

## RELATED SCRIPTURES

Luke 1:5–25 | James 4:6 | Isaiah 7:14

## STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 12.8.24

### SUMMARY

As Luke details the annunciation of Jesus' birth, we must remember and compare it to the annunciation of John the Baptist's birth as previously detailed (Luke 1:5–25). Luke shows us that God is at work, and Jesus is demonstrably greater than John. While John's conception is remarkable, Jesus' conception through the power of the Holy Spirit is *miraculous*. While John's annunciation occurs in a temple, Jesus' occurs in a city of no consequence. John's angelic announcement is made to an elderly male of high status, while Jesus' is made to a female with no status. Perhaps most remarkably, John's birth comes by way of the conception of an elderly couple, while Jesus' comes by way of an unwed virgin. Luke's purpose in laying out these details is to show the reader that the life of Jesus came at the impetus of God's direct, creative intervention, giving us the "Son of God," who is simultaneously fully God and fully man.

Equally as impressive as the angel's announcement of Jesus' birth is Mary's response to it. The angel tells Mary she is "highly favored" (v. 28) and that she has "found grace with God" (v. 30). These descriptors tell us that Mary is the object of God's favor—it is his initiative, and she is its recipient. God has entrusted Mary with something great to do and bear. Mary submits herself to God's divine will even though the angel leaves much of the detail untold. But what the angel says is still a lot, including her son's name will be Jesus, he will be great and of the "Most High," occupy the throne of David, and his reign will be everlasting (vs. 32–33). Undoubtedly, God keeps his promises and provides greatness through humility and sacrifice.

### GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Luke 1:26–38.

What are some more noticeable differences between the annunciation of John the Baptist's and Jesus's births? What is the underlying message in their differences? What does that mean for us?

What do you find most remarkable about how Mary receives the news of her impending birth? What does it teach us about God's character?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.