

A Not So Wonderful Life - Scandal and Surrender  
December 22, 2024

As you join this discussion, let the Holy Spirit guide you. Share your thoughts and reflect on the message. Work through the guide by reading Scripture and answering a few questions.

### **Open Up Together:**

- "If an angel visited you with a message, what's the first thing you'd ask or say in response?"
- Just for fun...Have you ever wondered what the Beatles thought when they wrote "Let It Be?"

### **Read Together:**

#### **Luke 1:26-28**

..."God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

#### **Luke 1:29-30**

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

#### **Luke 1:34**

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

#### **Luke 1:35**

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

#### **Luke 1:38**

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

#### **Luke 1:46-55**

*"My soul glorifies the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has been mindful  
of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—  
holy is his name.  
His mercy extends to those who fear him,  
from generation to generation.  
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;  
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.  
He has brought down rulers from their thrones  
but has lifted up the humble.  
He has filled the hungry with good things  
but has sent the rich away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering to be merciful  
to Abraham and his descendants forever*

### **Discuss Together:**

- In Luke 1:26-28, the angel calls Mary "highly favored." What does it mean to be highly favored by God, and how might that differ from our worldly understanding of favor?
- Mary's response to the angel, "I am the Lord's servant," demonstrates trust in God's plan despite uncertainty. How does her example challenge or inspire your faith?
- The message highlights that God is a "disrupter." Can you find other examples in Scripture where God disrupts human plans? What lessons can we draw from these stories?
- Have you ever experienced a time when God's plans disrupted your own? How did you respond, and what did you learn from the experience?
- The message mentions that worship is most needed when we feel like it the least. Can you share a time when worship helped you through a difficult season?
- Mary's recognition of God's greatness led her to a posture of worship. How do you keep God at the center of your life, especially in challenging times?

**Pray as a group:**

Mary's story involves surrendering control and trusting in God's timing. What areas of your life might God be calling you to surrender? How does this lead you to pray?