

The Unexpected Gift: “Unexpected Disruption” - Rev. Jeremy Bates

Sermon Notes: November 30, 2025

Text: Luke 1:26-45

Introduction

Have you ever had life completely interrupt your plans? Mary sure did. In Luke 1, God steps into a small town, chooses an overlooked teenage girl, and flips her world upside down — not to punish her, but to birth something supernatural in her and through her. In this message, we’ll unpack how God often works in the places and moments we least expect — the interruptions, the disruptions, and even the darkness we’re walking through.

History Repeats Itself: Romans 1:28,29

While this world contains a lot of darkness,
the good news is that Jesus isn’t afraid of the dark!

Intertestamental Period: 400 years of prophetic silence & waiting

- God was active in the world THEN and he is active in the world TODAY!
- Varying degrees of expectation: Diligent, Distracted, Disinterested, Dsmissed

Prophecy Fulfilled: Matthew 4:16 - The expected came very unexpectedly!

1) The Unexpected Visit

- God shows up in unexpected places to unexpected people

2) The Unexpected Disruption

- God’s plan was going to come with unexpected disruptions to plans, relationships, reputation
- Proverbs 16:9
- I hear your plan / I see a problem / I have some questions about the process
- Faith doesn’t ignore the facts, it means trusting God beyond them
- Questions don’t disqualify you, they develop deeper faith in you
- Isaiah 7:14
- Virgin Birth - Hypostatic Union / Athanasian Creed
- “You’re not a sinner because you sinned, you are a sinner therefore you sinned”

3) The Unexpected Power

- Whem Mary asks how this could happen in and through her, Garbiel’s answer had nothitng to do with her abilities, creativity, connections, education, status - actually nothing to do with her
- *“When God unexpectedly disrupts your plans with his plans, he will produce something in you and through you by his Holy Spirit’s presence & power.”*
- *“For nothing is impossible with God.”*

What is God inviting you to say “YES” to today?



Life Group Discussion

Warm-Up:

There are 2 kinds of unexpected gifts:

1) **Totally Unexpected** – but often very thoughtful

2) **Expected** – but totally not what you expected it would be!

What is the most unexpected gift they've ever received - funny, weird, or meaningful?

Study & Discussion:

Read Luke 1:26-56

1) What resonated with you from the sermon? What challenged or surprised you? What questions do you have?

2) Pastor Jer talked about the fact this scriptures are rooted in history: real people in real places in real time. Do you tend to think of your faith more as a philosophy, moral code, “ethereal” like an idea or something grounded in reality? Does it shift from time to time?

3) How does the fact God shows up in unexpected places to unexpected people affect your life and spiritual outlook?

4) Mary felt “confused and disturbed” — yet God was calling her “favoured.” Why do you think God’s favour sometimes doesn’t feel like favour?

5) Pastor Jer said, “You’re not a sinner because you sinned, you are a sinner therefore you sinned” What do you think about that? How might this come up when people say “Well, I’m a good person.”?

6) Mary ultimately responded, “I am the Lord’s servant...may it be to me as you have said.” What would it look like for you to say “yes” to God in a fresh way this Christmas? What’s an area of your life right now where God might be asking you to hold your plans loosely?

PRAYER:

