



The Greatest Announcement in the History of the World Luke December 07, 2025 Luke 1:26-38

(Video 32:24)

I guess if you do something every December for 13, 14 years, I guess you can call it a tradition, and so it's become somewhat of a tradition here at Reformed Living Bible Church is that when we get to the first Sunday of December, we don't want Christmas to sort of sneak up on us and just be gone any more than we want Easter to do the same, and so we wanted to devote the four or five Sundays in December to some aspect of Christmas, of the advent, the first advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so we're departing a little bit here for a few weeks from our study in the book of Romans to do once again just that. And so from our house to yours, let me be perhaps the first to say Merry Christmas as we start looking at the first advent of our Lord.

You know, it's interesting, you know, you say tell me the old, old story and I started trying to figure it out and do the math, I've been teaching and preaching the Word of God now for a little over 44 years and so that's 44 Christmas sermons but then it's actually more than that because the last 13, 14 years, we've been doing four or five every December and then of course there's the Sunday school classes and a few other things. When you throw them all together, there's somewhere over 100, 125 sermons on Christmas and you start saying wow, you're gonna end up repeating yourself. Now I lamented that to Bob Winkler, and I think he was trying to encourage me, he said, 'John, don't worry about it, we don't remember what you preached last year.' So I think he was trying to encourage me on that, but you know, there's a freshness still to even the familiar truths that we're familiar with. We get together sometimes as family over holidays and so forth and after dinner or sitting around a fire or



something, we're always, "Hey, tell that story, Reese." or "Tell that story, Teri." or tell that story. We all know the story. We've told the story 100 times as a family, but we still thrill when it's told again because it really isn't the facts of the story, it's the telling of the story. Not true when it comes to the word of God. It is amazing to me that even when I look at passages of scripture that is familiar, if you've been reading them since you were a child, there's something new still in the Word of God and it's no less true today when I was trying to decide these past few weeks what I might do.

Now it's interesting, this has been an unusual year in this regard. A couple of weeks ago was November the 22nd and you'll recall on that Sunday, I reminded you and worked it, I can't even remember myself, Bob, how I worked it into the sermon, but I mentioned the announcement 62 years ago, November 22nd, 1963 about the assassination of President Kennedy. I said a very short announcement that changed our world forever. Well, it's interesting, today actually is another significant date, December the 7th, 2025 because it was December the 7th, 1941, 84 years ago when Pearl Harbor was bombed. And there again, it was the head of the Pacific command that issued a teletype, a very short announcement. As a matter of fact, I've seen that original teletype with my own eyes. I saw it in the Smithsonian Institute and it's now in a museum out in Hawaii, but I've seen the original teletype. And what did the head of the Pacific command issue to every military personnel on every naval ship in the entire Pacific? "Air raid Pearl Harbor, this is no drill." Very short, very direct announcement. Absolutely changed the course of world history really. I remember sitting in a little room at the MD Anderson Cancer Clinic in 1983 in June of 83 where a surgeon told my dad, after he'd opened him up and closed him back up, the cancer spread everywhere Frank, there's no hope. Very short announcement, changed our world forever. They're not always so somber and sad or serious. They can be very serious, but they can be joyful. I remember in



February the 5th of 1980, I asked a beautiful young girl named Teri if she would marry me. And you know, a month later, she turned to me and said, "Do you remember that question that you asked me?" Like I could forget, right? And I said, "Well, yeah, I sure do." And she said, "Well, if you still want to, the answer's 'yes'." Now there's a very short but I submit to you a life changing announcement. Now as important and I don't tell her how much what a blessed life change it was so thank you for saying yes. But as powerful and as significant in my life and all of our lives and the world's lives, those announcements and so many other announcements might be, they pale in total, total, nothingness compared to the greatest announcement ever made in the history of the world. And Kenny read it for us.

Turn in your Bibles to the Gospel of Luke, if you're not there already, chapter one. And we're going to see that this very short announcement, if you will, profoundly simple and absolutely simply profound. You know, the things that we celebrate, Christmas is probably the most celebrated holiday around the world than any other holiday. It transcends countries and transcends times. And everywhere Christianity has gone for 2,000 years almost now, Christmas has been celebrated. Most of the things we celebrate on Independence Day or Columbus Day or Martin Luther King Day or President's Day or whatever, we're celebrating events, human events, human individuals. When you celebrate the advent of Christ, you are literally celebrating a divine accomplishment, a divine miracle. You're talking about the creator of the world, creator of you, coming into the world that He created. The child of Christmas, God in human form, born as a baby, living as a man. And the story begins, and I need to get there too, in Luke 1:26 with this announcement. Now Kenny read it for you at my request in the King James because as you're going to see, there's a couple of things that are shared in there and I wanted to underscore them when we get there. But let us start by looking at the translation that we generally teach and preach from here, the New American



Standard, and pick it up for you in verse 26. It says, ***Now in the sixth month***, stop right there. That's not sixth month of the year. Interestingly enough, the Christmas story actually starts with two miraculous births, if you will. Because earlier in this chapter, this angel, who's going to identify himself as Gabriel, has appeared to an elderly man, a priest, doing his two weeks of priestly service and duty. He appeared to Zacharias, Mary's cousin, so it could be an aunt, but a relative of Mary's, and has appeared to him and said, even in your old age and your wife's advanced old age, you're going to give birth to a child, you two. So that is certainly supernatural because they were well past, as scriptures say, childbearing years, and yet they're going to give birth to John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah. And so when it says here ***in the sixth month***, it's not the sixth month of the year, they're talking about the sixth month of Zacharias' wife, Elizabeth's pregnancy. And so in the sixth month that Elizabeth was bearing a child, who we know to be John the Baptist, it says ***an angel, Gabriel, was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth***. Again, profoundly simple, but simply profound. And what does he say to her? Verse 27, ***to a virgin, engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."*** I will stop right there. Beautiful, by the way, I'm always struck, no matter how many times you read this, with the simplicity of it all. It is truly, as I keep saying over and over again, profoundly simple, but when you start digging into what's being said, it is simply profound. There's nothing man-made about this. This is all looking at the incarnation from God's perspective. This is a divinely orchestrated event, okay?

Now, we know that this is not the first mention of the Savior, I keep saying it's the announcement, it's the announcement, it's not the first mention of the fact that the Savior would come. We know that, but just to orient you real quickly, all the way back in Genesis 3,



Adam and Eve, living in innocence, they sin, they fall, the curse falls upon man, and what's it say in Genesis 3:15 there, talking about the curse, talking about, and it talks to Satan, and God says to Satan, the tempter, ***I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and, here's the phrase, her seed.*** That's a little hint in Genesis. Most of you been around church a long enough time have heard this before. Why is that a hint? Because the man has the seed, not the woman, and when He says, I'll put enmity, Satan, between your seed, your offspring, children of Satan, evil ones, and her seed, that is a tip-off, to the virgin birth. That's a tip-off about this unusual event that will come one day down the road. It's the first prophecy, really, of Messiah would come.

All right, and by the way, this whole transgender movement that is going on about men can really be women, women can be men, and all of the things that fall out from that, don't miss, don't forget what underlies all of that. That is a demonic, satanic attack on the proper roles of men and women, the proper functions of men and women, the institution of family and marriage, as God has ordained it, but it's more than that. It wants to pervert history. It wants to cause confusion and chaos in people's minds with regards to proper roles, so it causes confusion and chaos, how to understand, how to interpret, how to appreciate the power and the efficacy of the word of God, and particularly as it comes down to the deity of Jesus Christ and the virgin birth of Christ, it perverts the word of God, and it ultimately perverts the gospel. That's what this is all about. The world system fights against this.

Genesis 49:10, there's another hint of the prophecy of the coming of Messiah. He says that, at 49:10, it says, ***until Shiloh comes.*** I remember I was always sort of a Civil War buff, if you will, as a kid, and I remember the Battle of Shiloh, town named Shiloh, and I was, what is Shiloh? Shiloh in Hebrew means *the one to whom it belongs*. It's another prophecy about the coming Messiah, that the Messiah is going to ultimately come, and He's the one who is the rightful



king. He's the one to whom the throne really belongs to. He's the one to whom this world really belongs to, even though now it is in the lap of the evil one for a time, and it goes on and on and on and on and on. Psalm 2 is another one. We won't turn to all of these, but in Acts chapter 13:32-33, and also in Romans 1:3-4, Psalm 2 is highlighted, because why? Verse 7 of Psalm 2 says this, ***the Lord said to me..., today I have begotten Thee.*** Now, by the way, those passages of scripture, Acts 13 and Romans 1:3-4, they take Psalm 2, and that refers to the first advent, the birth of Christ. Today the Father says to I have begotten Thee, but that also refers to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, because He's the first resurrection to be the first born, if you will, among many brethren. It doesn't mean in time, it means in terms of status, but the reason why I wanted to underscore that is remember again, not until the second person of the Trinity is God, always was God, equal with God, co-eternal with God, et cetera, Father, Son, and Spirit, one God, three persons, I don't understand it all, it's clearly what the Bible teaches, but He was never, meaning the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, was never the Son of God, was never called the Son of God, until His physical birth, His incarnation, He becomes in His humanity the living fleshly embodiment of Almighty God, and in that sense, He becomes, and takes on the title, the Son of God. Isaiah 9:6-7, ***a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us,*** I love that. In His flesh He's born, as a human being He's born to us, and He takes on the title 'Son', but as the Son of God, He's given for our sake. ***For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest upon His shoulders; His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace,*** and on and on and on and on. What's the point? These are all prophecies of a Messiah who's gonna come and rule one day forever. All through the scriptures, remember Luke, I think it was 24, where Christ in His resurrection is walking along the road to Emmaus, and what did the disciples say to Him afterwards? They said, did our hearts not burn within us, as He



explained and showed us Himself in all the scriptures, in all of the prophets, in all of the law, and all of the wisdom literature and so forth. What's the point? For centuries they'd been nursing and expecting this idea, this hope, that someday He's coming, and now He's breaking into history and it is amazing to me how simple the announcement is, and yet again, how simply profound it all is, striking in its simplicity.

Let me give you the outline that this week, and no doubt next, as we work through a lot of these verses together, that it'll give you something to sort of hang your mental hats on, so to speak:

1. We're gonna see the divine messenger, we're already looking at that in verse 26, Gabriel.
2. Then you're gonna see a divine choice, once again, underscoring the sovereign election of God in verse 27, His divine choice of this virgin, this Mary,
3. A divine blessing, which is grace, that's verses 28 and through 30, we'll underscore and unpack that for you,
4. and then a divine child in verses 31 to 33.

Okay, in verse 26, ***now in the sixth month***, that was Elizabeth's pregnancy, ***the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee***, let me stop right there. 'City' is a real stretch, the only reason why they say 'city' is because they have to use the Greek word *polis*, from which we get political or metropolitan or whatever, because in the Greek there's no word for a 'one-horse town', there's no word for a small nothing burg in the middle of nowhere, so they had to go with *polis*, a city. And that's what it was, there probably wasn't 2,000 people, tops, in Nazareth at the time. Nazareth wouldn't be known for anything. Well, as a matter of fact, Jesus in, John 1, makes a comment, and what's Nathaniel say? ***Can any good thing come out of***



Nazareth? Okay, it was a nowhere place, there were roads that traveled north and south from Africa up to the north, and there was roads that traveled from Europe all the way across the eastern part of the world at that time that came through Palestine, not one of them went through Nazareth, okay? Nazareth is about 75 miles north of Jerusalem, out in the middle of really nowhere in a rural area, sort of Hicksville we would say today, the only reason why it was known at all is because there was a Roman barracks there, and as a matter of fact later on there's gonna be a heretical lie told about Mary, that she's found with child because of a relationship with a Roman soldier, and all sorts of things that Satan devises in secular history to denigrate the deity of Jesus Christ. But the reason why I want to underscore that is that this angel shows up, and you have a tendency to think when you read the scripture, and I know I mentioned this to you last year when we talked about the angels appearing to the shepherds, you read the scriptures you're saying, well the angels were popping up all over the book. No, you need to understand, there hasn't been an angel appear on the scriptural record, there hadn't been an angel appear in Palestine, there hadn't been an angel appear to God's people in over 450 to almost 500 years before this, okay? The last time angels are even mentioned is in Zechariah's prophecy, but he was impressed upon an angel of God, and the specific time an angel talked to anybody was back in the book of Daniel, in Daniel's prophecy, these are 550 years before. What's the point? Now, just to sort of orient you to the time period, let's just say 500 years. If an angel appeared today, and it hadn't been 500 years since one had appeared, that would have meant the last time in our timeframe an angel would have showed up would have been in the Reformation, when Martin Luther was leading the Reformation would have been the last time an angel showed up if one showed up here today, that's about 500 years, that's how far it's been. We have a tendency to think that there was angels popping up with these people all the time, there wasn't. By the way, God had not spoken through a prophet in



