

**THE BIG IDEA:** Let it be for me what God has decreed.

### The Take-Off

Welcome to week 2 of our series in Luke where we find that the unbelievable became the undeniable.

Last week we met the 2 men behind this book and also learned why it was written - so that Theo (and we) could know for sure what he'd been taught! Luke was hash tagging true story before we were, and because he was an investigator and a doorknob turner (you've got to listen to week 1 to get that), he found a lot of crazy stories that no one would have believed if he hadn't done the research to prove them. #TrueStory

Today, we'll encounter a couple of those stories as we take a look at verse 5-38. It's an epic tale about how God does birth announcements!

Believe it or not, there was a day when birth announcements were quite as creative as they are today, and if you had a boy, it would go something like this: "Hey, dude! We just had a kid. Want a cigar?"

If you were a church goer, it would be a blue bubble gum cigar.

Thankfully, our country has upped its birth announcement game, and we're a bit more creative now.

[PICS OF BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS]

We've also gotten pretty good at videoing the different reactions that people have to said announcements, and here's a good example of that.

[VIDEO OF CHRISTMAS BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT]

I love that, because it shows 3 very different responses: thrilled, ecstatic and "I'm just gonna sit right here and blubber until you open the present for me."

Today, we're going to see 2 birth announcements and 2 different responses to them, and I'm pretty sure we'll be challenged about how we respond to the things that God says to us, as well.

Sit tight, because I'm going to read a lot, and then I'm going to make a few observations about the 2.

Ready? Here we go.

Read Luke 1:5-38.

#### 1. God uses what man can't or won't

- a. Zechariah was too old
- b. Mary was too young

#### 2. God is in control of what appears to be out of control

- a. We see this in how Zechariah was chosen
  - about 18,000 priests served the temple
  - what he was to do was typically only done once in a lifetime by a priest
  - he was chosen by lots (but really by God)
- b. Mary was chosen even though she had no control over her ancestry

#### 3. God does the unexpected when we're faithful in doing what's expected

- a. Zechariah was a faithful priest
- b. Worshipers were outside praying
- c. We'll see throughout the book that Luke associates prayer with God doing big things a lot
- d. We don't see much about Mary, but faithfulness is implied
- e. So is her purity - she was a virgin
- f. Her normal routine put her in a position for an abnormal visitation

#### 4. God's word can overcome God's silence

- a. It's been 400 years since God said anything
- b. Imaging how the Israelites had to have been feeling, especially after the last thing he said
  - Malachi 4:6 - what's been ringing in their ears is this statement; "Either I'll turn the hearts of the father to the children or I'll strike the land with a curse."
  - When God finally does speak, he leaves no doubt about which of those 2 options it's going to be
  - Name him John - means "Yahweh is gracious"
  - His mission? Turn the fathers back to the sons! No curse!!

5. God knows the heart behind the mouth

- a. At first glance, both Zechariah and Mary seemed to have the same response
- b. “How can I be sure?” and “How will this be?”
- c. But God know the heart behind the mouth - he sees what we don't say as much as he hears what we do
- d. Zechariah didn't believe (1:20)
- e. Mary didn't understand (1:34,45)
- f. God corrects unbelief, but he protects uncertainty
- g. Gabriel's response to Zechariah was one of authorization, but his answer to Mary was one of explanation
- h. This is the heart of God - Matthew 12:20 - he is gentle, not overbearing

6. God uses us equally but differently

- a. John would be used to make a way for the Way
- b. Jesus would be the Way
- c. Elizabeth would give birth in an unnatural way (old birth)
- d. Mary would give birth in a supernatural way (virgin birth)
- e. Different roles, equal importance
- f. While some would see John as less than Jesus, Jesus saw John as great (1:15)

The Landing

What does all this mean? It means that the only right response to a God like we see in Luke 1 is Mary's response in verse 38: “May it be to me as you have said.”

**Let it be for me what God has decreed!**

In the end, it was Mary's willingness to believe an unbelievable message that set her apart.

I pray that the same would be said of you and me.

That no matter how crazy the promise may sound, we would believe the message because we trust the messenger.

And that our lives would echo the boldness of The Big Idea:

**Let it be for me what God has decreed!**

Let's pray.