



Series: A Thrill of Hope

Date: December 19th, 2021

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Text: Luke 1:26-38

Title: When God Interrupts Your Life Part 2 (aka The Remix)

Intro

What do you do when things don't work out the way you had hoped they would? When you are forced to change directions, change your entire life, do you get frustrated, or are you one of those flexible people who seem to just go with it, no matter what "it" is? It appears as you read the bible that God has a tendency of interrupting people's lives in a huge way, Abraham was out there chilling in Ur, and God interrupted that and called him into a journey of faith, Moses was doing fine in median herding sheep, but God wanted him to go free his people, Jonah was okay just prophesying in Israel, but there were people in Nineveh who needed to hear from God, Nehemiah was doing great in the King's palace, but Jerusalem needed to be rebuilt, Peter was doing well fishing..well fish, but God was calling him to be a fisher of men, and two weeks ago we saw Joseph who was about to be a husband, and little did he know his wife to be was already pregnant. There have been moments when God has interrupted my life both in monumental and small ways; one of those

moments was back in 2014 when the Lord gave me a desire to go to seminary. At this point in my life, I thought I would work myself up to a lucrative career in Media, but God had other plans. At home, In Kenya, I worked on FM radio and did a little work on tv. The trajectory was looking great, so when the desire came to go to seminary, I was not all the way convinced, but through some hard lessons, my Wife M'Lynn and I put our yes on the table and moved from Nairobi to Texas.

I would love to tell you that it was easy, but the truth is, that first year was hard on me. I was on a student visa which meant I could only work 20 hours on campus and M'Lynn was working full time teaching and coaching volleyball. Not being able to provide was killing me inside, not forgetting I didn't know anyone, I missed my family, my friends, my Job. There were days I would go home after class and sit on the kitchen floor of our little apartment and cry. But the Lord knew what he was doing, now looking back, I realize it was all worth it.

I don't know if your interruption will be a big thing or a small thing, but I do know it's coming.

So today, we'll go through Luke 1:26-38, and by looking at how Mary responded to God interrupting her life, you will see three essential truths to remember when God does interrupt your lives. My prayer is that these truths will give you that thrill of hope we've been talking about throughout this advent season, and you will choose to



believe the God, who is in control of all things, even in the interruption.

TEXT: Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth. The passage preceding our Text tells the story of angel Gabriel in Jerusalem, telling Zachariah that his wife Elizabeth would have a child in their old age and that God would use this child to usher in the long-awaited messiah. We are, of course, talking about John the Baptist. Now in our Text, the script has changed. We move from Jerusalem the religious capital, to a small village called Nazareth – Nazareth was so insignificant that in John 1 when Nathaniel was told by Philip that they had found the messiah and he is from Nazareth, Nathaniel responded by saying, "can anything good come from Nazareth" In the previous announcement the receivers of the message were well-established in the community. Zachariah was a priest, he must have been well respected, but in our Text, the angel Gabriel comes to an unknown girl who is about to be married. What a contrast!

We learn that this girl was a virgin. Clearly, Luke thinks this information is very important to the readers; why do I say this? Look at verse 27, Luke mentioned it twice ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of

David. The virgin's name was Mary. (We spent a lot of time in the song of Solomon, so I don't think I need to explain what a virgin is right lol)

So here we have a young virgin, unknown about to be married girl, and she is about to receive the most important news in the whole of the world. Her life is about to be interrupted. One commentator says, "from all indicators, Mary's life would not have been extraordinary. She would marry humbly, give birth to numerous poor children, never travel farther than a few miles from home, and one day like thousands of others- a, nobody in a nothing town in the middle of nowhere" But that was not what God has instore for her. Look with me at verse 28

²⁸ And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰ Then the angel told her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

First, I don't know about you, but if an angel was standing right in front of me and then proceeded to speak to me, I don't think I would be able to say a word; that's probably why Gabriel says to Mary "Do not be afraid." This is the "I'm not trying to scare you conversation - before the real conversation." But notice what Gabrielle says to Mary, "Greetings, favored woman!" and again "you have found favor with God" The word translated favor in our Text has



the same meaning as the word translated grace in Ephesians 1:6 where Paul praises God for his "glorious grace that he lavished on us in Jesus"¹ Clearly Mary was an upright young girl who had kept herself until marriage. She is meek and humble, but that's not why she was favored. God chose to interrupt her life with His favor purely out of His unmerited grace and not because of anything she had done.

When God interrupts your life, here is the first thing you need to remember

1. **God's favor is not based on who we are or where we are from; God's favor is based on who God is.**

Our girl Mary was from a humble background, yet the Lord's grace reached her all the way in Nazareth. But sometimes, when God interrupts your life, you might be tempted to wish for a different story for yourself, you might be tempted to think you are not qualified, or it's not fair, and I get it, maybe you don't like the life you are leading, you don't know how on earth this is for your good. But have you considered that perhaps the dissatisfaction comes from your desire to build your own kingdom instead of God's kingdom?

Listen to me; God's sovereign hand works all things for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose. My encouragement to you is to be open to what the Lord is doing even in your humble circumstances. I also encourage you to open your eyes to see what God is doing in the lives of people around you, people who the world might label as poor, weak or not from the right neighborhood - join God in the work he is doing. In Deuteronomy 7, God tells the nation of Israel he did not choose them because they were numerous, strong, and mighty. In fact, they were the fewest among the nations. God's favor is not dependent on who you are or where you are from. It's based on who God is.

Let continue from verse 31

³¹Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end." ³⁴Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?" ³⁵The angel replied to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of

¹ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Eph 1:6). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.



the most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." ²

It's so like God that he would reveal to Mary, an unknown girl from a nowhere town, two of the greatest mysteries in the universe. The Trinity and Incarnation (Trinity this is the word theologians use to speak of the three persons of God, the father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and Incarnation refers to God becoming a man in the person of Jesus Christ. What wonderful, hope bringing news Gabriel delivered to Mary, to Israel, to the world, to you, and to me. This son who would be born would be named Jesus, literally "the Lord is salvation." You see, the nation of Israel was supposed to become a means or a vehicle of God's ruling and blessing the earth, but the people proved unworthy. Generation after generation proved unworthy, God chose David to become King, but even this great man who was after God's own heart proved unworthy.

But God had promised David that He would establish a kingdom through David's lineage that would last forever; this kingdom would be ruled by a worthy King, who would reign forever. This King is Jesus, our God with. Listen to what Daniel says about this King, ¹⁴ "He was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that those of every people,

nation, and language should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed." ³ (Daniel 7:14) So you see the answer to the question, Mary, did you know, is a resounding yes! Gabriel told her this much. This King Jesus offered up his life to reconcile humanity to God and to each other, and He invites all of us to repent and believe in him and not only that but to join him in His kingdom work as his workmanship created for good works.

Now, I recognize that this news might be a little hard to accept for some of you, and you would be in great company. Mary thought as much she asked Gabriel, "How can this be since I have not had sexual relations with a man?" You might be saying the same this morning; maybe you have questions about the faith, there is something that doesn't make sense to you. First, let me just say Pastor Spence would love to answer all your hard questions. Secondly, there are mainly two kinds of doubts; there is the kind of doubt that says, "there is no way this could be true" this is more of a statement. It's what Zachariah said to Gabriel. It showed a lack of trust in God (please read through Luke 1 to see this). This kind of doubt is proud and close-minded. Timothy Keller says it "refuses to consider the possibility whose purposes and power are far beyond

² [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Lk 1:31–37). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

³ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Da 7:14). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.



its comprehension." What he is saying here is this kind of doubt lacks intellectual honesty.

Then there is the kind of doubt that says, "how can these things be true" this is more of an inquisitive doubt; it's the person that says, Lord, I don't understand what you are doing, but I'm willing and ready to learn. This kind of doubt leads to genuine questions that come from a position of meekness and openness.

Although Mary had some doubts, she trusted God. on the other hand, Zechariah asked for more evidence from God, but Mary asked for an explanation. You see, Zechariah says he can't be sure about God's plan; Mary says she doesn't understand. Zechariah tells God, you can't do this. Mary asks, how are you going to do this? So, what are you saying this morning? Are you asking to understand, or are you defiantly wanting more evidence? I encourage you to keep asking questions and be open to what the Lord will do in your heart. He clearly brought you to church this morning to listen to this message; he can interrupt your life with the truth of the gospel.

Now church, when God interrupts your life, the second thing to remember

2. **There is nothing impossible with God**

Now Gabriel does something else I find very compelling, he tells Mary her life was not the only one interrupted by God's favor, ³⁶ **And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless.** There is this Black movie called Menace 2 society. Every time the characters bring out a lesson, like a teachable moment, someone pops on the screen and says MESSAGE, meaning this is important, pay attention! (I feel like someone should jump on stage screaming EVIDENCE) Because it looks like Gabriel is saying to Mary, there is actual evidence that what I'm telling you is accurate and true. Go visit your cousin. And as if that's not enough Angel Gabriel gives Mary one of the greatest faith-building statements in all the bible -look at verse- ³⁷ **For nothing will be impossible with God.** Take a moment and let this sink in. We get this profound pronouncement because a simple girl from a nowhere town asked a question with an honest and humble heart.

In human eyes, Mary's news is impossible, a virgin who gets pregnant and not through what we would consider natural ways, and to top it all, the child would be the son of God. But listen, church, when the giver of the message is trustworthy and true, the message is trustworthy and true. Jeremiah 33, God says, "I am the Lord of all mankind, is anything too hard for me?" Jesus said the same words in Mark 10, and surely, we can trust Jesus. The works He did are evidence that his words are true and trustworthy.