over 400 years, a miracle had not occurred for over 400 years, centuries had gone by, and they'd been anticipating this, and with absolutely none of man's pomp or fanfare, this angel appears, just this virgin if you will, and shares these truths with her. This is a divine intervention, and he says look, ***in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth***, by the way, this is gonna be the, I think Satan delights in this as well, again it's a way of perverting, there are no ETs, there are no little green men running around Roswell, New Mexico, and all of that, this advent of Christ is the only extraterrestrial being who's ever invaded our world, this is it. I think Satan delights in getting people sidetracked into all these other things, in any event, this is it, and he says this announcement, and he says in a city in Galilee, now by the way, ***city in Galilee***, why doesn't he just say to a city called Nazareth, why does he say ***a city in Galilee, called Nazareth***? I think there's two reasons for that, first one, no one outside of Palestine had ever heard of Nazareth probably before, and so it was a way of identifying. In other words, if I turn to you and I said, today to you a savior is gonna be born in Smithville. You say, "Where's Smithville?" But if I said "Oh, Smithville, Texas.", well you wouldn't know where it was in Texas, but you'd have a pretty, you know, oh, I know where Texas is, and that is exactly what's going on here, people outside of Palestine have no clue where Nazareth is, but when he says Nazareth in Galilee, that makes, it's a region, it would be known to people, but I think there's a much more important reason as well. The word of God never misses a trick. Like I said, it was a backwards rural area, hicks-ville, if you will. There were a lot of Gentiles there. If you're around Jerusalem and Judea, it's Jewish oriented to the max, it's predominantly Jewish, and as you get farther away though, and farther up to the north, it's very Jewish still, but there's a lot of Gentiles there as well, and it's, to me, Isaiah 9:1, the prophecy. What did Isaiah say? ***in Galilee of the Gentiles... they shall see a great light***. Matthew repeats it again in Matthew 4:15-16, and he



says, those who live in Galilee, and it says ***in the shadow of death*** (it reminds me of the phrase in Psalm 23, ***yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death***), will see a great light. And they were in the valley of shadow of death, spiritual death, light has come in darkness, okay? What's the point of all that? I think the point of all that is simply right at Christ's first advent, when the Messiah, prophet, would come to the Jew first, definitely to the Jew first, but the promised Jewish Messiah, the promised Jewish king, the salvation that comes first to Israel, comes to Israel at a point where it intersects also with Gentiles, and I think what he's underscoring and stating is this: Look, this Jewish Messiah is to be a savior of the entire world, for Jew and Gentile alike. And so this messenger Gabriel, in verse 27, he comes to a virgin ***engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.***

Astonishing thing, he comes to one house, by the way, what was Mary doing? She was probably alone in the house, and most likely 13, 14 years of age. Why do we say that? Because under Roman law, a woman had to be at least 12 years of age to be betrothed, engaged (we'll talk about that) to a man, and then she could get married. Boys, as we know, mature a little slower, a little later, and boys had to be 14 years of age before they could be married under Roman law, and for the most part, the Jews followed the Roman standards, okay? Girls were usually engaged, actually, around 12 or 13 years of age. Now what was she most likely doing, she was most likely doing household chores, domestic duties, probably preparing food or something. We lose this in our culture and our modern age of conveniences and so forth, but just putting food on the table was a full-time job in a household in Christ's day, and for many centuries after that. I mean, think about it, there's no refrigeration, there's no electricity, there's no modern conveniences, everything had to be served fresh; you gotta cut the lamb or slay the calf or whatever and butcher it fresh. You've gotta pick the fruit fresh, you gotta



be kneading and making the dough, fresh. And trying to put meals on the table for several people is a full-time job. You can't click on a light and do it at night, there's no electricity, you gotta do it between daytime hours for the most part to get it prepared. And you gotta keep the fire going, and to keep the fire going you gotta have the firewood or the other fuel, and on and on and on. It's a full-court press 24/7.

