

5 2 W E E K S
O F G R O W T H

Give it a Year
Week 07



WEEK 07

Luke 1:26-38

“In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, “Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!” Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. “Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her, “For you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David. And He will reign over Israel forever; His Kingdom will never end!” Mary asked the angel, “But how can this happen? I am a virgin.” The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the baby to be born will be holy, and He will be called the Son of God. What’s more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For the word of God will never fail.” Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.”

Mary was a young teenager engaged to be married to Joseph, when an angel shows up to her one day and says that she will be pregnant with God's baby. I can just imagine Mary thinking through thousands of scenarios and questions that she probably wanted to ask the angel. Things maybe like:

“How in the world am I going to explain this one?”

“Who in the world is going to believe me?”

“How can I explain this to Joseph and my parents? I'm pregnant but it's not what you think.”

“Joseph is going to probably leave me.”

“My parents are going to doubt me.”

“The community is going to turn their back on me.”

All these thoughts could have been going through her mind. We don't know. The Bible just says in Verse 29 that she is 'confused and disturbed', when the angel approached her. I'm sure she was! She must have been overwhelmed by this greeting, overwhelmed by this significant life change, overwhelmed by the fear, overwhelmed by maybe the feeling of inadequacy (how can I raise the Son of God?), overwhelmed by the supernatural and what exactly was going to happen to her body. Just overwhelmed.

I imagine this startled teenager, who just witnessed an angel appear out of nowhere, give her a message from God, and now maybe she's pacing, and her hands are on her head, and she's processing and disturbed and agitated as she's deliberating all this in her mind. And then, in all her thinking, she asks one question, "But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin." The angel answered her question and gives her further information and before Mary could ask any more questions, the angel says in verse 37 (ESV), "For nothing is impossible with God."

What else can you ask after that?!

Then Mary said in the verse 38, "I am the Lord's servant. I am willing to accept whatever He wants. May everything you have said come true."

What do you do when you get overwhelmed or stressed? Do you shut down? Do you hide? Do you just pretend it isn't happening? Do you numb yourself or give in to sin or indulge yourself? Or do you overcompensate and try to control everything around you?

Typically, the more out of control we feel, the more overwhelmed we feel, the more we try to control our situation. So much of the stress in our life is caused by this desire to micromanage everything, to control everything, to be the manager of our lives. We use force and all the willpower we can muster up to try to make things work in our lives. The more we try to control the things that are uncontrolled in our life the more overwhelmed we feel. It's a vicious cycle.

The truth is that most of life is out of our control. God intentionally doesn't tell us certain things about life to force us to rely on Him, to depend on Him. There are some things you're just NOT ever going to figure out. And like Mary, we need to let go and let God. Let go of our need to control it all and trust in The One Who is in control. And remember that, "Nothing is impossible with God." Nothing is too hard for God. Nothing is too overwhelming for God. He is in control. So let go, give it to Him, and trust that He can handle it all.

READ: Luke 1: 26-56

REFLECT:

- How do you handle overwhelming things in your life? Think through each area of your life - work, home, family, church, bills, activities, sports, hobbies - What do you do when you get overwhelmed in these areas?
- What's one thing in your life that you have not surrendered control over to God?
- What promise of God are you holding onto and giving you strength in this season of life?

PRAYER:

Father God, Thank You for always being with me and knowing me and how I handle the stresses of life. Lord, give me the mind to surrender all that I am going through to You. All the stresses in life, Lord, I turn them over to You right now. Lord, I pray that Your peace surrounds me as I continue to let go and let You step into my situation. You are God and I am not. I release this all to You and trust that You have the ultimate control. In Jesus Name I pray. Amen.