

What Does it Take to Celebrate?

Scripture Reading — Luke 1:26-38

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May it be to me according to your word.”
Luke 1:38 —

I remember hearing a Christmas musical in which Mary sang, “If the Lord has spoken, I must do as he commands. I will put my life into his hands; I will trust him with my life.” That sums up Mary’s response when she said to the angel, “I am the Lord’s servant. May it be to me according to your word.”

That response is one of the most beautiful confessions of faith ever made, but it’s also one of the most difficult. Mary was asked to put her life on hold, to scrap her own plans, and to open herself to humiliation and unimaginable pain.

But that’s what she did. Mary took God at his Word, and she accepted God’s will for her life. She did the most difficult thing in all of life: she surrendered to her Lord. And because of that, she became the mother of the Lord. Her willing submission to God’s will for her life gave her a privileged place in the history of God’s redemptive plan.

If we want to celebrate the birth of our Lord this Christmas, we will have to join Mary in surrendering our lives to him. We need to learn to say, “Lord, ‘not my will, but yours be done’” (Luke 22:42). We may also need to say, “Lord, I accept your will, even when it includes that empty place, illness, or hurt in my life.” Ask for God’s grace to do as Mary did, and pray that he will bring you to complete surrender.

Prayer

Lord, sometimes it is so difficult to surrender to your will. Bring us to the point where we say, “Not my will, but yours be done.” For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

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