

Life Group Notes
Sunday 27 September 2020

Speaker: Tex Chettiar
Passage: Luke 1:26-38
Series: Luke: Tell the Story
Title: Vessels of Hope

This week we continued our series in Luke. Tex looked at the familiar passage, in which the Angel Gabriel visits Mary and announces that she will become pregnant with Jesus. We see that Mary is used by God to be a vessel of hope, as she carries Jesus into the world.

Read: Luke 1:26-38

Mary is reminded that she is valued by God (v28-30). In this portion of the passage we see that Mary is a representation of those who are marginalised and overlooked by society. But we know that God loves to use those people for his glory. God often comes to lowly people. He comes in tenderness and compassion to those society has forgotten, those who are left out. He goes in great tenderness to the thieves and lepers. He eats in the homes of tax collectors and accepts worship from prostitutes. God does not skip over people society likes to overlook. He stops. He loves them. He heals them. And he uses them in his kingdom. God reminds Mary she is loved by God, known by God and that God is with her. *As we read this we need to remember that God has come to us, reminded us of our new identity in him and we are now like Mary, ready to be vessels of hope.*

God has a mission for Mary (v31-33) We see that Gabriel then shares with Mary what her mission will be. He does so by references to the Old Testament. It's here that we are reminded what kind of Kingdom Mary is bringing into the world. One that is vastly different to the prevailing culture. There is this promise of stewarding a kingdom to come - one that is filled with love, compassion, freedom, tenderness and hope. *As vessels of hope, this is the type of kingdom we are bringing in*

Mary is reminded of who she is carrying (v35): It is here that we are introduced to the theology of Jesus being fully God and fully man. Because Jesus was fully God and fully man, he is able to be the perfect sinless sacrifice for humanity (see Galatians 4:4-6), and at the same time being able to offer forgiveness to all humankind. The emphasis here is not on Mary, but who she is carrying. *We need to remember that being a vessel of hope is not about who is doing the carrying, but who they carry.* **Why not pray now, to be filled afresh with the Holy Spirit and to be reminded of the power you carry.**

Being a vessel of Hope is done so in Community (v36-37). Mary is reminded that she is not on the journey of being a vessel of hope on her own. She has Elizabeth who is in a similar life stage as her. *God intends for us to be vessels of hope in community. Where we can carry one another's burdens.*

Being a vessel of Hope is costly (v38). For Mary, being a pregnant unmarried woman, it will potentially cost her, her safety and reputation to be a vessel of hope, yet she is willing. *For us as Christians, it costs us to be vessels of hope. Jesus has words of challenge to us (lay down your life for him), as well as words of comfort (come all who are weary). Jesus also wants us to shoulder this cost with our church family.*

Questions for discussion:

1. What cultural restrictions do we place on people or ourselves, before we think God could use them/us?
2. What does it look like to bring a kingdom of love, hope, compassion, tenderness and freedom to your workplace/family/friends?
3. Are there any ways (practical and spiritual) you are able to support your Christian brothers and sisters while on the journey of being vessels of hope?
4. Who can I tell about the hope of Jesus Christ this week?