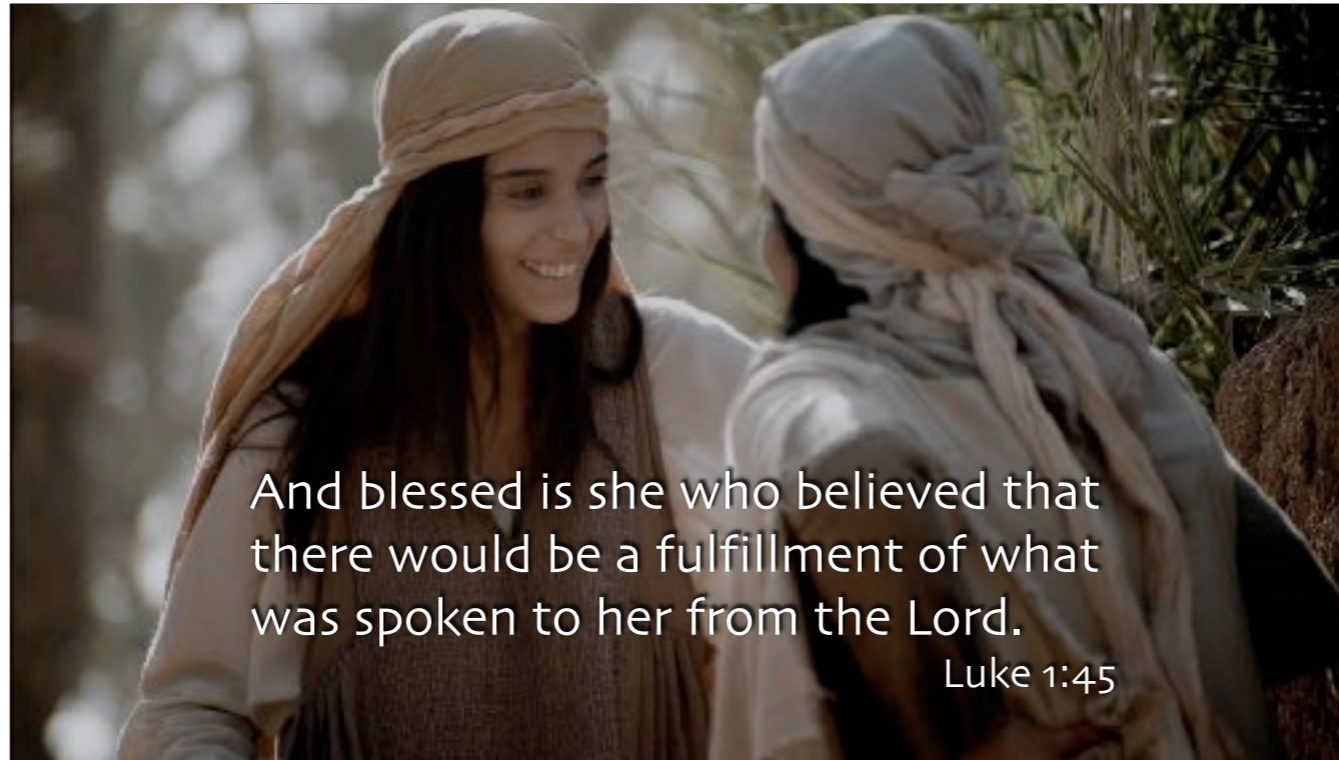




- Luke 1:45
- When you think of Mary, the mother of Jesus, what one word would you use to describe her character?
 - For most, we think of her humility, obedience, submission
 - Which are all true, and good suggestions.
- But I like what Elizabeth praises her for.



- Luke 1:45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”
- Elizabeth summarizes what is so special about Mary
- What is it that Mary believed?
 - At least four things
 - Favored By God
 - She would conceive by the Holy Spirit
 - Who Jesus would be
 - God can do the impossible



• Luke 1:26-30

- 26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.



- 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"
 - 29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.
 - 30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.



- Favored
- (CWSB Dictionary)
 - To grace, highly honor or greatly favor.
 - declares the virgin Mary to be highly favored, approved of God to conceive the Son of God through the Holy Spirit.
- (Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary)
 - primarily signified "to make graceful or gracious,"
 - "to cause to find favor," Luke 1:28, "highly favored" (marg., "endued with grace")



- What does it mean to be favored by God?
 - Mary
 - greatly troubled: agitated; disturbed
 - tried to discern: thinking through
 - afraid: alarmed
 - The appearance of an angel is rare, unexpected, and would cause us to wonder and be concerned.



- The angel is letting her know that God approves of her and wants to do something very special for her.
 - And Mary believed this.
 - Typically, most of us would be hard pressed to accept this as true, even when spoken to us by God.
 - We will demur, we will deny
 - But why would we reject God's favor?
 - Moses certainly didn't accept that God was choosing him to deliver Israel from Egypt.



- What we know of Mary before this: descendant of David; virgin
 - Why does she have God's favor?
 - WE DON'T KNOW.
 - But that's not the point
 - God chooses whom he chooses: Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, David
- The point is ... God chooses to show us favor!



- Romans 9:14-16 (ESV) 14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.
- Romans 9:18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.



- Romans 11:30-32 (ESV) 30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. 32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.



- He has blessed us
- Ephesians 1:6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.
 - The only other use of *charitōō* is in Eph. 1:6 where believers are said to be "accepted in the beloved," i.e., objects of grace. (See *huiothesía* [G5206], adoption, occurring in Eph. 1:5)
 - In *charitōō* there is not only the impartation of God's grace, but also the adoption into God's family in imparting special favor in distinction to *charízomai* (G5483), to give grace, to remit, forgive.
- Challenge you to accept this special place you have in God's family.



- 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son
 - 34 And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”
 - 35 And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you



- Believing that one can conceive without having sexual relations goes against our knowledge and experience. It's just not possible.
- Mary understands that as a virgin she cannot conceive.
- Trusting in God, she knows he won't harm her, or tempt her to evil
- So how is it possible to conceive?
- Even the explanation doesn't really help.



- But ... Mary accepted what she was told.
 - The difficult Gideon had when told that God had chosen him to deliver Israel.
 - Multiple signs and assurances were necessary.
 - And Jehovah provided these, very patiently to help him to know it is true.
 - I don't think that we should consider this was "easy" for Mary.
 - But because she trusted God, she accepted what she was told.
 - She believed there would be a fulfillment.



- 31 and you shall call his name Jesus.
 - 32 He 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,
 - 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever,
 - and of his kingdom there will be no end.”
 - 35 therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.



- All parents have big dreams for their children.
 - Doctor, President, Quarterback
- Mary is told that her son will be
 - Great and Holy
 - Son of the Most High (Deity?)
 - King, like David; kingdom forever
 - Son of God (Deity!)



- Mary believes!
 - These are not just her dreams for her child — probably no one would go this far?
 - This is revealed: deity, king, holy.
- How do you accept that your child will be the Messiah?
 - Because God tells you?
 - Because of who God is



- Prophecy and the Zeal of Jehovah

- Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV) 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.
 - The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.



- Treasured Moments

- Shepherds:

- Luke 2:18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.



- Simeon:
 - Luke 2:34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”



- Temple:

- Luke 2:49: And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”
- 51 And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.
- And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.



- Wedding at Cana - John 2:1-12
 - 3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.”
 - 4 And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”
 - 5 His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”
- What was in her heart about her son?
 - What did she believe?



- Mary at the cross.
 - John 19:24-27 (ESV) So the soldiers did these things, 25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
 - Simeon: and a sword will pierce through your own soul also (Luke 2:35)
- What did Mary know and believe about her son, even as he was dying on the cross?
 - Even to the very end, she is steadfast in her faith.



- Luke 1:37 For nothing will be impossible with God.
- Genesis 18:11-15 (ESV) 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?” 13 The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ 14 Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.” 15 But Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “No, but you did laugh.”
- Mary accepted and submitted: it will be fulfilled.



And 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 1:38

- Luke 1:38 (ESV) 38 And 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.
 - Do you believe?
 - Do you trust?
 - Do you submit?
- Mary teaches us that we can do these things because of who our God is.
 - Believe.
- Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

We implore you
on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

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Add Final Song/songs

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She Who Believed: Mary the Mother of Jesus

Luke 1:45

Synopsis: Elizabeth praises Mary because she believed. When Gabriel told Mary of God's favor and plan for her and her son, she believed and accepted God's will. She is a powerful reminder of how powerful belief really is.

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”