

# Beyond His Birth

## Life Lessons on Christmas from Those Who Were There

### SESSION 3: MARY – FAVOR

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O **favored one**, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found **favor** with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy - the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.

And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home. **Luke 1:26-56 ESV**

The Greek word for Favor (Charis) is synonymous with Grace.

For from His fullness we have all received, **grace** upon **grace**. **John 1:16 ESV**

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by **grace** you have been saved. **Ephesians 2:4-5 ESV**

If you follow My decrees and are careful to obey My commands...I will look on you with **favor** and make you fruitful and increase your numbers and I will keep My covenant with you. **Leviticus 26:3,9 NIV**

The Hebrew word for Favor (Chen) is synonymous with Grace and Acceptance.

But He said to me, “My **grace** is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV**

**Notes:**

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**Discussion Questions:**

- Have you had a tendency to see favor as something that God gives equally across the board? What about grace?
- Do you see God's favor on your life? If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
- Do you view God's calling on people's lives to be of varying significance? How significant do you see God's calling on your life?
- Have you identified God's purpose in your life?

**Homework:**

Spend some time alone with God thanking Him for His grace and favor toward you. Dedicate yourself to fulfilling His plan and purpose in your life and ask for His guidance. End your time repeating Mary's words in Luke 1:38, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to Your Word." After you're done, keep listening out for His word over you; remember His hand of favor over your life; thank Him for His grace through death on the cross and be on the lookout for opportunities to be used by Him.

**Meditate & Memorize:**

For from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. **John 1:16 ESV**

But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV**