

## MARY

### Lk 1:26-38

Mary had a vitally important job – to be the mother of Jesus; to be the one through whom Jesus would come into the world. What did she have to do to fulfil that job? Well, she didn't really have to do anything, did she? All she had to do was to make herself available – available to God for God to live in her and through her. And when she does that, God does something wonderful through her. Through her God brings Jesus into the world.

If Mary hadn't allowed God to do that, we would never have heard of Mary, would we? No, because she wouldn't have achieved anything great. When she allowed God to come into her life, she became someone very special.

Now here I have...what? Cockatoo (puppet). But it doesn't seem like much of a cockatoo – it can't fly, can't squawk, can't eat... What does it have to do to move and squawk? It just has to allow me to go inside; to put my hand inside. Now it can move, fly, squawk, maybe even preach a sermon – parrot fashion!

Before, this cockatoo was nothing very important. But now its going to be famous – people in Leatherhead will be talking about this cockatoo that appeared in church. Maybe it will be so famous it won't be a cockatoo any more; maybe it will become a cockathree or even a cockafour!

Let's go back to Mary again. When the angel Gabriel comes to her with the news that she is to be the mother of Jesus she says what? **'I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said'**.

A servant is someone who is there to do exactly what the master wants done, not so? The servant doesn't think to himself or herself, 'What shall I do today? The master said I should polish the floors, but I don't feel like doing that. It's such a nice day, I'll rather go into the garden and relax and if I feel like it, I might pull a few weeds out of the flower beds.' That servant isn't going to have a job for long, are they? A good servant will do exactly what the master says. And that's what Mary does. She says, 'Master, if that's what you want, from me, that's what I will do'. And because of Mary's attitude of faith and obedience, God is able to bring Jesus into the world through Mary.

Now I believe that what Mary did, the Lord wants us to do as well – **God wants us to bring Jesus to the world**. Not the physical Jesus as Mary did, but the reality of Jesus nonetheless – the love, the life, the light of Jesus. And God can do that when we allow God to take charge of our lives like Mary did.

Today is our gift service, and some of you have brought gifts to share with others. That is one way of bringing Jesus to the world – by bringing His love and care to others. We can also bring His peace, His joy, His goodness. We can bring His message – the same message as the angels – the good news of a Saviour; the good news of eternal life through Jesus.

The best gift that Mary could give was herself – her life; her body. And that is the best gift that we can give too. Listen to some words written by Paul in the New Testament. He says, 'Remembering all God's mercy and kindness to you, I want you to give your bodies, your lives as an offering to God.' (Rom 12:1) Each day we need to offer ourselves anew to God, to allow God to bring Jesus into the world through us; through our lives and bodies – our mouths, our thoughts, our hands, our feet, the love of our hearts.

And what do we have to do to make that happen? Like Mary we just need to make ourselves available to God. To say like Mary, 'I am Your servant; I am here to do whatever you want me to do.'

We must say like cockatoo here, I offer myself, I open myself up, so that I can come to life - to move and fly and speak.