



Sweet Surrender

Description

For nothing is impossible with God. (Luke 1:37)

Yesterday, I challenged you to read Luke 1 & 2. For those of you who were able to dive in and read this portion of Scripture... you might have come across these six dynamic words! This is a very short verse, but wow they pack a powerful message. There is nothing that my God and your God cannot do! Do you believe it? Well, let's take a look into the lives of two people who found out exactly what God can do.

The first one we come across is Zechariah. I know many of you know the story and have heard it just recently, but let's dive in just a little bit deeper. Zechariah was a man who observed the Lord's commandments and he was upright in the sight of the Lord. He and his wife Elizabeth had no children. They were both well advanced in years and it was starting to look grim in the child bearing area. But one day Zechariah was the priest chosen to burn incense in the temple. He went in to do his duty and was given a surprise. An angel of the Lord came to visit him. His initial reaction was fear, but the angel calmed his fears. Here is the angel's response:

“Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John...” (Luke 1:13)

(There were more words offered from the angel to Zechariah, but I encourage you to read them on your own.) We all know Zechariah's response to the angel's declaration but it still amazes me. Especially given the fact that this is something he prayed for. I mean don't you think his response should have looked more like this... “Oh, thank you God for hearing my prayers! I can't wait to tell Elizabeth we're going to have a baby.” A response that affirms he knows God has been listening to his prayers. Don't we all desire to hear an answer to our prayers? Then why is it at times we are surprised when they are answered. Is it because the timing is off? Is it because the way they are answered just doesn't feel right? Let's take a look at Zechariah's response.

Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.” (Luke

1:18)

Does this look like a familiar response to you? Don't we all ask God these kind of questions? Don't we all offer up excuses on why God's solution won't work? We're always trying to tell Him why it's so absurd for Him to answer prayers the way He wants to. It seems kind of silly for Zechariah to even have these objections knowing that God knew him better than he knew himself. But we are no different. Think of the last time you asked for God to provide. Did He do it the way you wanted Him to or the way He knows is best? Think of the last time you faced a major catastrophe. Did you get out of it in your own strength or with the strength of the Lord? The truth is **"NOTHING is impossible for God, but everything is impossible without Him!"** I want to make sure you catch that!

Now let's take a look at Mary. The situation is similar, but the outcome is different. I want to evaluate where our hearts will be in this year to come. How will we look at God differently? Will we believe that this is a year God can do anything? Will we be a little more like Mary and a little less like Zechariah?

Even in the beginning of Mary's exchange with the angel Gabriel we see that she too was troubled. She did not know the reason for his visit, so she was concerned. The angel told her not to be afraid. It's human nature to fear the unknown and the unexpected. God can handle that. Then it's time to trust Him when we hear those words, "Do not be afraid!" Will we trust Him even when we don't know what's coming next?

The angel proceeded to share with Mary that she would give birth to a son, but not just any son. He would be the son of the Most High. She would give birth to Jesus and his reign would be forever. Wow, that's a lot to swallow. Mary had a question of her own just like Zechariah, but watch her approach.

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34)

Mary's question did not come from a place of doubt and she didn't offer up excuses like Zechariah did. She simply stated a fact. She was a virgin and as far as she had known it was impossible to get pregnant. She was simply wondering how the Lord would carry this out. God can handle our questions. It's the attitude that we come to Him with that matters. How will you bring your questions this year? Will you remember that God has the answers?

The angel proceeded to give the answers on how the baby would develop. The baby was truly going to be the son of the Most High. One thing would prove to be true...

"For nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37)

I want to continue to explore the gospels with you and learn what it means to be a Follower of Christ. We will continue in the book of Luke tomorrow.

Challenge: Read Luke 3 & 4

Memory Verse for the Week: Psalm 37:23-24, Let me know how you're coming along on this and how your applying it to you're life!

Dear Father God, I pray that You will teach me how to wait on You for the answers I long to hear. Help me to understand that Your ways are higher than my ways and that everything makes sense in Your

world. Feel free to remind me daily that this life is not about me... It's all about You! I desire to serve You alone! Have all of me. I pray my life to Your hands. May this be a year of sweet surrender!

Finding the Answers in God,

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