

Jesus...the *Son of God* Luke 1:26~38

This morning we find ourselves with what arguably might be the most important doctrine in all of scripture...the *miraculous conception* of Jesus Christ. The teaching that this child known as Jesus, was different than every other child born into this world, in that He was born of a virgin. The teaching declares that this woman, named Mary, supernaturally and miraculously conceived a child, without ever having had sexual relations with a man. Declaring that she conceived a child, by the divine workings of God. Unlike every other child that has been born into this world, conceived by through the seed of a man, this child had no earthly father, but rather, this child's father is God... According to the scripture, Jesus is the "*Son of God*." Listen, if this teaching is not true, then everything we believe is in vain, because if it's not true, then Jesus is just another man...

Luke is the only one of the four gospels, who mentions this encounter between Mary and the angel. Mark doesn't mention the birth of either John or Jesus, he begins with John baptizing in the wilderness. John's gospel is vastly different than the other three. He doesn't mention the birth either, at least in the *traditional* sense. Rather than a child in the manger, John describes the birth in terms of the *word of God* taking on flesh. He sees the promises of God coming in the person of Jesus Christ. Matthew's account begins with the genealogy of Jesus, witnessing that he is of the proper bloodline. But Matthew records nothing to the angels visit. Matthew's account of the birth begins with Mary already pregnant, and facing the issue of her future husband contemplating leaving her. To which, Matthew records that an angel of the Lord (*Gabriel?*) comes to him in a dream, explaining the situation. Thus the account we have here from Luke, is the only one that speaks to the events leading up to the conception of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke begins with another interaction between a human and an angel... Angels serve an important role in God's plan. Though many may not believe in angels, angels are mentioned some 192 times in scripture, often taking on the form of men. Abraham had an encounter with angels, three of them. They were heading to Sodom and Gomorrah to confirm the wickedness that was allegedly taking place there. Two of these angels visited with Lot, and some of the townsmen tried to have sexual relationships with them. They warned Lot to get out, and as they were leaving, fire and brimstone fell from heaven on the city...

Jacob had an encounter with an angel, an angel of the Lord went before the camp of Israel. Balaam, Elijah, David, Daniel, and Zechariah...all had encounters with angels. Hebrews 13:2 tells us...²*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.* That insinuates, that they may look "*normal*," like you and me. Who knows, we may have met an angel, and didn't know it.

Who knows, I might be an angel...(Teri's like...NO!!!!!!!!!!!!) Ha, ha ha... Well, I don't know if I've ever met an angel of the Lord or not, but I am quiet sure, that *I have met* some of the angels of Satan. They may look like normal people, but they are evil!

Well here, Luke writes that six months into Elisabeth's pregnancy, Gabriel returns to earth, to a little town about 90 miles north of Jerusalem, in the region of Galilee, to a town called *Nazareth*. Very little is known about Nazareth, being that there is *no mention of it* in the entire O.T. Even so, we can gather a little about the town, in the N.T., by a comment that a man by the name of Nathaniel. A man named Philip had just met Jesus and began to follow him, came to Nathaniel and declared they had found the promised Messiah, *Jesus of Nazareth*. Hearing that Jesus was from Nazareth, Nathaniel comments...⁴⁶*And Nathaniel said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?*

Though he says very little, what he said says a lot... The statement itself testifies that if nothing else, Nazareth was an insignificant place, nothing or no one from there would ever be associated with something great. I found, that Nazareth was a tiny little village, nestled in a valley between two

mountains, and likely had 500 or less people living there at the time. Likely a place for the poor, land was cheap. We know that Mary and Joseph were poor, by their offering two birds for their son Jesus at the temple. The requirement was a lamb and one bird. But a provision was made for the poor, that if they didn't have a lamb, they could offer either two turtledoves or two pigeons, which Mary and Joseph did. (Luke 2:24).

Have you ever wondered, given that God could have chosen anywhere He wanted to, and to whom he wanted to, why He chose Nazareth, and this lowly and unlikely couple? I'm convinced that it simply reveals the "*humility*" of our God... The opposite of humility is *arrogance, haughtiness*... Humility is a very beautiful spirit, while arrogance is ugly. I want to say, I am so thankful that God is humble, so humble in fact that He is willing to lower Himself to have communion **with me!**

Another reason I think He chose to come the way He did, so He could identify with common man, with his struggles, his hardships and sufferings. Hebrews 4 says, ¹⁵*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

When He humbled himself to come into this world, I believe He went to the very bottom. And I believe He did so, so that He would experience all the hardships of life. Jesus understands what we are going through... He truly identifies with us.

