

# Mary and the Advent of Christ:

## A Gospel View

**Scripture:** *Luke 1:26-56.*

**Summary of Sermon:** Our *response* of faith to God's call through the gospel is *rewarded* by God in the face of the hard *realities* of life in this fallen world.

### Introduction

**Luke 1:26-56** is an important Advent passage because it narrates the announcement of the advent of Christ into the world, to Mary, the mother of Christ.

But the Advent season also reminds us of the coming or the reception of Christ by faith into our hearts, and what the implications of this are for our Christian walk with God.

So, this morning, we are taking a gospel view of this Advent passage to see the three ways in which it reminds us of, and can guide and encourage, our walk with God.

First, Mary's **response** of faith to the angel's announcement to her of the advent of Christ, reminds us of our walk with God. Second, we see this from the hard **reality** of Mary's response. And third, we see this from the **reward** of Mary's response.

### I. Response

- 1) From **verses 26 to 28** we read that God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth to the virgin Mary who was pledged to be married to Joseph, a descendant of David.
- 2) From **verses 30 to 33**, the angel announced to the virgin Mary the incredible news that she was going to conceive and give birth to a son, whom she will call Jesus, the Son of the Most High God.
- 3) In **verse 34**, Mary responded to the angel very skeptically by asking this question, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

- 4) As a result of Mary's question, from **verses 35 to 37**, the angel patiently explained his message more clearly to her, and as the angel did so, God imparted into Mary's heart the faith she needed to accept this incredible message of grace to her from God.
- 5) So, in **verse 38**, Mary responds by saying simply, "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled." In the **KJV**, Mary's words are, "Be it unto me according to thy word."
- 6) Every Christian who has received God's gift of faith to come and be a disciple of Christ Jesus is like Mary because **Eph. 2:8-9** tells us that when God calls us to come and follow Jesus, He gives us the faith to believe that He, the God who made us, has come to remake us in Christ Jesus.
- 7) So, we can summarize **our first R** by saying that Mary's **response** of faith reminds us that our own Christian lives begin with our receiving from God the gift of faith that we need to respond to His call to become faithful followers of Christ.

## **II. Reality**

- 1) Mary's response of faith shows us that she surrendered her will completely to God. But let us think for a moment about the hard reality that Mary was being confronted with by her faith response.
- 2) Mary knew that if she was found to be pregnant before marriage, her family, and the whole community, could stone her to death because the Law of Moses specified that in **Deut. 22:13-21**. Mary also knew that she and her family would face a life of disgrace.
- 3) In her song of praise to God, in **verse 55**, Mary connects God's promise to Abraham with God's promise made to her in this passage because her response of faith was exactly like Abraham's response of faith in **Gen. 12:1-3**.
- 4) When God promised Abraham in **Gen. 12:1-3** that He would bring salvation to the world through Abraham, God told Abraham to leave behind his home, his country, and everything he had known, and to set out to a place where He would show Abraham.

- 5) This is a picture of our own journey of Christian discipleship because anybody who wants to truly be a disciple of Christ must basically do the same thing as Mary and Abraham did.
- 6) This is because embarking on the life journey of following Jesus is an act of surrender to God in which we take off our hands from our lives and we completely leave the command and control of our lives to God.
- 7) So, we can summarize **our second R** by saying that the hard **reality** of Mary's faith response shows us that our own Christian journey involves our accepting that following Jesus involves complete surrender to Him, no matter the cost to us.

### **III. Reward**

- 1) In the **KJV**, when Mary says in **verse 38**, "Be it unto me according to thy word" those words are very close to the words her son, Christ Jesus when in the Garden of Gethsemane in **Matthew 26:39**, He said to the Father, "Not my will, but your will be done."
- 2) When Christ said that, He knew that His obedience to the Father would mean a plunge into infinite suffering and pain unlike any that anyone had ever known.
- 3) But Christ did that for your salvation, and for my salvation. Christ Jesus Himself, therefore, is our supreme example of what true Christian discipleship looks like.

This is why Christ can call you and I today to follow Him, and to be His disciples. So, our greatest motive for surrendering to Christ and becoming His disciples is what He did for us.

- 4) The good news of the gospel announces to us that if we commit ourselves to truly follow Christ as His disciples, we can trust that He will always be truly committed to us. That is the great and wonderful reward of our Christian discipleship.

- 5) Look at Mary and her reward. Today most people in the world know who Mary is. Because she responded in faith to God's call of discipleship, she has become one of the greatest women in history. But Mary's greater reward was to have been chosen by God to have the human Christ physically formed in her.
- 6) Our greater reward, however, as Christians, is that we have been chosen by God to become the disciples of Christ, and to thereby have Christ spiritually formed in us, in our lives, in our behavior, in our relationships, in our thoughts, and in all our responses to life.
- 7) So, we can summarize **our third R** by saying that the **reward** of Mary's faith response shows us that if we truly give ourselves to God's call to follow Christ Jesus, God will reward us by doing great things in our lives, even in all our troubles.

### **Conclusion**

So, this is how this passage shows us, first, Mary's **response** of faith, second, the hard **reality** of her response, and third, the **reward** of her faith response. We have briefly reflected on how these **3R's** relate to our own Christian lives, and our walk with God.

So, my dear brothers and sisters, Mary's response of faith in this Advent passage shows us that in our walk with God, we are called to respond to the Lord by surrendering everything we are, and everything we have, to Him in complete faith.

I am here to announce to you this morning, that if, and when, we do so, one day, when Christ returns to this world at His Second and ultimate Advent, we will find that it was really and truly worthwhile for us to do so.

Let us pray!

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