

Instead, let's do what Mary did; let's choose to believe and do what God asks of us. I believe her faith and her resolve helped to sustain her on a difficult path. She responded to the angel's challenge by saying, as recorded in Luke 1:38, *"I am the Lord's servant...May your word to me be fulfilled."*

Choose to believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, that He walked on the earth, did miracles, was killed for our sins, was buried, rose, and lived again, just as the prophets said, just as He said He would. Believe that he lives and reigns in your heart. Believe that He, and His ministering angels, are working for you, in fulfillment of His words (John 10:10b), to make your life an abundant one of joy, peace, love-all grounded in hope.

Remember the words of the angel to Mary, *"Nothing is impossible with God"* (Luke 1:37).

Christian apologist Norm Geisler wrote, "God is not asking you to take a blind leap of faith into the darkness. He's asking you to take a reasonable step of faith into the light."

Friend, you've got all the evidence for faith that you need, beyond the virgin birth and His predicted death, burial, and resurrection. Just look at your life! You've made it this far. I am privileged to hear stories of how God intervenes in so-called "impossible" situations. What should our response be to this seemingly impossible message that we are dearly loved and highly favored by God and that, thanks to Jesus, we have conquered sin and death? We should be willing, following Mary's example, to do whatever He asks.

As of this writing, vaccines for Covid-19 are being rolled out. Although Covid will pass, loneliness and sorrow will not. People will continue to need us to bring them the message of the merciful love of Jesus. Maybe God is not calling us to go on an overseas mission, but perhaps we are to buy an old vet a meal or give a kind word to someone who needs it. On Thanksgiving, my youngest daughter, her husband, and my grandson visited my 92-year-old mother-in-law at her assisted living facility. They had to wear masks and practice social distancing and keep the visit to a half hour. Did those Covid restrictions bother Mom? No way! It was as if royalty visited her; in a way, it was. Children of the King were on a mission! My wife, Lisa, continues to visit her as well, driving an hour just to be with her for a few minutes.

In our recent move, I've discovered a neighbor who is alone. We're trying to figure out ways, safe ways, to make sure this person is seen, and known, and ultimately, loved by the One who matters most-Jesus. Whether it is in person with a mask, or by Zoom, phone calls, emails, or letters, we all need to reach out to those who are marginalized in our society, young or old, black, or white, or any beautiful shade in between. In Mathew 25: 35-40, Jesus encourages us to tangibly care, to serve others stating, *"whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

May we be more like Mary; may we be more like her Son. May God bless you for being the loving, caring, Jesus representing, Holy Spirit filled people of God that you are.

May you have a wonderful Christmas,



Andy Quient
Executive Minister

