

Genesis 3:1 (NLT) - "Did God really say . . . ?"

Luke 1:26-38 (NLT) - In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. ²⁸Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" ²⁹Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. ³⁰"Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! ³¹You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" ³⁴Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." ³⁵The 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. ³⁶What'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. ³⁷For the word of God will never fail." ³⁸Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

1. Essence of Faith

2. Challenge to Faith

Luke 1:34 (NLT) - Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

3. Verification of Faith

Luke 1:38,45 (NLT) - Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her. ⁴⁵"You are blessed" because you believed that the Lord would do what he said."

Follow up discussion questions:

1. Where are you in your faith-journey?
2. Can you see yourself anywhere in Mary's story?
3. What can you do to grow your faith?

Study Guide

1. Would you describe yourself as a trusting person? How would you describe Mary's story of trusting God?
2. Read Luke 1:26-38 from Sunday's message and see if you can envision what Mary would have experienced in that amazing story. What challenges do you think Mary would have faced in trusting God to deliver His promise to her?
3. Can you see some similarities in your own story of trusting God? What do you think you can do to strengthen and grow your own faith?
4. Re-read Luke 1:26-38, slowly and purposefully. Read it out loud; form it into a prayer. Ask God to strengthen you as you contend for the delivery of His promises to you.