Now there are those, especially in the city of Nairobi where we are moving to plant Mercy Nairobi, who have taken this verse and use it to justify prosperity gospel. Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will grant you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4) but here is the thing, if you are in the Lord, the desires of your heart stop being selfish, self-motivated, and self-focused and start being the very desires of the Lord since you are now in union with Him. I don't know what situation is in front of you, but if you have trusted in the Lord for your salvation, then the child of God trusts that there is nothing impossible to him. Believe that and trust Him to take care of you.

For those of you who have been interrupted in a huge way. I'm talking about these things like divorce or marriage struggles, health issues, loss of a job. My heart breaks for you, if you haven't already talked to a church member, elder or staff, please know we are here for you, and we would love to come alongside you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to someone.

Most of our interruptions will most likely be a thousand small moments, it's the kids wanting to play, but you really have to finish that work project, or just watch that game, it's the flat tire on the way to an important meeting, it's the roommate who wants to pour out their heart and you just

want to go to bed, it's the many moments throughout regular ordinary days when things don't go as planned. If you are like me, you know that even these small moments can really stretch your faith. This is where you need to ask what God is doing here, how does He want me to join him in his redemptive work, what does he want me to prioritize. I love what one writer says about these interruptions of grace, "Rather than giving us a life of ease, God interrupts our lives with grace and shows us what we need most of all is Him."

So far, Mary's life has been interrupted in a huge way; imagine this was you and someone asked you, how was your day? Where do you start, the angel, the baby you are about to conceive as a virgin, or the fact that this child will literally change the world. And yet, in the middle of this interruption, Mary responds with uttermost trust, submission, faith, and belief in God. Look with me at verse 38 ³⁸ "See, I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. ⁴

Mary's response sounds so much like Isaiah's "Here I am send me" Esther's "if I perish I perish" Ruth's "your people will be my people, your God will be my God," Job's "even if he kills me I will hope in him" the very words of Jesus "Father not my will, but your will be done" This is how to

⁴ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Lk 1:38). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.



respond when God interrupts our plans even if we don't understand what He is doing.

Church, when God interrupts your lives, here, is the last thing to remember

3. **God's plan is better than your plan.**

This is not easy for Mary to believe; think for a second what Mary is saying yes to. First, she is saying yes to the potential shaming from her family and friends, not forgetting the real potential of getting divorced; secondly (and this is not my original observation; I picked it up from a book by Daniel Darlings), Mary is saying yes to raising God's son. Caring for the most important child in the whole of human history and future that's huge. This should make all the moms who struggle with mom guilt feel a little better, right. God trusted a young woman from Nazareth to raise his son; surely, he will give you enough grace to raise your kids in the way they should go; hold on to that. And thirdly, even though we don't know how much Mary knew at this point on how Jesus would save people, she is saying yes to seeing her boy being humiliated, hated, spat on, and eventually hung on the cross, and she has to carry this with her for 33 years that's a lot.

The late Detrick Bonhoeffer said, "when Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die" Christ calls us to abandon the attachments of this world and embrace what he is doing in

us and through us even if it's not what we would have planned for ourselves. To truly be servants of Christ, we must accept His plans for our lives, from the big things to the small things. Mary shows us how faith should respond to grace. And I believe she's able to do this because she doesn't think too highly or too lowly of herself. She thinks just rightly of herself. She refers to herself as **the Lord's servant**, literally a bondservant of the Lord. She recognized God is the King, the Lord of her life, and she responded in humble submission to the Lord.

And this too should be our response, we like Mary are God's servants, so when he interrupts our lives, it's an opportunity for us to worship acknowledge his lordship and trust that His plan for your life is better for you, for your kids, for your spouse, for your siblings, parents, job, city and for our church.

Conclusion

So church, when God does interrupt your life, remember **God's favor is not based on who we are or where we are from; God's favor is based on who God is. There is nothing impossible with God. God's plan is better than your plan.** And honestly, to be able to remember these truths, we'll have to prayerfully be in the word and do life in community. Remember God's past faithfulness and let that propel you to trust Him more.



SOUL WORK

Today I want to challenge you to take your time after service, don't rush to the next thing. Take 10 to 15 minutes in here, In the lobby, or outside to pray with someone who's going through an interruption right now. This means we will have to be vulnerable with each other and encouraging. Our Lord desires for us to pray for one another, to bring to him all our anxieties and worries, he alone can satisfy us.

Church keep your eyes on the hope to come, this baby who was promised to Mary, was born, he lived a sinless life, and died on the cross for your transgressions and

mine. Mary was there when Jesus took his first steps, Mary was there when Jesus taught at the temple at 12, Mary was there when Jesus performed his first miracle in Cana of galilee, Mary was there when Jesus hung on that cross, but Jesus did not stay on that cross, he resurrected, Mary was part of the 120 who were in the upper room when the holy spirit fell on them, God with us become God in us hallelujah! We have what Mary received that day; the Holy spirit now lives in us. God is with us; God is in us. I cannot wait for when we get to see our Lord face to face in all of his glory but until then let the Holy Spirit, His word and the union we share right this very moment with Christ give us a thrill of hope even in the middle of interruptions.