  
 God is supernatural.

### **Luke 1:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

#### **A. Unpack Text**

1. Last week Elizabeth's pregnancy
2. The town of Nazareth – a town in Galilee
  - a. This is significant because it is not significant.
  - b. This is not an important town.
  - c. This is a dot on the radar.
  - d. A town of little significance
    - 1.) As a matter of fact...
    - 2.) The people in Judah disdained the Jews in Galilee and claimed they were not “kosher” because of their contacts with the Gentiles there (Matt. 4:15).
    - 3.) They especially despised the people from Nazareth (John 1:45–46).

#### **Straw Man**

- God chooses the popular and powerful
- Those who have the right background and the right pedigree.
- Time and time and time again we see God doing this.
- It seems as if God looks for the least likely person - from the least likely family – from the least likely upbringing – that have the least likely set of skills and gifts.

#### **Moses**

- First of all, don't you know my past.
- Second, God I'm not a good talker.

#### **Rahab**

##### **Joshua 2:11**

<sup>11</sup> When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

##### **Hebrews 11:31**

By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient

- To disobey, refuse to believe, or be rebellious.
- This word describes the inhabitants of Jericho who perished because they did not trust God's promise, unlike Rahab, who believed and welcomed the spies

## David

- **Youngest & Least Important:** In ancient Israel, the youngest son held the least status, making David the least probable choice for leadership.
- **A Shepherd, Not a Warrior/Politician:** He was tending sheep, an humble occupation, while his brothers were more visibly qualified, yet God chose him over them.
- **Overlooked by Family:** Even his father, Jesse, initially didn't present David to Samuel, the prophet, implying he saw little potential in him for kingship.

## God's Perspective:

- **"Man After His Own Heart":** God rejected the tall, physically imposing [King Saul](#) for disobedience, seeking a replacement with a heart devoted to Him, not outward appearance.
- **Sees the Heart:** The core lesson from David's anointing (1 Samuel 16:7) is that "man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart".

## The Bigger Picture:

- **Divine Sovereignty:** David's story exemplifies God's sovereign choice, choosing the unexpected to show His power works best through the weak and humble.
- **Preparation & Potential:** His time as a shepherd prepared him, and his lack of ambition allowed God to work uniquely, focusing on his inner character over worldly standards.

## Gideon

### Judges 6:11-22

<sup>11</sup> The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son **Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites.** <sup>12</sup> When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "**The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.**"

<sup>13</sup> "**Pardon me, my lord,**"

Gideon replied, "but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us?

Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?'

But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

<sup>14</sup> The LORD turned to him and said

"Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

<sup>15</sup> “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”

<sup>16</sup> The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive.”

<sup>17</sup> Gideon replied, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. <sup>18</sup> Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you.”

And the LORD said, “I will wait until you return.”

<sup>19</sup> Gideon went inside, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah<sup>[a]</sup> of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak.

<sup>20</sup> The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And Gideon did so. <sup>21</sup> Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. <sup>22</sup> When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, “Alas, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!”

### **Luke 2:28-29**

<sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

B. Greetings you who are highly favored – the Lord is with you.

1. What we know about Mary.
2. She was highly favored by God
3. God was with her.
4. Mary heard this and was rattled.
5. “Greatly troubled” literally means – greatly confused, greatly perplexed.
  - a. This was troubling to Mary.
  - b. Luke tells Theophilus.
  - c. It is a real human reaction to hear a message from God and it cause you to be “greatly troubled”
    - 1.) The struggle from hearing to believing.
    - 2.) This is a real thing.

Why is it so hard to believe that God wants to put his favor on you.

In God’s sovereignty He says I want you

### **1 Timothy 2:3b-4**

God our savior who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

### **2 Peter 3:9**

The Lord... is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance

Luke wanted Theophilus to know this and God wants you to know this.

God does not mind your honesty, God does not mind your questions, God doesn't mind your struggle. As a matter of fact he works in and through your struggle.

### **Application**

- What about you?
- Where are you this morning in your faith journey?
- How are you doing with the idea that God desires to choose and favor you?
- What is keeping you from receiving God's word to you today?

### **First Steps**

- Faith is required.
- Biblical faith is a faith unto action.

### **Core Requirements**

- **Faith in Jesus Christ:** The foundational requirement for being in God's good graces is believing in Jesus.
- **Obedience & Righteousness:** Walking uprightly and obeying God's commands, even when difficult, attracts favor (Noah).
- **Humility:** Humility attracts God's favor, while pride pushes it away (Joseph, Moses).
- **Seeking God:** Diligently pursuing wisdom, prayer, and intimacy with God brings favor (Proverbs 8:35).

## **II. I will gladly submit to God's word.**

### **Luke 1:30-33**

<sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> 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, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

A. Unpack Text

1. Angel don't be afraid.
2. Mary – he calls her by name.
3. How did He know her name?
4. God knows everything – including your name.
5. You will conceive and give birth to a son.
6. You are to call him Jesus.
7. He will be called the Son of the Most High.
8. The Lord will give him the throne of his father David
9. He will reign over Jacob's descendants forever
10. His kingdom will never end.

**B. Stop right here to process this.**

1. Mary is a young teenage girl
2. Probably 14-16 years old.
3. She is from a nobody town and a nobody region.
4. No respect
5. No accolades
6. No degrees to her name
7. No following
8. No great outward gifts or talents.
9. She is just a regular girl like some of you.

C. The visitation is to Mary but the focus is on Jesus.

1. He will be fully man – you will give birth to a son.
2. He will be fully God – he will be called son of the Most High.
3. He will reign over Jacob's descendants forever.
4. His kingdom will never end.

**In other words Jesus will...**

**1. Fulfill prophecy**

- It connects Jesus directly to Old Testament promises (Isaiah 9:6-7, 2 Samuel) about the Messiah.

**2. He will have Divine identity**

- It confirms Jesus is both man (descendant of David) and God (Son of the Most High).

**3. He brings Hope and Authority**

- It establishes Jesus as the eternal King whose rule brings ultimate justice, peace, and salvation

**Illustration**

## Application

1. **Embrace God's Favor**  
Acknowledge you are favored by God and accept His grace for your life.
2. **Confront Fear**  
Let the words "Do not be afraid" silence your anxieties about the future or God's plans.
3. **Live as a Subject of His Kingdom**  
Pray for His kingdom to come, live obediently, and point others to Jesus as the true, everlasting King.
4. **Serve with Quiet Faithfulness**  
Respond with humility and trust, even in small, unseen acts, just as Mary trusted God with the great calling on her life.
5. **Praise and Worship**  
Express awe and gratitude for God's promise fulfilled in Jesus, the King whose reign never ends.

### **III. I will humbly submit to God in faith.**

Manner in which it was received

#### **Luke 1:34-38**

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> 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. <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."

<sup>38</sup> "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

#### A. Unpack Text

1. Vs. 34 is key to the story.
  - a. Luke does not shy away from this detail.
  - b. He doesn't say this quietly under his breath.
  - c. Luke emphasizes this truth.

## Question

10. Where did the sun come from?
11. How did the earth come into existence?

12. What keeps your heart beating?
13. How does the earth spin on its axis?
14. What makes the earth rotate around the sun at just the right distance so humanity can live and thrive?
15. Who tells the **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** to migrate from Montreal, Canada to the same back yard in Guatemala every year.
16. Who told you to breathe while you were sitting here today?

**Answer**

- Of course I believe in the virgin birth.

- I. **I will accept God's sovereignty.**
- II. **I will gladly receive God's word.**
- III. **I will humbly submit to God in faith.**