

PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE

*A Manifesto on
The Meaning of Life*



CHRISTIAN EMBASSY

VII. WORSHIP GOD

December 15, 2005

Dr. Michael Leary

We have been discussing for the past few weeks how we were created for God's pleasure. We learned more about worship through the Samaritan woman and Noah. Then we considered what it means to surrender to God. As Warren says, "Surrender is not the *best* way to live; it is the *only* way to live. Nothing else works" (p. 83).

Today we meet two people who had a very personal encounter with God. In fact, they are two of central figures of the Christmas story. We will take a fresh look at their faith in order to find some valuable insight into practical, personal belief.

1. Read Hebrews 11:1-6 offers the biblical definition of faith. How does this compare with the popular conceptions?
2. Compare Luke 1:5-10 with 1:26-27. What similarities and differences do you see?
3. Compare Luke 1:11-17 with 1:28-33. What similarities and differences do you see?
4. Compare Luke 1:18 with 1:34. What similarities and differences do you see?
Consider the response of the angel (1:19-20 and 1:35-37).
Now consider the response of Zechariah and Mary (1:21-25 and 1:38, 46).

The first gifts given at Christmas were not the gifts of the Magi given to Jesus. The first gift given was Jesus Himself, given by God to us! Given to be our Savior. Christmas was anticipated by Biblical prophecy (Jesus would be born in Bethlehem in Micah 5:2; of a virgin in Isaiah 7:14, as a coming King in Isaiah 9:6-7). His birth was confirmed by secular historians, and accepted in faith by over 1 billion people. Those who missed His Majesty's arrival that night missed it not because of evil acts or malice; no, they missed it because they simply weren't looking. Mary was the first to know and believe. God kept her promises to her, as He surely will to us. Trust Him!

"You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed."

(Joshua 23:14 NIV)