So she's most likely doing some domestic duties, and this angel, Gabriel, shows up. And by the way, it's interesting, I'm a little ahead of myself, but look at verse 28. He says, "**Hail favored one!**", just stow this one away in your mind, you know what the word 'hail' means? *Chairō*: hello, that's what it means, it means 'hello'. It doesn't mean any, it doesn't, not yelling megaphone, it just 'hello', and I think there's a reason why he soft-pedaled it that way, but in any event, he appears to this virgin engaged, and I think Kenny's King James is *espoused*, and some of the translations might say *betrothed*, and actually, betrothed is actually what it means. And I always found this interesting in performing the wedding services a lot of times and just reading the traditional vows and so forth, I, John, take thee, Teri, to be my lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, and so on and so forth. When you would do those older vows, a lot of times, you'd come to the end of it, the original archaic wedding vows, if you say, and I would say, "and Teri, I plight thee my troth." And then she'd do her vows, and she'd say, you know, "I, Teri, take you, John, and I plight thee my troth." What's plighting your troth? What's that? That is a, it means a pledge; I pledge you my troth. It means fidelity, loyalty, faithfulness, okay? And so to be betrothed means you had pledged your loyalty to one another. So she had pledged her loyalty to Joseph, and Joseph had pledged his loyalty to her. Now, I'm going somewhere with this. So, it was a contract, they literally were contracted, in those days, the marriages were determined by the parents of the bride and groom, many times when they were just little kids, but certainly as they got a little older, and got, started



to get into their teens, and they would say, you know, I'm thinking that my son, Randy, needs to marry your daughter, Heather. And the parents would start negotiating and talking this whole thing out, and it would all be prearranged. And, so, when the time would come, and they were of legal age, 12 in the case of a girl, or 13 or 14, and certainly 14 in the case of a boy, they literally would be contracted, betrothed together. And they would do that for several reasons, but they would be contracted, betrothed, for a full year, usually, why a full year? Well, a year would pass, nothing physically, they would not be physical together. The boy would live in his home with his parents, the bride would live in her home with her parents, but they would be considered husband and wife. And should the bridegroom die, or if there was infidelity of some sort, and they would literally have to go through a divorce. If the bridegroom died, the bride would be considered a widow. I mean, they were considered married in that regard. That's why, as a matter of fact, over in Matthew 1, when Joseph learns that Mary is with child, realizing that he hadn't been with her, but they were espoused, they were betrothed, it says he starts looking for a way to put her away privately. That's a phrase 'to divorce her privately'. He could divorce her publicly and shame her, or he could divorce her privately, because he didn't realize that she's with child by the Holy Spirit, until he has the dream and so forth, and we'll get into all of that. But the point I wanted to make on that, is there's the analogy, which is so powerful, to what exactly happened. And, by the way, what is going on during that period of time? Not only is the bride proving her purity, if you will, but what is the bridegroom, the young man, doing during that one-year betrothal period? Well, he's preparing their home, usually building an adjunct on to his dad's house, so that when they get married in a year, they'll have a home to move into, okay? And so, and then of course a year later, then they have the marriage, and the marriage is consummated and they set up their home and so on and so forth. Now, and also, the young man, or usually the parents of



the young man, after they contract for this, they would give the parents of the bride a dowry, a down payment to seal the contract, to seal the wedding contract. Now, why are you going into all of this? Number one, it's interesting, but number two, it exactly shows you how God has orchestrated and ordained everything in life to demonstrate, it seems like, a spiritual truth. What spiritual truth? God makes his choice. God sovereignly elects before the foundation of the world who his bride is gonna be. What's the bride referred to in scripture? The church, believers in Christ. We, as believers in Christ, we're the bride of Christ before the foundation of the world God, if you will, and that Godhead arranged your marriage, and mine, to our bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Okay, but then what happens? Then in one day in time, space, dimension, history, you and I "accept Christ as our Lord and Savior", the reality that we're chosen to be the bride of Christ, we repent of our sins, we give our life to Christ and so forth, and you know what? We're betrothed. We're betrothed, why? Because true fulfillment of our union with Christ, in many ways, has not been fully consummated yet, but we're His. What do we do during that period of time? We are proving our purity. We're being more and more conformed to the image of Christ as we go through life, this betrothal period, if you will, and what does it say? That's the preservation of the saints. That's the perseverance of the saints. We're proving the genuineness of our faith. We're proving the genuineness of our fidelity, our loyalty, our betrothal to Christ as we live out this earthly life. And oh, by the way, no, a dowry wasn't given, but what happened when you came to know Christ as your Lord and Savior, if you do know Him as your Lord and Savior? In addition to being betrothed to Christ, espoused to Christ, our bridegroom, you're given a down payment. You're given a pledge. God, Himself, in the person of the Holy Spirit, indwells you and me, and what? As surely as when I got engaged with Teri and I gave her an engagement ring, what was that engagement ring? That engagement ring was a down payment, a pledge, a promise that come our wedding day, I'd



