Luke 1:26-38

The Discovery Channel has a popular show called *Mythbusters*. It is a reality show where these two guys use scientific experimentation, pyrotechnics, high speed cameras, and all sorts of highly and some not so highly technical equipment to try and recreate things that are considered impossible. They have tested such things as whether ancient ships could really catch fire from reflected sunlight (no). They also set the record for the highest eruption created from dropping a single Mentos into a 2 liter bottle of Diet Coke (30 feet). After their tests are complete, they decide whether the impossible is really possible or if it is truly just a myth.

As Christians, we know that there are a lot of things that have happened which cannot be recreated in any lab or workshop, but that does not make them myths. That does not make them impossible. These are things that we know to be true, but even the *Mythbusters* will not try to recreate them because they are so far outside the scope of human understanding. In the Bible these are called miracles.

Can you imagine a reality TV show where they tried to do miracles - create something out of nothing just by saying words? Or make the earth stop rotating so a battle could be won? What if they tried to keep someone alive for three days in the belly of a fish? Or tried to bring a dead person back to life? Or, like in today’s lesson, make a virgin have a baby? Their failure rate would be 100%. None of these things can be proven or recreated by people but we know them to be true. There is no explanation, they are miracles.

The reason we can believe in these miracles is because of the miracle that was performed on each of us. We were given faith in Jesus. By this miracle, our Heavenly Father makes sinners into saints and he uses sinners as humble servants. Pretty amazing! Miraculous! Our gift of faith makes us able to say **Nothing is impossible with God**!

Our Lord does the impossible in the hearts of his people. He makes sinners into saints.

**In the sixth month, 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.** Luke introduces us to a young couple, Mary and Joseph. They were engaged to be married. On this day, the angel Gabriel came to Mary and changed her life and human history forever.

By all accounts, Mary could have been any teenage girl. If Jesus had decided to come in our time, she could have been sitting here in Trinity or St John. Nazareth was a working class berg, not unlike Smiths Mill or Alma City. It certainly was not the Hollywood of Judah, just like Smiths Mill or Alma City is not the most famous city in Minnesota. Mary did not stand out in a crowd just like all of us. She could have been sharing a pew with you this morning and you would have thought nothing of it.

As the regular church service began, she would sing the hymn then confess her sins, the same sins you confess. Because she would carry Jesus in her womb, there are some today who say she was holy but she certainly did not think so. There are some who worship her but she never would have wanted that. There are some who say that she is equal to Jesus Christ himself, but later in her life she would see her baby boy hanging on a cross, placing her care in the hands of his best friend, as he was being punished for her sins. Mary would never want any praise for causing that pain to Jesus.

If she were here, she would join us, asking forgiveness for her sinful thoughts, words and actions, the sins she knowingly did, and the times when she did not do what she should have. Just like us, she had a sinful nature. Mary was the worst of sinners, just like all of us. Mary’s sins nailed her baby boy to a cross, just like your sins and mine did.

Then told: **The angel went to her and said, Greetings! You who are highly favored!**
The Lord is with you. 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. Mary was shown favor, the same favor that all Christians of all time have been shown. She was given faith in her Savior. For her, it was a Savior to come; for us, it is a Savior who will come again. This faith is not something we do, not something Mary did, but something that is given to us by Jesus. We can never deserve this favor, but Jesus freely gives it to us out of love, out of grace, out of mercy. It is the only way a sinner, deserving of eternal punishment, can ever hope to be in heaven.

This Scripture lesson is not about Mary. It is all about Jesus. Jesus chose you, me, and Mary to be his own. He did this from eternity. We received grace from Jesus before the world was created. We still receive that grace and will until the day we join Jesus in heaven. Because we have been given faith in Jesus, we have been made from sinners who would spit in his eye, into saints who sing his praises. It is a miracle! Nothing is impossible with God!

This gift we have been given enables us to live our lives to the glory of Jesus. Mary showed this in her thoughtful pondering of everything that was happening with her baby boy throughout his time here on earth. She knew this was the eternal plan of salvation, fulfilled by her Son and Savior. Later, after finding out she would be pregnant, she asks the angel: How will this be, since I am a virgin? This is not a question of doubt. It is her faithfully accepting her Lord’s plan and her role in it. The only way she could do this is because of the faith she was given. Pretty amazing! Nothing is impossible with God!

