

DECEMBER 8 & 9

Fear Not: Mary

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Introduction

Our Advent series, *O Hear the Angel Voices*, continues with Pastor John's message about the words spoken to Mary by the angel Gabriel. She learned God was not tipped over by her emotions, the enormity of the moment, or her questions, and He did not ask her to walk alone. Thankfully, the same is true for us today!

Discussion

1. Read this week's passage, **Luke 1:26-38**. Mary took a bold step of faith after being asked to do something that seemed impossible. Share a story about how you responded to God's call when the outcome was uncertain.
2. Read **Luke 1:37**, **Ephesians 3:20** and **Jeremiah 32:27**. Nothing is impossible for God! How have you seen this truth play out in your own life?
3. Have you ever questioned God? How did He respond? What did you learn?
4. Every member of Christ's body, the church, has different gifts [**Romans 12:3-8**, **1 Corinthians 13:2**]. Share a story about someone who used his or her gift to support you in a time of need.

Do Something

1. Mary displayed remarkable courage when she was receptive to the angel Gabriel's instructions. Conduct a word study on "courage" using online tools such as *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* or *studylight.org*.
2. God is not asking us to walk alone! If you are not currently in an accountability relationship, this may be the time to share your struggles with a trusted friend or family member. Pray for God's guidance as you take steps to walk in obedience and courage like Mary.
3. The basis of the Christian faith is love, not fear. Identify a person in your Little Iowa you've been afraid to approach and begin demonstrating God's love to them.

Resources

1. In *Leading Through Your Fear of Failure*, Craig Groeschel teaches taking risks and accepting failure is essential to spiritual growth.
2. Mary accepted God's call and moved forward with determination. We must also work hard at whatever God gives us to do as summarized in the brief video *Jesus Didn't Call You to a Recliner*.
3. Elizabeth opened her heart and home when Mary desperately needed a friend [read **Luke 1:39-56**]. *Mary and Elizabeth's Absolutely Proven Guide to Friendship* explores the lessons we can learn from their relationship.