

Trust is really becoming an issue in our nation. We constantly hear the phrase, “Fake news.” Police officers now need to wear body cameras because we do not trust their account of what happens — we want to see it for ourselves. When one political party proposes something in congress, the other political party opposes it — they do not trust each other. When a public figure makes a statement about a scandal, it almost always follows that the truth will be something different. Things like this make it difficult for us to take people at their word — we do not trust them. This is especially the case when what we hear does not seem to make sense to our rational thinking. We tend to ask, “How can this be?” At this time of the year, we need to put aside our rational thinking and trust the words which we hear from our Lord. It is in those words which He speaks to us that we find our joy and peace, for it is our Savior Who has come down from heaven, and was born of the virgin Mary. None of that makes any sense to our reason, but we are to trust that it is true. We are to be willing to say with Mary, **MAY IT BE AS YOU HAVE SAID.** Like Mary, 1) We do not understand God’s plans, so 2) we are humbly to accept God’s plans.

Mary was a young girl from the village of Nazareth. To all outward appearances, her life was totally normal. She had become old enough to be married, so she was engaged to Joseph of the same village. But one day, before they began to live together as husband and wife, an angel appeared to her. That alone would have been enough to fill her heart with great fear, but added to that, the way the angel addressed her greatly troubled her. Gabriel said, **“Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you!”** (28) This did not make any sense whatsoever to her. This angel addressed Mary as one who had gained great favor in the sight of God. She could not understand the reason for any of this.

Her amazement did not end there, for Gabriel had a very special message for her. **“You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”** (31-33) In short, Mary was going to be the mother of the Savior Whom God had promised from the very beginning. Mary recognized this for what it was. But something simply did not fit. **“How will this be since I am a virgin?”** (34) was her question. Notice that she was not denying God’s plan for her, but was seeking to understand just how this could be possible. After all, she knew enough of how babies are made to know that this was not possible. She was still a virgin — she had not yet had relations with any man. So how could it be possible for her to become pregnant?

She wanted to believe the message which Gabriel was bringing to her, but she could not figure out any possible way for this to happen. So she asked her question. Notice that her question did not deny what God had announced to her, but simply sought further information so that she might understand how everything was going to come about. “How can this be?”

That reaction was quite different from the other reaction recorded for us in this first chapter of Luke’s gospel, the reaction Zechariah had to the announcement of the birth of his son. When he questioned the angel, his question was a denial that such a thing could happen. It was as much as saying that since he did not understand how this could be, then it could not be true. But Mary reacted quite differently. She did not understand how God was going to bring this about, so she sought further information. We need to make sure that we react the way Mary did, not denying what the Lord tells us, but in humble obedience, simply seek further information to satisfy our curiosity. We, too, will recognize that we need what God is offering to us, but we may not always understand how the Lord is going to carry out His plans for us. So it is not wrong to request information on how this is going to work out, but we also need to remember that the Lord may not reveal to us how He is going to carry out His plans for us in this world. At times He may reveal to us what He is going to do and how He is going to do it, or He may withhold that information from us. Either way, we need to trust the Lord completely, no matter how much information He may reveal to us.

The angel Gabriel did explain to Mary just how everything was going to happen. **“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”** (35) Jesus would be conceived through the power and working of the Holy Spirit, and not in the normal way that all other babies are conceived. And that is going to make Him someone who is truly special, for He will not only be the son of Mary, but He will also be the true Son of God. At one and the same time, then He will be both true man and true God. This was necessary, for as true man, He was placed under the same demands of the law which you and I are under, but are unable to fulfill. So, taking upon Himself human flesh and blood, He came as our Substitute to fulfill all of the demands of the Law for us. Having done that, being true God, He was able to lay down His life blood as an offering sufficient enough to pay for the sins of the whole world. That is why Jesus would have Mary as His human mother, and the God as His father.

There was no way that Mary was able to comprehend all of this. Even today we can speak about this tremendous wonder that Jesus is both true man and true God in one person, but we can never fully understand it. But like Mary we will humbly accept the truth of what God has revealed to us. We recognize our own limitations in comprehending the Lord our God. We recognize that our God is much wiser and knows far more than we would ever be able to understand. “For nothing is impossible with God.”

When Mary heard Gabriel’s explanation, she did not understand all of the details. No doubt she also recognized the difficulties which would lie ahead of her, but still she responded, **“May it be to me as you have said.”** (38) In humble faith she was willing to follow the plans which the Lord had laid out for her. She was not going to let the difficulties which she was about to face disturb her. She was willing to accept in faith everything which the Lord had revealed to her.

That is to be our attitude as we hear once again the wonderful news announced to Mary by the angel Gabriel. The baby which Mary was to bear is the Son of God. There are many that claim that the virgin birth of our Savior is “fake news,” and miss out on the true joy and peace of this special season. But as we listen with Mary to the angel, we realize that God was being true to all of His promises, and was fulfilling His promise of sending the seed of the woman to crush the head of the evil one for us. What joy fills our hearts knowing that Jesus has come and that He reigns forever, just as God promised. May we take God at His Word as He makes His promises to us, for we know that they are all true.

That is to be our attitude as we go about our whole lives. The Lord has revealed certain things to us about what is going to happen to us in our daily lives. He has promised that He will always be with us, and will turn all things around to make them serve our good. At the same time, He reminds us that through much tribulation we will enter the kingdom of God. As we place our unwavering faith and trust in Him, we will begin to see just what this will entail in our life. We will see that no matter what we must face, God never goes back on any of His promises. And He does not leave us alone to face our difficulties alone. He always stands by us, helping us and enabling us to understand in faith that He is able to do things which we might have considered impossible.

Trusting the words of another in this life is not easy because the words which men speak are not always reliable. But the words which are revealed to us in the Bible are God’s Word to us, and they are true and accurate in all that they say to us. Mary knew that, and even though she did not fully understand all that she was told, she responded, “May it be to me as you have said.” As we listen to God’s Word this Advent season, may we have the same attitude — trusting that all God has revealed to us is absolutely true. His promises are what fills our hearts with joy and peace. And He will never go back on any of His words of promise.