be there. What is it when Almighty God indwells you with God the Holy Spirit? It literally says in Corinthians, we have Him as a security, as a pledge, and in the secular Greek, it means engagement ring. The Holy Spirit of God is given as our engagement ring. That what? That when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, when that moment comes to die, or if we're alive and Christ returns, but when we walk through that valley of the shadow of death, what's it say? Thou art with me. Christ will be there. And what did Jesus say, by the way? I must go, but I'll come again. But when I go, what? In My Father's house, there are many dwelling places. I go there, as your bridegroom, to prepare a place for you so that when I come to receive you unto Myself, we will be [together]. Now, look at the analogy. I got a bride betrothed to a bridegroom. I got a bride proving her faithfulness, persevering in purity and so forth. I got a bridegroom, a young man who's off building a house as an adjunct to his dad's house so that he can receive the bride. In the meantime, he's paid a dowry, a down payment, and we've got the Holy Spirit given to us as a down payment, as an earnest pledge, and so it's all laid out right there. So she's betrothed to her husband as surely as we're betrothed to Christ, and she didn't do the choosing. God or her parents, if you will, did the choosing, and God does the choosing of you and me to be the bride of Christ. This is doctrine of election on steroids. By the way, it says in verse 27, ***the young man's name was Joseph***. You know what Joseph means? May he have many sons. May he have many sons. By the way, did Joseph have many sons? Yeah, thank you, Joan. Yes, he did. James, who wrote the little epistle of James as one of his sons, half-brother of Christ. Jude, who wrote the little book of Jude is another one of Joseph's sons, and if you look sometime in Matthew 13:55-56 or Mark 6:3, you'll see that he had a son named after himself named Joseph, and he had another son named Simon, and as far as we know, he could have had others, but he certainly lived up to his name, okay? But the key phrase in verse 27 is that he was of the ***descendants of David***. Now, you know that's



critical. Why? Because David is the king. The Messiah to come is going to have to be a descendant of King David. It even says David, he will sit on his father's throne, the throne of David. Now, if you go to Matthew chapter one and read the first 17 verses, you get the lineage of the genealogy, I should say, an overview of the genealogy, it's not everybody, but an overview of the genealogy of Christ from the father's side, because your right to rule as a king came down through the male side of the family, if you will, and so, and Joseph is of the descendants of David. He's of the kingly line. Now, he's Christ's adopted father, not his natural father, so [we have a] problem, what's the problem? Well, it's okay, he can have an adopted father and he could be the rightful king of Israel and sit on the throne through his father David through adoption, but he doesn't have the DNA, the bloodline, oh, yes, he does, because if you go to Luke chapter three sometime, you'll see a reverse order genealogy and because it doesn't parallel with the genealogy in Matthew, it's clearly the genealogy of Christ through Mary and you see that Mary too is of the bloodline of King David and therefore, Jesus, both because of his bloodline as well as his birthright through his father Joseph, both ways, he is a legitimate king to sit on the throne of David.

Okay, the virgin's name was Mary. Mary, Mary in the Greek, in the Hebrew, it's Miriam. What does that mean? Interestingly enough, it means *exalted one*, exalted one. But I think it's interesting, it says in verse 27, ***to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary***, period. It doesn't say anything else about her. It doesn't say that she was righteous and she loved God with all her heart and she's just absolutely the pattern of godliness and every man and woman alive ought to pattern their life after this woman. It doesn't say any of that. It just says Mary, period. Absolutely nothing [else]. I mean, at least Zacharias and Elizabeth got a little honorable mention. When they mentioned angel appearing to Zacharias and Elizabeth, it says earlier in this chapter,



