

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE
DECEMBER 10–11, 2011
MARY



1. What is your favorite part of Christmas?
2. Read Luke 1:26-29. Why is it important that Joseph is a descendant of David? See 2 Samuel 7:16 for a promise God makes to King David. But after the Babylonians conquered the Southern Kingdom in 587 BC, there was no longer a descendant of David on the throne. How does Jesus fulfill God's promise to David? See Luke 1:32-33. What does this say about God's faithfulness to His promises?
3. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary. Gabriel also appeared to Zechariah (Luke 1:19), and to Daniel more than 500 years earlier (Daniel 8:15-17 and 9:21). Each time Gabriel appeared he brought important messages from God. Do you believe God still sends angels today with messages from God? Why or why not?
4. Read Luke 1:30-33. If an angel told you that you were going to have a child this year, how would you react? What are the risks for Mary if what Gabriel says happens? Think of the potential reactions of her fiancé (Joseph), her father, and the wider community. In light of this, what encouragement does Gabriel give Mary in verses 28 and 30?
5. Read Luke 1:34-37. Think again about how crazy this is; all the physiological reasons why this can't happen. What is something you are hoping and praying for that seems pleasing to God and yet impossible? In what ways are Gabriel's words encouraging to you?
6. Read Luke 1:29, 34, and 38. What progression do you see in Mary's responses? Have you ever gone from confusion to questioning to surrender? What was the situation? Is there an area of your life today in which you need to surrender to God and say, "I am the Lord's servant; may it be to me as you have said."?
7. The challenge this month is to "Create a Story of Hope" for someone in your life? How is that going? Any stories to share with the group?
8. Pray together as a group.

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THE STORY CONTINUES...

After the Jews begin to return to their homeland after the exile to Babylon and start rebuilding, the Bible is silent for about 400 years. History moves forward and the Jews become subjects to one empire after another. And then things begin to happen. God begins to move. An angel visits a priest named Zechariah, and then a young woman named Mary. The angel announces that something new is about to happen. A king that everyone has been waiting for is to be born...his name is Jesus.

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