

Monday, January 1, 2018



A week ago, on Christmas Eve, I preached a sermon entitled *Favored*. In this message we looked at Mary's encounter with the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:26-38 (NASB), where she learns that she will conceive the Christ child. The entire sermon audio and message outline will soon be available on our [media page](#). However, I wanted to highlight one of the six points from that message as a devotional.

Point #5: "The fulfillment of the purpose for which you have been favored will be accomplished by God.

Luke 1:34-37 (NASB) ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. ³⁶"And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. ³⁷"For nothing will be impossible with God."

Other verses in Scripture that come to mind:

Jeremiah 1:12 (NASB) *Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it."*

Ephesians 3:20 (NASB) ²⁰*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.*

Philippians 2:13 (NASB) *for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

Philippians 4:19 (NASB) *And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*

Observation: The only thing Mary is told to do is to name the child Jesus (Luke 1:31).

Thought: Sometimes God says we are going to do something and we question how it will happen, all the while trying to do things to make it happen. The interesting thing here is Mary could not do anything to produce an virgin conception. This was all the work of God. Often the same is true for us.

Takeaway: We must learn not to take on more responsibility than we are supposed to in the fulfilling of God's plan. Failing to understand this can be counter-productive at best. At worst, (as seen in the story of Ishmael and Isaac- Genesis 16-25) it becomes the biggest hinderance to the plan and blessings of God.

Final admonition: Recognize your limitations and trust that God will do what He said He will. Ask God to help you do this today!

Blessings,

Rev. Michael W. Hammond Sr.