

DATE: December 7, 2008 Communion Sermon

TEXT: Luke 1:26-38

TITLE: "Lessons on Mary I"



For this advent season I have decided to look at the birth narratives in Luke. I have decided to spend three or four weeks looking at Mary. Our text this morning is called "The Annunciation". I realize there will be no new revelations in these sermons... we have all heard the story 100,s of times before... my prayer is that no matter how often we hear the great truth of Christ's birth our heart will be excited and we will once again praise God.

Before we look at Mary I want to share one brief aside. Notice in our text that the angel Gabriel is the messenger from God sent to Mary. This is the primary purpose of angels... they are servants of God. In scripture we have only three angels called by name. Interesting enough they are all male names. **First**, is Michael. He is spoken about in Daniel, in Jude and in Revelations. He is called the archangel in Jude.

Second, is Gabriel. He is named in Daniel and in Matthew and Luke. He appears to be the messenger of the Throne.

Third, is Lucifer. He is named in Isaiah as the Fallen angel who became Satan.

In the Apocrypha, the books written between the Old and the New Testaments two additional angels are named. They are Raphael and Uriel.

In our text this morning we see Gabriel, the Messenger of the Throne of God, go to a little, obscure village and speak to an unimportant, peasant girl named Mary. What I want to do this week and next week is look at this girl and see the tremendous lessons on obedience that she teaches us. I believe the primary lesson we receive from Mary is obedience. This morning, as we prepare to come to the table of the Lord, I will share one lesson and next week two additional lessons on obedience.

Lesson # 1 notice the preparations needed for obedience. *Ironsides*, in the commentary written on this text states....

It is very evident that Mary was chosen, not simply because she was a virgin, but because of her deep spirituality and her subjection to the will of God. When He chose a young woman for the high honor of becoming the mother of the Savior, He did not take some frivolous worldly girl, living in carelessness and enjoying a butterfly existence. He chose a pious, lovely young woman, who delighted in doing the will of God and ever sought to be subject to His Word.

We must apply this lesson to our lives. Are we willing to echo the words of the Mary "I am the Lords servant, May it be to me as you have said." We must prepare ourselves to be men and women of God centering our lives on Him.

I have had a number of people come to me and say **"If I knew God's definitive will for my life I would obey."** They then add **"but I'm just not sure what God's will is."**

I believe God is constantly revealing His will to us... often we are not prepared to see it. *Gary Maeder has written a book entitled God's Will For Your Life states this about discovering the will of God...*

The will of God is frequently approached from the "program" angle: What college does God want me to attend? What Job does he want me in? What does he want be to do today? These are all valid questions, but God's will for you is not fundamentally a program, but is rather a personal, growing relationship with Him. In short, it's not what you do; it's what you are. The will of God concerning the formation of our characters is universal: we are all to be conformed to Jesus Christ and be led by and display the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The primary will of God for our lives is that we become His children. We become His children by surrendering to Him and molding our lives to Him. As Meader says it is not a program, it is a relationship. Allow me to conclude the quote from *Meader...*

The overwhelming majority of God's will for your life concerns you character and is revealed in the Bible. Discovering the will of God for your life is thus primarily a matter of acceptance and not of guidance; John 17:7 states "If any man is willing to do His will, He shall know of the teaching."

I saw an example of this with my parents. They tried to guide me but did not try to force me into a preset mold. My parents were concerned with what I did but were far more concerned that I was a happy person.

God does care what we do... but is most concerned with who we are. Mary was a Godly woman. She was prepared to act in obedience to the Word of God. We must prepare ourselves to hear the Word of God. First and foremost we must be willing to obey. *James 1:22* gives this command...

Do not merely listen to the Word and so deceive yourselves. do what it says

1 Peter 1:14 tells us to...

prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed

God reveals His will for us in his Word, the bible; in his people, in fellowship; in His quiet voice, in prayer. We need to be close to Him to hear as He speaks to us. We must be prepared to obey.

AMEN