

# Character 3

## MARY

**Scripture Passage:** Luke 1:26-38

**Attribute:** Perfect Faith, Imperfect Vision

Wow! Now we've come to Mary. A seemingly infinite number of words have been written about her and her role in the Christmas narrative over the centuries. Yet, too often, familiarity can lead us to miss simple truths. Let's re-examine the person of Mary and look to see what she can teach us this Christmas.

Mary's message is indeed simple, yet profound. Look first at her reaction, in verse 34, to the angel's astonishing message. In Mary's finite and limited understanding, she couldn't possibly make sense of the predicted conception. Mary lived in a world ruled by logic and understanding, one in which facts and the laws of nature govern what was possible and impossible. *It's the same world we live in today.*

And yet, we read here of a supernatural being, an angel, literally standing in front of her, relaying to her a personal message from God. *Whoa!* If that's not an intersection of the natural and the supernatural, I'm not sure what is. And as if that weren't enough, the message itself was perplexing and more than a little alarming.

**Not surprisingly, Mary asked a question: "How can this be"?**

In Mary's words we should recognize the echoes of our own disbelief. *How often do we, with our flawed feet planted firmly on a flawed earth, surrounded by worldly concerns and considerations, question God's ability to move in ways only He can?* Like Mary we're bound by our limited understanding. We have needs in our life that we don't bring to God for fear that He can't help. We read Scripture and see miracles and subconsciously doubt the veracity. We see God moving in others lives and question the authenticity. *"How can this be"?*

**We must never lose sight of the fact that God is the God of the impossible.** God Himself created and ordered the universe. He crafted the natural laws and systems that rule the world. This is the God who hung the stars in the sky, set the mountains on their foundations, and measured the borders of the seas. **For this God, nothing is impossible!**

The power of this lesson is in Mary's response to the angel found in verse 38: "And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.'" (ESV). Mary had an imperfect vision of what God had in store for her. But her faith was expressed perfectly.

**The message for us (who, like Mary, rarely see the full vision God has in store for us) is to faithfully follow God, the God of the impossible, trusting His leading in all things, and professing our faith in His guidance.**

### Food For Thought . . .

1. Think back on your life: when have you had to trust in God when you didn't have the "full picture" at your disposal? How did this situation work out?
2. How did you respond in this situation? What, if anything, could you have done differently?
3. How does knowing God's character make it easier for us to trust Him even when we don't have all the answers?
4. How do you see this playing out in the lives of the students you lead? What are some practical ways you can walk beside them as they attempt to follow God's leading?