

Favor To The Overwhelmed

Overwhelmed!

"My soul is **overwhelmed** with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." - Matthew 26:38

"People were **overwhelmed** with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak." - Mark 7:37

"As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were **overwhelmed** with wonder and ran to greet him." - Mark 9:15

Zechariah's "News"

"In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷ But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old. ⁸ Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. ¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³ But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John." Luke 1:5-13

Mary's "News"

"In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² 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, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." Luke 1:26-33

A posture of doubt

- When we allow the pageantry of **religion** to dull our expectancy.
- When we stop believing that God is listening to our **prayers**.
- When we assume a "**prove it**" posture.

Mary's Response and Posture

³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered.

"May your word to me be fulfilled."

[Idou Hay Doula]

Behold the bondservant of the Lord.

[Kuriou Genoito Moi Kata To Rama Sou]

Let it be according to your word

A posture of trust

- Let it be
- Trust God's promises: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14

Small Group Questions

1. Have you personally been overwhelmed in 2010? (Remember, the term overwhelmed can be positive as well negative.) How and where did you receive the overwhelming "news"?
2. Review the three 'postures of doubt' from above. Which of the three are you most susceptible to?
3. Currently, in which areas of your journey with God and life in general are you responding like Mary? ('Let it be according to you word.') Currently, in which areas of your life are you responding more like Zechariah? ('How can I know this to be true?')