

## *Merry Christmas!!*

Luke 1:26-38 (TLB)

*"The following month God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin, Mary, engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Congratulations, favored lady! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be frightened, Mary," the angel told her, "for God has decided to wonderfully bless you! Very soon now, you will become pregnant and have a baby boy, and you are to name him 'Jesus.' He shall be very great and shall be called the Son of God. And the Lord God shall give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he shall reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom shall never end!" Mary asked the angel, "But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of God shall overshadow you; so the baby born to you will be utterly holy—the Son of God. Furthermore, six months ago your Aunt Elizabeth—'the barren one,' they called her—became pregnant in her old age! For every promise from God shall surely come true." Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to do whatever he wants. May everything you said come true." And then the angel disappeared."*

For me this passage has always been a source of wonder and blessing. I thought you would appreciate some thoughts I delivered from this account some years ago that certainly have a current application.

- a. Because we are in Christ, we are likewise highly favored as Mary was.
- b. Because we are in Christ, the Lord is not only around us, but in us.
- c. Before truth takes on outward character and behavior, it must first be present as a revelation in our heart.
- d. Truth that changes our life will create an overflow influencing others in our environment and will lead to change in them.
- e. If what we claim God implants in our heart doesn't change our life, it was nothing more than a good idea.
- f. Presumed revelation that doesn't produce a noticeable change in our life and environment, is not revelation, it is simply more knowledge that occupies our capacity to store information.
- g. When truth is received, it requires our willing submission to what it declares if it is to take on life-changing power in our life.
- h. Just because God tells us He is going to work His plan in our life, does not mean we have to understand what He is doing.
- i. Any Word of promise that God implants in our heart, He also gives that Word the life and power necessary to bring it to pass.
- j. Faith is not blind, it just ignores the stupidity and lack of wisdom of this world. Faith ignores the natural impossibilities before us and focuses on God's abilities as found in Him, not us.
- k. Relationship transcends the power of legalism (religious obedience) that we often practice in order to gain God's favor and blessing, but fail.
- l. Legalism will never release the creative power of God in our life. As with Mary, relationship provides an environment for God to do the impossible.