

## Slide #11 - Title

### Are You the Type of Person God can Use?

Text: Luke 1:26-38

#### Luke 1:26-38

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He 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, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." <sup>34</sup>"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The 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. <sup>36</sup>Even 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. <sup>37</sup>For nothing is impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

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Did you ever ask yourself why God chose Mary to carry His Son? Well, this morning, I want to look at Mary and answer why God chose Mary above all the women of the world to be used in this special way.

There are just about as many depictions of Mary **(click)** in paintings, **(click)** statues, **(click)** in a cheese sandwich and even tattooed as body art as there are misconceptions about Mary. **(Click)** The Bible does not say we are to worship her. **(Click)** She was not perfect or sinless. **(Click)** The Bible does not say she was God. **(Click)** It doesn't say we are to venerate or pray to her. In fact, **(Click)** what was special about Mary was her **(Click)** plain ordinariness. God took an ordinary woman, **(Click)** like any young girl today and used her in an extraordinary way. What made her special was the fact that there wasn't anything special about her.

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So, why did God choose Mary? **(Click)** It wasn't because of her education. **(Click)** She didn't have any. **(Click)** It wasn't because of her wealth. **(Click)** She was poor. **(Click)** And it wasn't because she was so wise or mature. **(Click)** She was but a teenager, and young one at that, probably only 13 or 14 years old.

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So, why did God choose Mary? Here it is – you ready for this? **(Click)** God chose Mary because she trusted God! Pretty unspectacular, wouldn't you say? Having said that, does not mean that Mary was not afraid. **(Click)** Mary was afraid. In fact the Angel probably saw that

fear and that's why he said, "Don't be afraid, Mary." **(Click)** The text tells us that Mary was greatly troubled. **(Click)** The original language carries with that being "petrified by fear or scared to death." We don't have a picture of Mary at that moment, **(Click)** but it probably looked a little like this.

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But even as scared as she was, Mary did not let her fear control her. And there probably was all kinds of things that she could have been scared of. **(Click)** Like fear of criticism; **(Click)** Fear of the supernatural; **(Click)** Fear of inadequacy; **(Click)** Fear of Change;

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We must ask today, when can God truly use people? What does God look for in people He can mightily use? **(Click)** Well the first requirement is they must be people who desire to Do His Will. The simple fact of the matter is God was able to use Mary **(Click)** because she wanted God's Plan for her life. But just saying that does not make it happen. God has made every person for a purpose, but we can miss that purpose. **(Click)** We can have one plan and God can have another. I am sure Mary had plans for her life, you know, dreams and aspirations. And then this angel shows up and says **(Click)** God wants to come to earth as a Baby and He wants to use your body, Mary. Mary did not understand God's plan, did she? She questioned, I have never been with a man; I am still a virgin; I'm not married: how can this be? And probably the biggest question of all **(Click)** why a baby? If God had come to earth with all His glory and power, how would the people have reacted? Fear! **(Click)** But nobody is afraid of a baby, right? And besides, **(Click)** everyone comes into this world as a baby. God wanted to relate with us and us to relate with Him. By this special coming, we know God truly understands us and feels what we feel.

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What was Mary's response? "My soul praises the Lord and my heart rejoices in God my Savior." **(Click)** She could have resorted to any number of excuses, **(Click)** like I've got a career to think about, some goals for my life – like school. **(Click)** It's just not convenient right now to be pregnant – you know I've got to think about what's best for me. **(Click)** So, tell you what God, why not ask somebody else? Mary did not do any of these things, but **(Click)** declared "My soul praises the Lord and my heart rejoices in God my Savior. May it be to me as you have said."

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God can use people who are willing to pay the cost. **(Click)** There is always a cost in following God's plan for your life. It may be the cost of time, energy or money. We will be constantly challenged to give up something in order to attain something greater. **(Click)** Mary was ready to pay the cost, saying, "It's the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said." **(Click)** She was saying simply, "God, I am willing to do whatever You want."

For Mary, what did this "whatever" include? **(Click)** Probably, her reputation. She was a virgin and now she was pregnant. She was engaged to Joseph but had not slept with him. What was everybody going to think? I'm single and I'm pregnant and the baby's going to be God. Right? Her reputation was one thing and now we add a little mental imbalance as well, a little mixed up in the head.

For Mary this "whatever" would most certainly include her **(Click)** comfort. This birth would mean a long and difficult trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem. It would mean this teenage peasant girl would give birth in a foreign city around strangers rather than family. And then shortly after the baby birth, you hear that a King is trying to kill him and you have to flee with your family in the middle of the night. That surely was not comfortable.

God's purposes for our lives will include some problems. These are not accidental – no they are part of the cost in doing God's will. Jesus was very up front with this when He said, **(Click)** "No one can be My disciple who doesn't carry his own cross. But don't begin without counting the cost." **(Click)** So, what are you willing to give up, as the cost of following Jesus?

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God uses people who dare to trust His promises. That means taking God at His word. **(Click)** Mary asked the angel "How can this be? I am a virgin." It was beyond her ability to reason. But it was not beyond God's. **(Click)** The angel assured her that nothing is impossible for God. Did Mary understand how God was going to do this? No, not at all! But Mary was not being asked to understand it, but simply to trust that what God said would happen.

We sometimes think that courage is the absence of fear. Not at all! **(Click)** Courage is NOT the absence of fear but rather courage is moving ahead in spite of your fear – simply trusting God to work out the details, even when we don't understand them.

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God uses people who desire to do His will; are willing to pay the price; and dare to trust God's promises. **(Click)** Are you that kind of person? Let's face it, **(Click)** if God can use a poor

peasant teenager girl with no education to be the mother of His Son, Jesus Christ, how puny are our excuses for not letting God have all of our lives?

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God can use us.

**(Click)** Are you willing to be used by God?

**(Click)** Could you say to God "use me anytime, anywhere for anything?"

**(Click)** If you were to answer yes, does that scare you? It need not scare us if we only remembered **(Click)** how much God loves us and **(Click)** that God has our best interests at heart.

**(Click)** So, what are you going to give Jesus this Christmas? Christmas is the only celebration where the birth child does not receive the gifts. So, what do you want to give Jesus? What do you give someone who has everything? There is only one thing He does not have and really would like. Do you know what that is? **(Click)** Myself. That way Jesus can have a wonderful Christmas. Amen.