

# To Face Unafraid The Plans That He's Made

Luke 1:26-38 December 21, 2025

What are your Christmas plans? I'm sure someone has asked you and you've asked someone that question. Christmastime has a high concentration of plans. Where are we going to go? What will we buy? Which events will we attend? What side dish are we bringing to Aunt Blanche's house?

Christmas travel plans require US airlines to add an additional 72,000 seats on their flights every day between December 19 and January 5.<sup>1</sup>

But some people take Christmas plans to the next level. Consider Delaware native Rich Faucher. In the late 80's, he and his wife Linda piled into the car with their infant daughter to drive around and look at Christmas lights.<sup>2</sup> But, they simply couldn't find any. And so, Rich made a plan. They would cover every square inch of their house with 1,000,000 Christmas lights every year. And they have! The job takes over a month to complete,<sup>3</sup> but year after year the Faucher Family Christmas House ranks as one of the best light displays in the nation.

We've been taking a look at some of the angel visits surrounding the birth of Jesus. Every time they come, they come plans have to change. Sometimes it's a short-term change - "You shepherds should go check out a Baby in a manger tonight." Sometimes it's a total life change. That's what happens today, when Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel, who explains that any and all plans she may have had for her life going forward were about to dramatically change.

At the same time, Gabriel reveals something amazing about God's plans. Plans He had been dedicated to and accomplishing for thousands of years. Plans He continues this very day as He faithfully carries out His intention to Light up the world with the Good News of the Gospel.

**Luke 1:26-27 - <sup>26</sup> In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.**

We've talked about Mary and Joseph's betrothal before. Mary was probably around 14 years old.<sup>4</sup> She lived in a tiny town, in a not-very-respectable place. From the world's perspective, she was not important, not interesting, not significant.

But here she is, a young lady in love with a young man. And though we don't know the specifics, we know that they had made plans together. To make a family. To start a life together. But one day everything changes. This angel named Gabriel shows up with a message.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.airlines.org/news-update/u-s-airlines-expecting-record-number-of-passengers-over-the-winter-holidays/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://abcnews.go.com/Business/spend-80000-electricity-christmas-lights/story?id=12460355>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.delawareonline.com/picture-gallery/news/local/2023/12/07/holiday-spirit-christmas-photos-delaware-online-news-journal-archives/71755154007/>

<sup>4</sup> Craig Keener *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (Second Edition)*

There are only two good angels *named* in the Bible. One is Michael, who is called an archangel. We see him in Daniel and in Revelation doing battle against the powers of darkness. He commands other angels when war breaks out in heaven.<sup>5</sup> And then there's Gabriel. He is seen bringing messages to Mary, to Daniel, and to Zechariah. But don't think of him as just a courier. He identifies himself as one "who stands in the presence of God."<sup>6</sup> His name can be translated as, "God's strong man."<sup>7</sup> And here he was, having a one-on-one with a young Jewish girl.

**Luke 1:28-29 - <sup>28</sup> And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be.**

Mary was made of some tough stuff. She wasn't afraid of him because he was an angel. She was deeply troubled because of what he said. She thought, "What kind of greeting is this?"

Did you know Gen Z is changing the etiquette of telephone greetings? According to some research, many young people today think that when you call someone, it is the *caller's* responsibility to say 'Hello' first, not the person being called.<sup>8</sup>

Mary was upset and puzzled by what the angel said.<sup>9</sup> "What do you mean I'm *favored*? What do you mean the Lord is with me? What could God have to do with my little life?" Maybe *you* feel that way this morning. But the Scripture shows many times over that God can and does use people of every age and stage, every background and circumstance, for His purposes. He loves to do it. Fishermen and kings and shepherds and academics and slaves and priests and soldiers and prisoners of war.

