



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – December 14, 2021

The Lord be with you.

Question. What do you sense God might be saying to you?

The reason I asked that is because God is after all, a God who speaks, a God who reveals Himself to us. Scripture calls Jesus the word of God, because it is God's very nature to speak... To reveal Himself to us. And so I ask, What do you sense God might be saying to you?

Perhaps saying to you through a scripture you've been reading, saying to you the world events, same to you through a sermon that you've heard, the wise words of a friend. What do you sense God's saying to you? Because after all, God is speaking to you and me, and that's why Jesus repeatedly says, Whoever has ears to hear... Listen.

For the next few moments, I want to look at the story that begins this advent season, when God is speaking to a young teenage girl, her name is Mary, and she lives in that tiny backwater village of Nazareth of Galilee, and one day a day when... Well, Mary might be gathering firewood or baking bread, we don't know, but that God speaks to Mary through His messenger angel Gabriel. So Mary is going to become not only Jesus's mother, but she's going to become Jesus first disciple, a true example of faith that we're looking at today in the Gospel of Luke chapter 1, when the angel Gabriel appears to Mary and he reveals to her, he speaks to her, telling her that she will conceive and bear a son and that her son would be great and who we called The Son of the most time, and he will reign forever and his kingdom, and He will be the Son of God.

Now, you and I, well, we know the story very well. We hear it again and again, but keep in mind that Mary is hearing all of this for the first time, and what Mary hears... Well, it doesn't make any sense to her. She cannot understand. Well, she's not had intimate relations with a man, and how is it that that God would do something so great and wondrous through well, through such a poor and lowly girl. But the angel reminds Mary, he says that with God, nothing is impossible. You know, I used to take it for granted that Mary would say yes to God, in that I've always said Yes to God. Not that I've always made myself available to God. But you know, in reading a story, I just assumed that Mary will say Yes, but think what saying yes to God will mean for Mary. I mean, here she is a teenage girl who will be pregnant out of wedlock, and here is a marriage to Joseph that's gonna get called off, and in place of her father getting a dowry, her father is going to get shame. And according to the law of Moses, Mary might even be stoned to death.

And so will Mary obey what God is speaking to her? Mary could say, well, you know, Lord, this is not a good time. Could you come back in a year? Or Mary could say, You know what, this really



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interferes with my plans. Could we do it another way? But notice that Mary simply says, Here, I am the servant of the Lord. Now, our English word servant, it's actually a weak translation of the word that Mary uses it, she uses the Greek word doule and doule comes from the Greek word Deo, that means to bind. As a doule is a female slave who is bound by obedience to her master, that's the word Mary uses her to express that she's willing to be bound in obedience to the Word of God. Here I am, the doule, the bond slave of the Lord. So notice that at this moment, Mary is faced with the decision, will I obey will make way for the life of the son of God to be formed in me? Or will I avoid the pain? Will I avoid the confusion? Will I take an easier way? But notice that Mary does not resist, she does not argue, she does not offer up some other option, she does not try to come up with some better plan, but Mary simply says, Here, I am the bond slave of the Lord, let it be with me according to Your word.

I like here how Mary, refusing the world's most frequent prayer thy will be changed. Mary is saying to God, your will be done. Lord, I don't understand what all of this is gonna mean for me, but... Yes, yes. Your will be done. Now, notice what happens here. In the very moment that Mary says, yes to what God is saying to her, in that moment, she says, Here I am, at that moment, the Holy Spirit comes upon Mary, and the Holy Spirit begins forming in her the very life of the son of God.

Let it be to me according to your word.

And the spirit of God goes to work in her life. It is startling. It is strange what God is going to do, but Mary says yes to God's word. And you know the moment that you and I say yes to what God is speaking to us. That moment that we say, Lord, here I am. Let it be to me according to your word, according to what you were saying to me, the spirit of God goes to work in us forming the very character and image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so I began by asking what you sense God might be saying to you, because God is saying something to you, you may not totally understand it, God might be saying it to you something that well Lord, it's not the right time, or Lord is not going to be easy. But at the moment that you say yes to the word of God, to what God is saying to you, the Spirit of God goes to work in your life. Forming in you, the life and character of Jesus, answering that prayer that you've been praying, that you might be more like Jesus.

So let's in this advent season, let's say yes to the Word of God that's speaking to us. And as we do that, the Spirit of God goes to work and us making us more and more like our Savior.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for this thing. Until next time.