Luke tells us that, during Elisabeth's sixth month of pregnancy, God sent Gabriel to Nazareth...

(Vs 27) ²⁷*To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.*

Several things we learn here...one being, she was ²⁷*espoused to a man whose name was Joseph*, The fact that she was "*espoused*" to Joseph, meant more than she was simply "*engaged*" to him. Though it does bear some resemblance to modern day engagement, the Jewish form was much more binding. To be espoused to someone in that day, was considered the same as being married, with the exception that you didn't live together, and the marriage was not yet consummated. Typically, the couple would be espoused for about one year, concluding with a weeklong feast and the marriage ceremony. Unlike engagement of our day, in order for an espoused couple to separate, they would have to go through the process of divorce. In Matthew account, he tells us that when Joseph learned Mary was pregnant, (and knowing it wasn't his), was going to "*put her away*" privately, meaning he wasn't going to make a big scene, but simply *quietly divorce* her. But the angel came to Joseph, and told him the whole story...

Another thing we learn here...is that Joseph was... ^{27b}*...of the house of David;*

This is very significant because the *promised Messiah* would be of David's bloodline. He had to be of the lineage of David in order to have any rights to the throne. Something else that is significant about Joseph being "*of the house of David*," is that Bethlehem was the hometown of King David. This would prove vital in bringing about the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy of the Messiah being born in Bethlehem. As Luke will explain later, in God's perfect timing, the governor called for a taxing, which required all those of the lineage of David to come to Bethlehem, (*house of David*), resulting in His birth in Bethlehem.

All very important and significant things, but the overall context here, the heart of this passage is on that of the "*Miraculous Conception of Jesus Christ*." Luke stresses the fact that Mary was a "*virgin*." The angel came... ²⁷*To a virgin*..... *the virgin's name was Mary*. With the emphasis being that a "*virgin would conceive*" and bear a child. **Impossible, right?** Mary thought so...in verse 34, Mary replies to the angels declaration by asking, "*How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?*" Referring to the fact that she had never had sexual relations with a man. Nearly all the other translations put it this way, "*How can this*

be, being that I'm a virgin?" Fair question...right? If you remember, Zacharias was chastised by the angel for questioning. But that was different, as long as there is the act, then there is the "*possibility*" that it could happen. In Mary's case, (*humanly speaking*) this was truly an *impossibility*!

Contrary to popular belief, you can't get pregnant by drinking from a certain water fountain... You know that's the old saying at the workplace when several women become pregnant in close proximity to each other. "*Don't drink the water...*" Listen, it's not in the water...and if you are not clear on the matter, we need to talk, and do so quickly before you end up with more kids than you know what to do with. My point of that little story is, *outside of sexual relations*...it is **humanly impossible** to conceive a child!

The angel answers Mary's question by declaring that...*with God nothing shall be impossible*...

He declares...³⁵...*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

The angel declares that the "*Spirit of God*" will come upon you, and you will conceive. This child's Father will be God Himself! This child that will be conceived in your womb, will be the "*Son*" of God!

Beloved it is imperative that we have the right view of the conception of the individual known as Jesus of Nazareth. That's why Luke strongly emphasizes the "*Virginity*" of Mary. In doing so, he is declaring that the impossibility of this being any man's child!

Listen, the entire Christian faith, whether any of this is true or not, our salvation, everything...hinges on whether or not Mary was truly a virgin. Number one, the prophet Isaiah declared, ²³*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

The scripture requires that the Messiah be born of a virgin... If Mary had not been a virgin, meaning that she had had sexual relations with Joseph, or any other man for that matter...*then everything we believe is in vain!* As good as he was, along with all the miracles, and teachings, if he was of the seed of a man, then that would mean that Jesus was "*just a man.*"

No one questions the fact that there was "*a real man*" called Jesus, whose mother was Mary. Nor do they question that he lived in Israel, and made a major impact on the world, because it is undeniable. But many do question his claims to be the "*Son of God!*"

Beloved, Christianity teaches that this Jesus of Nazareth was a "*God-Man.*" Meaning that he was part man, in the sense that he had a physical body like a man, which came on the part of Mary. But at the same time, he was God, meaning that the "*Life*" that was in this body, this shell, was the "*Eternal life of God.*"

God in the flesh... Beloved, Jesus Christ is the "*Son of God.*" Through Mary, the God of the universe, the creator of all things, entered our world, taking on the form of a man. He humbled himself and submitted himself unto the hands of men. Think about that, the creator of man, submitting himself to those he created. A holy God committing himself into the hands of sinners. Why? To show how much He loves them... Christ was born for the express purpose of dying... He came into this world to lay His life down for sinners, to make an atonement for our sins!