

Advent 2021 - Week 2, Peace
The Pathway to Peace
Luke 1:26-38
Dec. 5th, 2021

I. Same ANGEL, very different STORY. (v.26-38)

- A. A YOUNG and unmarried WOMAN. (v.26-27)**
- B. A DIFFERENT type of QUESTION. (v.34)**
- C. An active EMBRACING of the CALL. (v.38)**

This week we look at another angelic visit, once again bringing news of an impending birth. But other than that the comparisons between this week's text and last week's visit to Zechariah don't have a lot in common.

1. Kid's Question: What do you think God wants you to do this coming week?
2. The visitation to Zechariah and Mary are very different. Which one do you identify with most and why?

II. What is NOW and what is COMING. (v.29-38)

- A. Mary is FILLED with GRACE. (v.28-30; Eph 1:3-6)**
- B. God is PRESENT with HER. (v.28,35; Mt. 1:22-23)**
- C. Messiah will COME and RULE forever. (v.31-33,35; Is. 9:6-7)**
- D. SURRENDER is the path to PEACE. (v.38; Gal. 2:20)**

The message to Mary, and the information given in response to her question give insight into what was going to happen in both the near and distant future. The same can be true of us, as Jesus keeps coming to the world through His people until His full and final return.

3. How would life look differently if we were more aware of being filled with Grace and living with God's presence? What can we do to become more aware of that reality?
4. Is Jesus ruling at present? Does it look like you think it would look? What can we learn from that?
5. Reflect on the full text of Niebuhr's "Serenity Prayer." What phrases stand out to you most and why?

III. Mary's LEADERSHIP toward PEACE. (v.34-38)

- A. HONESTY and OPENNESS before God. (v.29,34; Phil. 4:6-7)**
- B. A clear UNDERSTANDING of where we FIT. (v.38; Rom. 1:1)**
- C. A willingness to SURRENDER despite the UNKNOWN. (v.38; Jn 13:6-9)**

Mary serves as a great example of how to be a follower of God. Her pathway to peace was challenging to say the least. But she lived open and surrendered to God. And the world has never been the same since.

6. Rate yourself on your own level of honesty and openness before God. Are you happy with that rating? If not, what can you do differently?
7. What does being a servant/slave of Jesus look like in your life this week? How is God calling you to live that out?
8. What “unknowns” make it hard for you to surrender? Ask God for the faith to continue to surrender despite the future unknowns.

The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change
the courage to change the things I can
and the wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time.
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace.
Taking, as he did, the sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it.
Trusting that he will make all things right
if I surrender to His will;
that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
and supremely happy with Him forever.

—Reinhold Niebuhr, 1892-1971