

### WARM-UP

- Share surprising news that you've recently heard. What about it got your attention?
- Recall a time when you were chosen to work on a task or project. How did you respond?
- When faced with challenges, do you wait for favorable conditions or would you rather push through? Why?

**WORD** *<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"*

**LUKE 1:26-28**

(Read also **LUKE 1:29-38** and **MATTHEW 1:18-25**.)

Christmas is a celebration because Jesus is the greatest miracle we can ever receive. However, when we look back at the first Christmas, it was a messy one. Mary and Joseph's relationship took an unexpected turn. The would-be Savior and King had no place to be born in. God indeed had something great in store for humanity, but He was also intentional and involved in the personal lives of those in the first Christmas. God did miracles in and through them so that the world would know Him. This season, as we end the year having trusted God to do the miraculous, let's learn how He does miracles in and through us.

## 1 | God chose Mary to miraculously bear the Christ.

*<sup>30</sup>And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.”*

**LUKE 1:30-31**

When God sent an angel to speak to Mary, Mary could not understand why this was happening. The angel encouraged her to not be afraid and told her that she would bear a son, *the Son of the Most High* who will be the King. She grew uncertain, but God assured her that the Holy Spirit is with her to do miracles in and through her, *for nothing will be impossible with the Lord*. As Mary heard these things, she chose to believe and obey God. How would you respond if God chose you to fulfill something incomprehensible yet great?

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## 2 | God assured Joseph of His miraculous plan.

*<sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”*

**MATTHEW 1:20-21**

It must've been a shock to Joseph when he found out that Mary was pregnant. He already had plans—she was betrothed to him and they were to be married. News of her pregnancy would cause shame and judgment upon them. But God spoke to Joseph, encouraging him to take Mary as his wife. God reminded Joseph that he was from David's line and told him

that the miracle in Mary's womb is the promised Messiah. Though it seemed like a lose-lose situation, Joseph was assured that God was with him, so he humbly trusted God. How do you respond when your plans don't go your way?

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### 3 | God revealed that Jesus is the promised King who will reign forever.

*<sup>32</sup>"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, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."* **LUKE 1:32-33**

As God spoke to Joseph and Mary, He was reminding them that what was happening is the fulfillment of His promise. Jesus is the Savior King through whom He would establish His eternal kingdom (2 Samuel 7:12-16). He is the *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace* (Isaiah 9:6), a King who would rule with righteousness and justice. Yet, He is also the way by which God would save the whole of humanity—our greatest miracle indeed. What does this tell us about the character and plan of God?

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Even in challenging situations, God speaks to His people and is faithful to fulfill His promises. As we celebrate Christmas, may we give thanks to God for who He is and how He works, and may we make Him known to everyone around us.

## APPLICATION

- Is God calling you to do something that seems impossible? Like Mary, will you trust God and His plans for you? What practical steps can you take this week in light of this?
- Recall the miracles God has done in and through your life this year. How has He been faithful to you?
- When you meet your relatives and friends this Christmas, how can you tell them about who God is and what He has done for you? Like Joseph, are you willing to do what may be uncomfortable and make tough decisions in order for Jesus to be known?

## PRAYER

- Praise God for fulfilling His promises, especially for sending Jesus. Thank Him that He chooses to be involved in your life and invites you to take part in His redemptive work.
- Ask God for humility to trust Him even when the odds are against you. Pray that despite the challenges you will face, you will have the boldness and passion to make Him known.
- Thank God that His plans bring about true salvation and peace. Pray that you will take this to heart and proclaim His goodness and power to those you will encounter.



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