

# **“THE HIGHLY FAVORED WOMAN OF GOD”**

*An Introduction to the Story of Mary, the Mother of Jesus*

*Sunday Evening Sermon on December 18, 2016 (by Ray Reynolds)*

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Text: Luke 1:26-38

Introduction: The gospel of Luke starts with a story about Zachariah and Elizabeth. They were getting old and had no children. God works a miracle in their lives and Elizabeth gets pregnant! That story is quickly followed by an angel's appearance to Mary (young virgin girl). From this point forward Mary will become arguably the most important woman in the New Testament. God works a miracle in her life and she also conceives the child. The angel refers to her as a “highly favored” one. What does that mean? What did God have planned? Let's study together...

Discussion:

### **I. THE ENLIGHTENMENT FROM GABRIEL**

- A. Mary is approached by God's angel (vs.26-27).
- B. Mary is favored by God (v.28).
- C. Mary is comforted by God (v.28).
- D. Mary is blessed by God (v.28).
- E. Mary is troubled by the visitation of the angel (v.29).

### **II. THE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM GABRIEL**

- A. Gabriel calms Mary (v.30).
- B. Gabriel encourages Mary (v.30).
- C. Gabriel presents God's plan to Mary (v.31).
- D. Gabriel reveals God's Son to Mary (vs.31-33).
- E. Mary is confused by the prophecy (v.34).

### **III. THE EXPLANATION OF GABRIEL**

- A. Gabriel explains God's plan for Mary (v.35).
- B. Gabriel explains God's plan for Elizabeth (v.36).
- C. Gabriel explains God's providence to Mary (v.37).
- D. Mary responds to God's message (v.38).
- E. Gabriel departs from Mary (v.38).

Conclusion: Mary's response developed through a three-part dialogue with Gabriel. As we read the story we can gain a tremendous amount of respect for this young lady. God's plan for the Messiah's birth was not what the world expected. God elevated the lowly for His purpose because God sees not as man sees. Are you willing to respond to God when He calls you? Are you willing to face persecution and ridicule? How has the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus affected you?