along about verse six, it says they were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blameless in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. They got a commendation from the Holy Spirit, verse six, chapter one. Mary gets none of that, nothing. And again, she's certainly from David's lineage, but she gets a divine blessing. And by the way, I'm not saying that she wasn't a righteous young lady. I think by implication, you would have to agree that God isn't gonna pick anyone just out of nowhere to be the earthly mother of the Son of God who probably wasn't a wonderful, wonderful young girl. But you're talking about a 13, 14, maybe 15-year-old, tops, teenage girl of tender years here. And I think the thing that most demonstrates her righteousness and her holiness is the way she responds to the announcement. When it says she is troubled, yes, stress so, she's perplexed mentally. What can this possibly be? And then later on, in her fabulous Magnificat, what she say down in verse 46 of the same chapter, **and Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior..."** And what does the angel say to her, by the way, back in verse 28? **And coming in, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."** Hail, favored one! God extends grace to sinners, only sinners, of which we all are. I think Mary was shocked by this, and she even says, she's perplexed in her spirit. Me, I'm a nobody. This is an angel talking to me out of nowhere telling God has graced me. I think if the angel had walked in and said, by the way, Mary, I'm from God, and God's gonna judge you for the sinner that you are, she'd have probably said, man, that wouldn't have surprised her near as much as I think this surprised her. She's so humble about it, and it's exactly what truly genuine righteous people do in the face of godliness. An angelic being shows up, Almighty God shows up, and bang, they fall. They're humbled. Isaiah sees the glory of God and goes, woe is me. I'm a man of unclean lips. I'm undone. And righteousness always does that, and she's absolutely stunned. And so he goes on with a divine blessing. He says in verse, again, 28, **"Hail, (hello) favored one! The**



Lord is with you." and look at verse 30. **And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid."** I think one of the reasons why he walks in with a simple 'hello' is that he doesn't wanna startle her. He doesn't wanna scare her. He says, **"Mary, for you have found favor** (that's grace, you have found grace) **with God.** This is not about Mary's merit. This is all about the grace of God. God saves Noah and drowns the whole world because of Noah? No, it says Noah found grace in the sight of God. This is God being gracious, if you will, to her. She's sitting there doing household duties, maybe, but the thing I, and the reason why, again, I wanted Kenny to read that passage in the King James is because the King James ties in some from older manuscripts, and it's not a bad translation, but in Jerome's Latin Vulgate, what's Jerome's Latin Vulgate? In the fourth century, the 300s, the early church father by the name of Jerome thought he would take classical Latin and take the Bible out of classical Latin, or translate, excuse me, the Greek and Hebrew of the Bible into common street Latin that was taught, and that's where he gives it vulgata. The Latin word means common. We get the word vulgar from it, common. In other words, instead of classical Latin, it's basically he was writing a living translation for his day, okay? The Latin, and when he writes the Latin Vulgate, he translates this *"Hail Mary, full of grace"*, and he adds a phrase, *"blessed art thou among women."* Now, you know I come from a Catholic background. A lot of you do too. You remember what we talked about, hail Mary, and what's the prayer? Hail Mary, hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. What's the next phrase? Blessed art thou amongst women. That comes right out of this verse, a mistranslation of this verse. He isn't saying hail Mary, full of grace. He doesn't say that. He says hail favored one. The Lord is with you. That's why you got grace, because the Lord is with you. Verse 30, **do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor**, grace is being bestowed upon you, **with God.** God is bestowing grace upon you. What's the point? The misunderstanding and the mistranslation of this one verse of scripture, you're talking about the importance of



understanding the word of God, has literally led to the blasphemy of Mariolatry that has pervaded the Roman church for 1900 years almost. Mary has no grace to dispense. She has no grace of her own, no sinner does. As a matter of fact, you only need grace because you're a sinner. And it's God saying she has no grace to give is what I'm saying. So it's not what the angel said. She's not a source of grace. She is the recipient of grace. I know that the new pope recently, just this last month, withdrew from the stance that has been the Roman stance for 700 years about Mary being a co-redemptrix with Christ. Don't be deceived by that. His withdrawal from that stance does not remove, and I'm so happy about that. And as a matter of fact, I heard a girl who's an admitted Roman Catholic on the television today reading one of those hallowed TV prayers about the first advent of Christ. And I was very encouraged to see that through that prayer, when she went through there, it talks about imitating Mary's faith and so forth, but relying upon the atoning work of Christ for salvation. I was very encouraged to see that twist, if you will. But the whole point of all of that is to underscore again, Mary has no grace in and of herself. And to really shake you up a little bit, Mary does not hear your prayers or mine. No glorified saint that's gone on to glory, St. Christopher, St. Dominic Savio, none of them are hearing our prayers. They are blissen out in the presence of their Lord and Savior, Almighty God. They've never heard your prayers. They've never heard my prayers. And so I remember talking to a lady the other day, nobody any of you would know, and doing some legal stuff for her. And she made a comment and it made me think, hey, maybe she might know Christ. I brought up the Lord. I brought up salvation, mentioned Christ and our Savior and so forth. And she seemed to be positive about that. And I made a comment about, you know, well, I'll pray about that. And she says, oh, I will too. I'll pray to St. Anthony. He always hears my prayers. And of course my heart just sank because I realized she really didn't get it and so forth. But in any event, Mary recognizes she's not worthy. Verse 29, **she**



