

THE INDWELLING CHRIST
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Luke 1:26-45

1. The passage we are focusing on this morning may cause you to think I have confused Easter with Christmas.
2. I was wondering the same thing earlier this week as I began to pray about what God would have me to preach today.
3. It became apparent early on what He wanted me to say, but how could I tie it to the Resurrection.
4. In my preparation my first concern is always what does God want me to say.
5. All of us who have been called to preach the Word should follow the example of a prophet named Micaiah. 2 Chronicles 18
 - a. Ahab, the king of Israel, enlisted the help of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to go with him into battle against his enemies.
 - b. Jehoshaphat, a godly king, advised that they should consult God first.
 - c. Ahab's hand-picked prophets all prophesied success.
 - d. Jehoshaphat was unconvinced, and asked, "Is there not yet a prophet of the Lord here that we may inquire of him?"
 - d. Note the following two passages.
 - (1) 2 Chron 18:7

The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the Lord, but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me but always evil. He is Micaiah, son of Imla." But Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so."
 - (2) 2 Chron 18:12-13

Then the messenger who went to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, "Behold, the words of the prophets are uniformly favorable to the king. So please let your word be like one of them and speak favorably." 13 But Micaiah said, "**As the Lord lives, what my God says, that I will speak.**"
6. Today we focus on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead.
7. The resurrection is an indisputable fact upon which our hope rests. Col 1:24-29

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. 25 Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, 26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.** 28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. 29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

8. Paul's statement, "Christ in you, the hope of glory," has some important implications.
 - a. If Christ is not in you, you have no hope of glory.
 - b. Without the resurrection there is no way Christ could be in you.
 - c. Apart from the resurrection you and I have no hope.
 - d. But if Christ is in you, you have hope, help, and a purpose.
9. What was true about Mary must be true about us if we really want to fulfill God's purpose for our lives.

I. Mary was accessible.

A. Mary and Joseph were numbered with those Jews who not only had a messianic hope, but they were actually expecting the Messiah and lived accordingly.

NOTE: All evangelical Christians expect Christ to return, but only a small minority live accordingly.

B. Like Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon, and Anna, Joseph and Mary believed the promises that had been made to Abraham and were therefore counted righteous.

C. They had a living hope rather than an empty, meaningless one.

D. When I say Mary was accessible I mean that she was a woman who was in a right relationship with the Lord, and therefore in a position to not only hear God, but also to obey God.

E. We should expect the Holy Spirit to commune with our spirit.

F. We should also expect Him to instruct our minds, capture our hearts, and control our wills.

II. Mary was available.

A. Mary was perplexed by Gabriel's visit and pondered what the implications might be.

B. When told that she would be the means through which God would become flesh and dwell among us she questioned how this could happen since she and Joseph were engaged but not married.

C. Gabriel's explanation was impossible from a human standpoint, but "nothing (not any word) will be impossible with God." 37

NOTE: The full implications of this verse are enormous.

1. "For every promise from God shall surely come true." TLB

2. "For no promise from God will be impossible of fulfillment." Weymouth

3. "Because no word (God speaks) shall be impossible with God. Douay-Rheims

D. In spite of the enormity and troubling implications of Gabriel's announcement Mary responded, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." 38

1. How do you respond when God speaks to you?

2. Does He speak to you?

3. Have you ever said to God what Mary said to Gabriel?

III. Mary was amenable.

A. The word amenable speaks of being agreeable, submissive, or cooperative.

B. God had chosen her, spoken to her, and reassured her; what could she do but obey?

C. There is an important point here that we cannot afford to miss, and that is that Mary was not only agreeable; she actually believed what God told her.

D. Note Elizabeth's words to Mary spoken under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by (from) the Lord." 45

E. It is one thing to believe that God's Word is true, while it is a totally different thing to live expectantly because of God's Word.

APPLICATION

1. Prior to appearing to Mary the angel Gabriel was sent to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist.

2. Zacharias was told that his prayer for a son would be finally answered even though he and his wife were well beyond child-bearing age.

NOTE: I suspect both had long ago accepted the fact that having a child was not part of God's plan for them.

3. Unlike Mary, Zacharias found this word from the Lord impossible to believe and was rendered mute for an extended period of time.

4. Yet he was assured that what God promised He would perform, and He did.

5. Christ is alive, He is alive in you and me if we have embraced Him as Savior and Lord, and He is ready to work in and through us if we are accessible, available and amenable.