



**Sermon-based reflections connect the week to the weekend!**

*Dig deeper into the talk each week, in a small group or independently. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life.*

**Message Info:** Finding Christmas in The Chaos - Are You Serious?, 12/03/23 - Sung of as a “silent night,” we romanticize the Christmas story; a glorious star cuts through the darkness as the Savior of the world is born. The reality of this beautiful story is riddled with trials, much like our own. A closer look reveals deeper beauty, and meaning in the mess. It proves our need for a savior and promises hope. (*Passages: Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-24, Philippians 1:6, Romans 4-6, 5:1*)

**Discussion Questions:** Take your time and dig into these questions.

Do you ever have unreal expectations? What happens when reality hits? Is it wrong to dream a little? How can we moderate our picturesque hopes? And deal with reality when things play out differently?

Read Luke 1:26-38. What stands out to you in this passage. Why?

Initially, the angel’s greeting alone troubled Mary. It’s miraculous that by the end of the conversation, Mary accepts the angel’s words. Her future plans could have been completely ruined. She could have become a social disgrace, which had serious implications in those times. But she chose faith and obedience. What state was Mary’s faith in to respond like this? Could Mary have received this message without first knowing God? How does knowing God change our reactions and decisions?

Read Matthew 1:18-24. What do you think went through Joseph’s mind?

Joseph responded to his angelic visitor similarly to Mary. Though hurt, his mind racing with questions, he also chose to yield to God. It’s a choice to invite him into the mess. Have you ever made a choice or walked a path that went against God? What happened?

Jesus came to meet us in our brokenness. He is the light our hearts are desperate for. When we acknowledge our sin and need for him, he turns fear to courage and heals our heartbreak. Trust Jesus and practice faith every day to withstand life’s storms. We can’t control the mess, but we can control our response. God blesses the decision to yield and stand in faith.

**Weekly Challenge:** Invite a friend to one of our exciting Christmas Services at 5:30 pm on Christmas Eve!