was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. And the angel said to her again, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found [favor] grace with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you will name him Jesus." By the way, she humbly obeys the word of God all the way through this, because later on you realize after the birth when she goes to the tomb and so forth, what's the name of the child? She says Jesus. Why will you name him Jesus? Because later on we're told he'll be called Jesus because He'll save His people from their sins. Now look what else is said. You see a really a divine blessing here on Mary. And now he's describing this divine child that we're gonna look more at in the weeks ahead. Verse 31, ***And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of his father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and his kingdom will have no end.*** By the way, you can debate the virginity of all you want of Mary and the virgin birth. Look at her own response in verse 34. Mary says to the angel, ***"How can this be, since I am a virgin?"*** She knew she hadn't known anyone. ***And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of El Elyon, the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God."*** Okay, and what does Mary say in verse 38? ***"Behold,*** (Here's her humility, this is why she was a righteous young lady) ***the bondslave of the Lord;*** (Hey God, not my will but Thy will be done.) ***be it done to me according to your word."*** ***And the angel departed from her.***

Now, I want you to see in these two verses. He'll call Him Jesus, He'll be great, He'll be called the son of the most high God and the Lord God will give Him the throne of his father David and He will reign over it forever and ever and ever. Interestingly enough, in those four verses you have the entire person, life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. A simply, a profoundly



simple statement that is simply profound, a divine child. He says, he'll call His name Jesus, Yeshua. Common Jewish name, what's it mean? Yahweh saves, Jehovah saves I should say. The God of the Old Testament was a saving God and the people all knew it. Luke 19:10, what does Jesus say? ***The son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.*** Matthew 1:21, she'll call His name Jesus because He'll save His people from their sins. Luke 2:11, ***today in the city of David there has been born to you a Savior, who is Christ Jesus the Lord.*** What happened? They're gonna show the baby to Simeon a little bit later in the gospel of Luke and what's he say? Today I have seen the salvation of the Lord. An older 84-year-old lady named Anna is gonna come running up to him and what does she say? Ah now, it says she describes her as an individual who is one of those individuals who is looking for the consolation and the redemption of Israel, and she comes up rejoicing knowing that she'd seen the redemption if you will of Israel. Paul says what? Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of which I am chief and so forth. They always knew that the Messiah's role is, the Word of God taught, Messiah, real believers knew, that He would save sinners.

Now there's a word here that you gotta get. Verse 32, ***He will be great.*** We overuse words so much, I considered [it] today... that was a great ballgame. That was a great ham sandwich. Have a great day and it means nothing. We gotta add 27 adjectives to it to get it up to the point of... not in the Word of God. When it says, ***"He will be great"***, this is absolutely so critical that you understand this. It actually means He's gonna manifest the glory of God. You say well how so? And how is the whole person and work of Christ also shown in these verses, these few words? His death, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension and His reigning again in glory. Well if the Lord is gracious to us and I'm alive next week and you show up next week, I hope to have the privilege of unpacking that for you as we go through, literally, the greatest story ever told.



Let me close this in a word of prayer as Brian comes. Father, thank You for this Christmas season. We start looking at simple words really and we start seeing the incredible significance that underlies each one of them. Jesus, He'll be great. He'll be called the Son of the Most High. He'll reign forever. Father, I thought I knew what all of those meant until I started really digging into this passage. And now Father, I thank You for the richness that those verses entail, richness that I thank You for the privilege I hope to get to share with our church family in the weeks to come. For now Father, we just thank You for giving us not a day but an actual month on the calendar when we can be proactive and directive and stop many of our thoughts that run to other things and focus, I hope, more as your children on your first advent always with a view of what it entailed, what it was all about and the fact that there is going to be a second coming as well. May we learn more of Your truth to enable us to live more in holiness in light of that second coming. We ask it all in the matchless name of Jesus, the child who was God, and all God's redeemed people said amen and amen.