

Christmas Expectations

- People experience disappointment and frustration when they set their Christmas expectations too high.
- People experience despair when they set their Christmas expectations too low.
- People experience the status quo when they set their Christmas expectations realistically.

What if all we were expecting for Christmas was God?

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The LORD is with you."

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The LORD God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing is impossible with God."

³⁸"I am the LORD's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary's Expectations of Her "Unplanned" Pregnancy

- Distance between Joseph and her family
- Despair over the reaction of people
- Divorce as a serious consequence
- Death as an imminent possibility
- Delivering a healthy baby

(Continues on back)

The Virgin Birth prepared the world for:

- The perfect fulfillment of prophecy

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. – Isaiah 7:14

- The perfect Savior

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” – Matthew 1:21

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the LORD.
– Luke 2:11

- The perfect sacrifice

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. – 1 John 4:10

- The perfect victory

[So the Lord God said to the serpent,] “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” – Genesis 3:15

Mary set her expectations in God and God alone.

And Mary said, “My soul praises the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. – Luke 1:46-48a

Next Steps

Grab a calendar for the month of December. Where will you intentionally plan peace, joy and love this Christmas season? Plan it out, because if you fail to plan, you plan to fail!

Make a list of your expectations for the Christmas season both realistic and unrealistic. Now, read Mary’s Song from Luke 1:46-56 and write a new set of expectations that revolve around Jesus and your relationships with Him.

Small Group Discussion Questions



- 1) Do you have any unrealistic expectations of the Christmas season? What are they and what do you think will happen if your expectations go unmet?
- 2) What is your plan to make Jesus the focal point of your Christmas celebration?
- 3) Which category of “Christmas Expectations” (high, low, status-quo) best represents how your approach Christmas? How would your life change if you were only expecting God?
- 4) Why is the virgin birth so foundational in the Christian faith?
- 5) How can we pray for you tonight?