

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

[by Pastor Gene Henderson with edits by Pastor Pier]

God surprises us with His decisions. This time of year, we think about Heaven sending Earth a Savior, in the form of a baby. On its own, that thought – the Savior coming from among us – is inspiring. But it also creates a mass of complications. From which nationality? What social or economic standing? When? Then simple details, like, who's the mother? And if that isn't enough, who's the father? Okay, that's troubling just to consider because how do you mix the DNA? Then there's marketing. Who do you tell? How? Do you build the excitement when he's just a child? If not, when does the announcement come? How do you handle the back-talk, the doubt or opposition?

Doesn't sound like a simple campaign, does it? Turns out, it wasn't. Starting with Mary. And if God inspired the Bible, what's with not talking about Mary's family? Or Joseph's? Does that mean they don't matter? No. It means that no matter who they were, it didn't matter to Mary. Or to Joseph. Would the primary issues have changed – or mattered – no matter who the parents or families were?

Mary was about sixteen when the angel from God interrupted her day. Her life. She was old enough to know what He was talking about and young enough to ask appropriate questions. Her plans with Joseph went sideways the second she agreed to the most impossible suggestion from the angel. Even for a teenage girl, the entire concept had to be life-altering.

On the positive side, what convinced Mary to agree? Of everything we'll review about Mary's place in God's plan, this matter – her choice – changed the world. **She made herself available to God's plan regardless of the consequences.** Our success for 2025 will depend on our availability to what God asks of us. Job 11:14-18 (Good News Translation):

Put away evil and wrong from your home. Then face the world again, firm and courageous. Then all your troubles will fade from your memory, like floods that are past and remembered no more. Your life will be brighter than sunshine at noon, and life's darkest hours will shine like the dawn. You will live secure and full of hope; God will protect you and give you rest.

Happy New Year!

December 29th, 2024



"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way."

SERVICES

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
Unity in Prayer & Youth: 6:00 – 7:00 PM
Wednesday – Bible Study: 7:00 PM; Kid's Club
Prayer ½ hour before services

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Wednesday Bible Study – we continue our study of the Rapture of the church.

New Year's Eve Service – December 31st, Tuesday night at 10:00 PM. We will be celebrating Communion as the new year starts.

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TEXT: 1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 4:1-2

I. LIGHT IS KEY!

II. THE UNSAVED ARE TOUCHED BY THE LIGHT

III. MANIFESTATIONS _____ LIKE MANIFESTATIONS

Dad is to be the _____ in the home.

The Eli priesthood ministers to people “in the _____ of their idols” – Ezekiel 44:7, 12 (NIV)

These priests actually put God's people at _____ about their sin.

Our homes are meant to be _____ sanctuaries, where the Lord is _____ . Deuteronomy 7:26

But if we're not _____ what our children take in, we're not manifesting Christ to them.

Our God wants to make us living, breathing _____ to the world. Ezekiel 44:13

IV. WE ARE A LAST DAY _____ – Revelation 1:6; 2 Corinthians 4:1-2

Paul says manifesting Christ involves renouncing all hidden _____ and secret _____ .

Minister “*sharath*” means to _____ on or _____ , and to _____ . Ezekiel 44:15-16

1. The “*fat*” represents the _____ part of an offering. Leviticus 3:16-17

We _____ to the Lord every time we put Him _____ .

2. The “*blood*” Ezekiel speaks of represents a _____ that's _____ to God.

It means _____ consecration, the yielding of our whole lives.

_____ our bodies as living sacrifices, and _____ on Christ's blood as our victory. Romans 12:1-2