We get why Mary was puzzled, but why would she be *upset* by this greeting? One scholar wrote, "perhaps she had the innate wisdom to comprehend...that those highly favored by God do not have a life of unbroken happiness."<sup>10</sup>

That's true. God's plans for Mary's life were marvelous, wonderful, history-changing, but they came with a cost. Because the good work of God is always opposed by the spiteful challenges of the enemy. In the last few weeks, we've seen the kind of dangers and difficulties Mary and Joseph were up against as God accomplished His work through their family.

But *even though* there would be difficulty, there was good news: She could be full of joy because God was with her. The word used for "greetings" means "be full of joy," or "continue to rejoice."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Revelation 12:7

<sup>6</sup> Luke 1:19

<sup>7</sup> Robert Utley *The Gospel According To Luke*

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.businessinsider.com/gen-z-phone-ansewring-hello-2025-7>

<sup>9</sup> Archibald Robertson *Word Pictures In The New Testament*

<sup>10</sup> Bruce Larson, Lloyd Ogilvie *The Preacher's Commentary, Volume 26: Luke*

<sup>11</sup> Utley

God was not only *with* her, He *knew* her and He *loved* her. God is omnipresent. But understand that He has individual care, concern, and affection for you. And it's not that it's just a wish that we *hope* He will be with us. He *IS* with us. That's what Gabriel told her. And that's what the Lord tells us. "I am with you always, to the end of the age."<sup>12</sup> It's not just that God is around, He wants to indwell you.

God was doing a specific work in Mary's life - a special thing that no one else in human history would experience. But that doesn't mean that God feels differently about you. Because Paul says the same grace that was given to Mary has been lavished on *us* by God when we walk with Him.<sup>13</sup>

**Matthew 1:30-33** - <sup>30</sup> Then the angel told her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end."

God was making *big* plans for our world. Plans that would change everything forever. The Faucher Family Christmas House lights up their one neighborhood for one month of the year. Jesus is the Light of the world and His illumination never ends. The darkness cannot overcome it.<sup>14</sup> One day, Christ Jesus will return and establish a literal Kingdom on a throne in Jerusalem, and His glorious reign will never end. He will rule in justice and righteousness and wisdom.<sup>15</sup>

What would *you* do if you were king or queen for a day? We have ideas, right? "If I were president, there'd be no more pineapple on pizza." We'd solve a bunch of problems for about 2 hours and then we'd be violently overthrown.

There are so many competing visions of how the world should be. People fight for *this* political party or another one, *this* form of government or another one, *this* style of society or another one. And yet, with all the variations and all the attempts and all the struggle, have you noticed there is no lasting peace anywhere? Not *true* peace. Not in the East, not in the West, not in the northern hemisphere or the southern hemisphere. Where nations aren't at war, neighborhoods are.

Do *you* like to clean up other people's messes? Do you like doing your coworkers' jobs for them? God loves us so much He isn't going to come solve all the mess we've made. He's going to cover the world in His righteousness, wipe away every tear from our eyes. The King will return and fix *everything* with His power and His grace and His goodness. And oh how this world needs it.

But *only* Christ can do it. He alone is the great, Most High, Son of David Who can do what is necessary to save not just us individually, but save the whole world. But to do this work, God Himself would have to put on flesh and dwell among us. Fully God and fully man. And for that, He would need a human mother to deliver Him into the world.

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<sup>12</sup> Matthew 28:20

<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 1:6

<sup>14</sup> John 1:5

<sup>15</sup> Jeremiah 23:5

**Matthew 1:34 - <sup>34</sup> Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?"**

This isn't a statement of disbelief, it's a legitimate question of how such a work could be accomplished. When Gabriel appeared to Zechariah and said, "Hey your wife is gonna get pregnant," Zechariah essentially said, "Yeah, that can't happen." And so Gabriel said, "Here's how I'll prove it - you're going to be mute for nine months."

Mary is asking for guidance. Have *you* ever been given a job you don't know how to do? Ask questions. As Christians who want to be doing God's work, ask for wisdom. "Lord, what's the plan?"

