

1 (1729a notes)

The Power of Love

Series: Inbreaking: The Kingdom Come at Christmas

Luke 1:26-38 (1729)

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E. W. Howe *Nothing is wonderful when you get used to it.*

William Hazlitt *Though familiarity may not breed contempt, it takes off the edge of admiration.*

I. The Power of Love to honor God in obscurity

a. Nothing about Mary's life would have marked her as special

Luke 1:26-28 NIV ²⁶ *In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."*

John 1:45-46 NIV ⁴⁵ *Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.*

b. Yet Mary's love and commitment to God was genuine

II. The Power of Love respond to the call of God

a. Mary responded to God's invitation in a very human way

Luke 1:29-37 NIV ²⁹ *Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.* ³⁰ *But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.* ³¹ *You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.* ³² *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,* ³³ *and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."* ³⁴ *"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"* ³⁵ *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on 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.* ³⁶ *Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month.* ³⁷ *For no word from God will ever fail."*

b. Mary ultimately affirmed God's call by acknowledging her identity

Luke 1:38 NIV ³⁸ *"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled."* *Then the angel left her.*

III. The Power of Love to endure the critics of life

a. The tendency to sanitize the story of Jesus' birth

Matthew 1:18-19 NIV ¹⁸ *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.* ¹⁹ *Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

Matthew 1:20-21 NIV ²⁰ *But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.* ²¹ *She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*

b. Only a select few understood the whole story

IV. The Power of Love to trust even when I don't understand

a. One step of faith does not necessarily resolve all doubt

Luke 2:19 NIV *But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

Luke 2:33 NIV ³³ *The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.*

Luke 2:51 NIV *...But his mother treasured all these things in her heart*

Mark 3:21 NIV *...“He is out of his mind.”*

b. But genuine faith will absolutely ruin you for anything less

C.S. Lewis *You must make your choice: either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.*