

Mary  
Luke 1:26-56

ETS: Mary served even though the angel's announcement didn't seem to make sense

ESS: We serve even though God doesn't always seem to make sense

OSS: Serving God doesn't always Make Sense

PQ: Are you ready to deal with your scorn?

UW: Ways

**ME**

There are a lot of things in life that don't make sense!

- Why are there **flotation** devices under **plane** seats instead of **parachutes**?
- How does the guy who drives the **snowplow** get to work in the mornings?
- If 7-11 is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, why are there **locks** on the **doors**?
- If nothing ever sticks to **Teflon**, how do they make **Teflon** stick to **the pan**?
- Why do we **drive** on **parkways** and park on **driveways**?
- Why is it that when you **transport** something by **car**, it's called a **shipment**, but when you transport something by **ship**, it's called **cargo**?

- If a **black box** in a plane is **indestructible**, why can't they make the **whole plane** out of it?

There are a lot of things in life that don't make sense!

- Why do **kamikaze pilots** wear **helmets**?
- If **Barbie** is so popular, why do you have to **buy her friends**?
- Why are they called **apartments** when they are **all stuck together**?
- Why does **lemonade** have **imitation** flavoring, but **furniture polish** contains **real lemon juice**?
- Why do your **feet smell** and your **nose runs**?
- Why are **boxing rings** are **square**?
- Why do they **sterilize needles** used for **lethal injections**?

There are a lot of things in life that **do not make sense!**

## WE

Do you ever look at the world around you and wonder **what God is doing**?

- Do you find yourself **struggling** to make **sense** of God?

## Why would God allow His followers to **undergo persecution**?

- Christian missionary organization Open Doors (UK) estimates **100 million Christians** face persecution
  - Christians suffer **numerically** more than any other faith groups or groups without faith in the world.
    - Of the world's three largest religions Christians are the most **allegedly persecuted** with **80% of all acts of religious discrimination** being directed at Christians who only make up **33%** of the world's population?

Those statistics don't seem to make sense!

- How can a **loving God** allow His children to face **persecution**?

Look at world events!

- **Mass shootings** and **bombings**
- The **removal** of God from our **schools** and **public** places

It doesn't make sense that God has put a stop to all of this!

**YOU may be struggling with God**

- You've been struggling and you don't understand why God **hasn't fixed** your situation!

You may have **stopped worshiping** on Sundays with other believers because following God didn't make sense!

- **HOWEVER, you are here b/c life without God life doesn't make sense either!**

**REALITY: God's actions don't always make sense!**

In the eyes of many,

- **Believing in God** doesn't always make sense
  - How can you believe in Someone you cannot see?
  - Why believe in Someone who doesn't audibly talk to you?
    - Why won't God send you an **email** or **call** once in a while?
- Following God's **commands** doesn't always make sense
  - Why should you "**pray for those who persecute you**"?
  - Why should you "**Love your enemies**"?
- Believing Jesus is **God's Son** doesn't make sense to many

- How can a **carpenter** from Israel be the **Savior** of the World?
- How can a man live a **perfect**, sinless life?
- Believing that Jesus is **the Only way** doesn't make sense-surely there are many ways to God.
  - Why doesn't God give **many ways** to Him?
  - Why is God so **narrow** in His plan of salvation if He wants **all people** to be saved?

**REALITY: God's actions always make sense!**

**That fact-God doesn't always make sense-makes following God *difficult***

- People wonder how you can follow a God who doesn't always make sense!
  - How can a loving God **permit evil** in this world?
  - Why does God allow "**bad**" things to happen to "**good**" people?

What do you do when God doesn't makes sense?

- How do you **respond** to God when He doesn't make sense?
- What do you **say** to God when He doesn't make sense?

**GOD**

**Turn to Luke 1:26–38 (HCSB)**

If there was one person to whom God didn't make sense, it was Mary!

**Luke 1:26-27** “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a **virgin** engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the **virgin's** name was Mary.”

- **TIMELINE: Elizabeth**, the wife of the priest Zacharias, who as along in years, became pregnant.
  - Elizabeth has been pregnant now for **six months** when **Gabriel** comes calling on **Mary!**

Mary's life was **typical**

- Jewish Girl living in Nazareth
  - She was **not rich**, but was a peasant girl (offerings)
  - She was **not cultured**, but was from Nazareth-the “**backwater**” country
- Jewish Girl with a **normal** life
  - **Engaged** to be married to Joseph
    - Get married; raise a family!
- Mary was a **moral** person

- Luke mentions that fact that she was a **virgin 2x** in these verses and again later.

**Luke 1:28 (HCSB)** “And the angel came to her and said, “Rejoice, favored woman! The Lord is with you.”

What a greeting!

- To be called “**Favored**” by God!
  - Wouldn’t you want an angel to say that you?

Mary is a teenager, and yet she is “**Favored**” by God!

- That word “**Favored**” is the word from which we get “**GRACE**”
  - **Grace = Receiving what we do not deserve**
    - **Mary did not deserve God’s grace, but God had chosen to shower His grace upon her!**
      - God has chosen to show His grace to Mary!

Mary is not only the recipient of God’s grace, but also God’s presence: “**The Lord is with you.**”

**PROBLEM: Mary is confused!**

- She was just a normal Jewish girl from the backwaters of Nazareth.
  - Why would an angel visit her?
    - Why would God “**Favor**” her?

- Why would God be “with her?”

**Luke 1:29** (HCSB) “But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be.”

## GOD’S ACTIONS DON’T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE

What the angel says next sounds strange: **Luke 1:30** “The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God..”

- That statement doesn’t make sense!
  - Why should Mary be **afraid** if she has **found favor** with God?
    - In fact, this is the **second time** the angel told her that she has found “**favor with God.**”

Why should Mary be **afraid** if she has **found favor** with God?

## GOD’S ACTIONS DON’T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE

**Matt. 1:18** tells us that Mary was “**Betrothed**” to Joseph.

- The families of the Bride and Groom met with others serving as **witnesses**
- The young man would give the young woman a ring, or a document in which he promised to marry her.
  - He would say “See by this ring or token you are set apart for me”

Mary and Joseph had been through the Betrothal ceremony!

- In that day, Betrothed couples *did not yet live together*, but one year had to pass before they were married.
  - **Purpose:** Prove the Bride’s **purity**. Allow the **Groom** to finish **preparations** for his bride.

It is during this year of waiting—of proving Mary’s purity—that she becomes pregnant!

Why should Mary **be afraid**?

**Luke 1:31** “**Now listen:** (the angel wants to have her full attention) **You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will call His name Jesus.**”

Before Mary can respond, the angel continues: **Luke 1:32–33** (HCSB) <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.

*This doesn't make sense!*

- How is Mary going to **conceive before marriage?**
- How is her “**son**” going to be on **the throne of David?**
  - **No one is ruling** on the throne of David at this point!
- How will her son’s **kingdom have no end?**
  - All kingdoms end!

Mary still couldn't get past the first declaration “**You will conceive and give birth to a son!**”!

Mary had better **be afraid!**

- **Legally**, Joseph could have her **killed** for becoming **pregnant out-of-wedlock!**
- **Legally**, Joseph could “**divorce**” her.
  - Joseph could **legally** allow Mary to endure her **embarrassment on her own!**

**Matt. 1:24** tells us that Joseph proceeded to take “**Mary as his wife.**”

- Why? Because an angel of the Lord told him to do so!

**To the outsider, Joseph's marriage to Mary did not make sense!**

- Why would he risk embarrassment?
  - Did they have a marriage ceremony?
    - **Marriage Ceremony: Bride and Groom wore special garments, Procession to the Bride's house by the Groom and his friends, Marriage Feasts, Blessing of the parents....**
  - Or was it too embarrassing to go through all of this with a **pregnant** bride?
    - **Nowhere** do we read of a **wedding ceremony**-maybe the family was too embarrassed of their daughter's pregnancy!

**GOD'S ACTIONS DON'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE**

**Luke 1:34:** "Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not been intimate with a man?"

How is Mary going to **conceive**?

- Mary **did not understand** why she had been chosen.
  - She was not sure how this was going to work!

Mary asked, so the angel gives her an answer: **Luke 1:35** (CSB) “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.”

- There were **no stories** of anyone conceiving by the **Holy Spirit** of God!
  - This was **unprecedented**.
    - **This didn't make sense!**

How is Mary going to get pregnant by the “Spirit” of God?

- Spirits do not have **body parts!**
  - **It makes no sense!**

God takes Mary to the **brink!**

- God **stretches Mary's belief** to the edge.

HOWEVER, just as God always does, **He doesn't ask you to believe with no proof!**

- **God does not ask you to believe on pure emotion-He gives you EVIDENCE.**

**Even though God doesn't always make sense, God gives us a EVIDENCE to believe!**

God gave Mary evidence: **Luke 1:36–37** (HCSB)  
“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.”

God is telling Mary—Go check out your relative!

- **Elizabeth** was not able to get pregnant and now, when she is old, she is pregnant!

Why God waited to bless her with a child DIDN'T MAKE SENSE-but God gave Elizabeth a child in her old age!