It is the same with us. Because of the grace of Jesus, we are able to accept the Lord’s plan for us. We are able to carry it out with our acts of love to one another. We are able to keep God’s holy law out of thanks and praise to Jesus. We support our church and the work we do for Jesus of spreading the Gospel and passing our great heritage of the Gospel of Jesus on to our children and grandchildren. When you think of how Jesus has made us sinners into saints, it is awesome! Nothing is impossible with God!

Jesus makes us from sinners into saints. Almighty God became a baby in Mary’s belly, was born from her body, grew up under her roof and obeyed her perfectly. He lived his whole life without sin and then died to pay for our sins. He rose from the dead to make us sure that we are saints. Mary is St Mary. I am St Keith. Put saint in front of your name because of Jesus. Sounds good, doesn’t it? Nothing is impossible with God!

Our Lord makes sinners into saints! While we are still here on earth, he has a plan for each of us. He gave us faith in him which allows us to carry out this plan. He uses sinners as humble servants.

The Lord had a plan for Mary, a special gift of grace for her: You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, his kingdom will never end. Then when Mary asked how: The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come upon 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.

Wow! Put yourself in Mary’s place and wrap your mind around that one! She probably had a bunch of questions racing through her mind. But notice, she only asks one question: How will this be, since I am a virgin? Then, she simply accepts the rest as God’s plan. She knew that this incredible gift of bearing the Savior was not because she deserved it, but was all by grace. She was able to submit to the will of her Father in heaven because of the miracle performed on her which gave her faith in the baby she would bear. This sinner was being used as a humble servant. Unbelievable! Nothing is impossible with God!
Jesus has a plan for us too. We do not have an angel come and tell us what it is. We may not always be aware of what it is, but we do know that all the glory goes to Jesus. We have different responsibilities in our lives that Jesus gives us. We are members of his Church and carry out its work. We are husbands and wives who love each other the way Jesus wants us to. We are parents who are responsible for bringing our children to Jesus. We are children who love and obey their parents as Jesus’ representatives. We are friends, family members, boyfriends, girlfriends, coworkers, who look out for each other and act in love, sharing Jesus with people we meet everyday, because we love them enough to want them in heaven with us. Jesus uses us, sinners, imperfect and broken, as humble servants! Phenomenal! **Nothing is impossible with God!**

Sometimes Jesus’ plan for us seems impossible. That is when we have our own set of doubtful questions for Jesus. When our congregation asks us to serve, **How am I supposed to do that?** **When am I going to find the time?** **Or Where are we getting the money for our ministry plan?** **How am I supposed to talk to people about Jesus?** **I am supposed to be an example in this world?** **How am I supposed to raise Christian children in this horrible world?**

The answer to all these questions is simply Jesus. Jesus gives you the strength in his Gospel. The Holy Spirit works in you to make you able to be Jesus’ humble servant. All of these questions that seem so impossible are possible for you because of Jesus. **Nothing is impossible with God!**

It is a miracle that we are here in church today. It is a miracle that we are going to heaven. It is a miracle that has been done in each of us. Share the miracle with everyone in any way that you can. Tell people about Jesus who do not know him as their Savior. Encourage those who do. Support the church, not just with your offerings, but with your time and your talents as well. Live every day as a gift from Jesus, because it is. **Is there a lot to do?** Sure. **Is it going to be hard?** Sure. Can we do it alone? Absolutely not, but **Nothing is impossible with God!**

You and I are blessed just like Mary. We were made from sinners into saints. We are also blessed to be used by Jesus as his humble servants. For strength and encouragement in carrying out our works of service, we turn to Jesus. He is there, giving us strength, sending his Holy Spirit to refresh us until we go to be with him.

He is in heaven right now, directing everything in the universe for our good. We will join him someday because we have been made from sinners into saints. Until we get to heaven, he will use us sinners as humble servants. This is a wonder that can only be done by Jesus. Miracle upon miracle! Truly **Nothing is impossible with God!** Amen.

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