**Matthew 1:35-37 - <sup>35</sup> The angel replied to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God."**

Gabriel isn't terrible specific, but that's ok. The important point is that this was not like what the ancients used to teach about demigods like Hercules or Achilles. This was a miracle accomplished through God's holiness and His presence.<sup>16</sup> God was *sending* His Son, not *creating* His Son. Jesus was not *created* when He was born. He is the Second Person of the Trinity. He is God. He is eternal.

**John 1:1-3 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.**

To help strengthen Mary's faith, Gabriel pointed out the miracle of her relative Elizabeth who was about to give birth in her old age.

God plans to do wonderful work in the world. He plans to save, to restore, to transform, to rescue. And part of that plan is to use *your* life as a testimony of Who He is and what He can do. Gabriel said, "Look at Elizabeth and you'll see that *nothing* will be impossible with God."

This is the same thing God wants to do in small or great ways through *your* life. He's making plans for it. That *your* life would become more and more adorned with the light of the Gospel, drawing the people around you to stop and see the glory of God, the goodness of God, the reality of God.

Now notice, as Gabriel revealed all this to Mary, she doesn't respond with, "Ok, well what about *me*? There's a lot of talk about Jesus and about what He'll do, but how does that make *my* life better?" Mary doesn't say that at all. Here's what she says:

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<sup>16</sup> Frank Gaebelin, D. A. Carson, Walter Wessel, and Walter Liefeld *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 8: Matthew, Mark, Luke*

**Matthew 1:38 - <sup>38</sup> "See, I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.**

She agreed. She signed on the dotted line. She presented herself to God as a trusting servant. But understand, that means that any plans *she* had for her life were now submitted under the will of God. She was willing to be redirected because she trusted Him. She believed that a life submitted to God's plans was infinitely better than a life directed by only her own plans and desires. We've seen Joseph look at things the same way. That, when the moment came, they said, "Yes, Lord. Not *my* will, but *Yours* be done."

Mary says, "May it happen as you have said." This is truly one of the most courageous statements ever recorded.<sup>17</sup> Technically, she could face the death penalty for being pregnant before her wedding. She would *certainly* face lies and smears and sideways looks the rest of her life. She would have to watch her son be mistreated, attacked, misunderstood, beaten, and crucified.

But she saw beyond the temporal to the eternal. That she was being invited into the work of God. That she had a part to play in His wonderful plans. That the God of the universe had come to her and said, "Would you join Me in this?" And even though it wouldn't be easy, she said, "Yes. This sounds like a *great* plan!"

The Faucher Family Christmas House brought joy to their neighborhood with their shining lights year after year. But over time, they decided they wanted their Christmas plans to reach further. They have since used their light display to raise funds for children's charities like the Ronald McDonald house.<sup>18</sup> Their annual Christmas plans bring a lot of joy and wonder and real help to people. But it also comes at a personal cost. Though the Fauchers haven't said how much, some experts estimate their monthly energy bill could be in the \$80,000 range.

God is a planner. His plan is to save this world. To transform lives. To glorify Himself through the power of His grace and truth and victory. And though I'm sure you've heard it many times, He really does have a plan for your life. In that same passage where Paul says God's grace has been *lavished* on us - that we are people who like Mary, have found grace in the eyes of the Lord, Paul also explains that God has made wonderful plans for *your* life - custom made - before the foundation of the world to be holy, to be blameless, to be adopted into His family, to be forgiven to bless us with *every* spiritual blessing. It is His plan to bring everything together in Christ. The Gift of God sent at Christmas for you, for me, for your family, your neighbors, your friends, and enemies. The Savior, Christ the Lord. And *now*, not only at Christmas, we can remember we have a place in His work. And, like Mary, we can face unafraid the plans that He's made.

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<sup>17</sup> Larson

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/RMHCDelaware/posts/last-night-we-lit-up-the-house-in-celebration-of-our-incredible-community-of-sup/1273814024788359/>