- *(The reason God waited until Elizabeth was old to enable her to conceive was for THIS moment—when Mary was of age!)*

**Faith in God is NOT Blind Faith!**

- Faith in God is not built on fairy tales—it is built on **propositional truth**.

World seems crazy, but God has given us EVIDENCE of His existence!

- **Fulfillment of prophecy** =
  - Evidence He is in control
  - Evidence Jesus is the Messiah
- **Order, Cause and Effect** in Creation = Evidence He exists
- **Changed Lives** = Evidence Jesus is the Savior
- **Resurrection** of Christ = Evidence Christ is the Savior!
- **Celebration of Christmas** = Evidence that something magnificent Happened!

What **do you do** when God doesn't makes sense?

- How do you **respond** to God when He doesn't make sense?
- What do you **say** to God when He doesn't make sense?

Mary makes a very important decision that will carry her through this period of **Embarrassment**: **Luke 1:38** “I am the Lord’s slave,” said Mary. “May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel left her.

**GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE  
BUT HIS SERVANTS SERVE HIM**

Even though God didn't make sense...

- Even though this **out-of-wedlock marriage** would result in tremendous **embarrassment**
- Even though Mary did not know how **Joseph** was going to **respond**
- Even though Mary's **reputation** was going to be **tarnished** as a result of **submitting** to God
- Even though Mary **did not understand** how her **son** was going to be "**on the throne of David**"  
Even though **Mary didn't understand**----she **submitted!**

Years later, Mary's Son-Jesus-would tell a story that I did not understand until recently.

**Luke 17:7–10** (HCSB) <sup>7</sup> “Which one of you having a slave tending sheep or plowing will say to him when he comes in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? <sup>8</sup> Instead, will he not tell him, ‘Prepare something for me to eat, get ready, and serve me while I eat and drink; later you can eat and drink’? <sup>9</sup> Does he thank that slave because he did what was commanded? <sup>10</sup> In the same way, when you have done all that you were commanded, you should say, ‘We are good-for-nothing slaves; we’ve only done our duty.’ ”

- That sounds harsh! **We are good-for-nothing slaves; we’ve only done our duty.’ ”**

- That should be our attitude! “We have only done our duty!”

**GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE  
BUT HIS SERVANTS SERVE HIM ANYWAY**

Why do His servants serve Him? FAITH

- **NOT BLIND FAITH, Faith backed up by evidence!**

Notice the **Progression**:

1. God **proclaims**
2. Mary **believes**
3. Mary **investigates**

**Luke 1:39-40** “In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah where she entered Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth.”

God doesn’t always make sense but that is no reason NOT to investigate!

- God wants you to investigate
  - “God provides you with enough evidence to make faith reasonable”

Trust God and investigate the evidence!

## WE

### Why did God choose Mary?

- Not because she was **sinless**—she admits in v. **47** that she needed as **Savior**.

### Why did God choose Mary?

- Not because she was **the only virgin** who was a descendant of David! There were probably many others who could fulfill that qualification.

### Why did God choose Mary?

- **Not** because she was **rich**!

### Why did God choose Mary? Because of her **servant's heart!**

God knew that

- Even though HE **didn't make sense**-*she would obey*
- Even **Mary's** questions were **not all answered**-*she would obey*
- Even though Mary would **face embarrassment**-*she would obey!*

**GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE  
BUT HIS SERVANTS SERVE HIM ANYWAY**

## How do you know if you are serving God?

- You will serve God even if it means...
  - Embarrassment!
  - Ridicule
  - Scorn

## **PQ: Are You willing to Serve God Even When He Doesn't Make Sense?**

NOT Asking you to try to embarrass yourself for God!

- Asking if you are willing to be embarrassed for God.

## How many times have you had the opportunity to

- Share Christ and you didn't for fear of being embarrassed?
- Stand for Christ and you didn't for fear of being embarrassed?
- Show Love for Christ and you didn't for fear of being embarrassed?

## **PQ: Are You willing to Serve God Even When He Doesn't Make Sense?**

Remember this: Jesus Christ endured the  
“Embarrassment of the cross” so that you don’t  
have to!

- Jesus Christ willingly took the Embarrassment of your sin upon Himself!

God is ready to forgive you! He wants to forgive you!

- Come to Him
- Confess your sin to Him
- Make amends to others when appropriate
- Stop living in rebellion and live as servant of Christ.
- Let God work through your life for His glory!

You can turn your Embarrassment into a testimony of God’s power, God’s mercy and God’s grace!

Don’t go through another Christmas carry a load of Embarrassment !

- Give it to God.
- Meet Him at the altar!
- Deal with it now!

**GOD DOESN’T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE  
BUT HIS SERVANTS SERVE HIM ANYWAY**