

Machine generated transcript - All right now this is the part of the service tonight. I think the kids are the most excited for right guys. This is the part where we're going to bring a lot go in here. And you all get to watch me kid. Our kids raised and our I know. But here is over eight hundred dollars. In our Christmas missions project so give yourselves and the kids all round of applause. And you might notice in the back already there's a live go in here I'm going to put this right here OK. There's already. A little kid in here and the reason that I thought it be fun to bring a goat in is because one of the projects specifically that we raise money for is buying a goat they called it kids for kids because if you didn't know a baby goat is called a kid so this is a little kid right here she's young she's kind of scared I'm told that she's a herd animal so she's a little uncomfortable being away from all your friends have any of you ever felt like that being scared when you're away from everybody you know. And everyone's looking at you like you're all looking at me right now. Kind of scary so she's feeling like that a little bit but how many of you think I should try to help her out by giving her a hug and you guys want to see that. OK All righty do you think she looks like she's feeling a little better. Not so much no. Giving one more. OK I mean you look at me. Actually has a lot of boy is red lipstick on its face now it really does it not everybody gets to enjoy that. All right OK we're going to head back into our classrooms so I think we should have the little ones go first. Thank you everybody for being here watching the kids. It's such a cool time of yours you get to watch all these different pieces come together and you get to see all this stuff and it's a real pleasure to have some of you here who are here I know you some of you are here because your kid was up here your grandkid was up here and we just want to say welcome and we're glad you're here. And and we don't we don't take that lightly We're so glad that you and trust your kids to our care are couple times a week and we love to to grow with them and in so thank you for that we're going to continue on in a series this morning that we started a few weeks ago. That simply called rediscover the wonder we've been talking for the last several weeks about how. This story that we just talk about because we can get so used to it is is really honestly ridiculous like I mean if you remove God from the equation and no part of this Christmas story is even remotely believable right I mean if you take God out of the Christmas story and you start talking about virgins having babies and angels in the sky and all of those kind of things these kings you know these wise men coming across you know this is a vast area to find one little baby and town in the middle of Israel it doesn't make any sense I mean it is an absolute ridiculous story but then you factor God into this equation and all of a sudden it starts to make sense but one of the things that we really try to talk about is as as Christian people I think sometimes it can become just common to us you know we talk about these miraculous things like like there are no big deal and so the whole time that we've been talking about this is just simply rediscover the wonder and I have a question for you today and it's going to kind of shape what we talk about today and it's simply this question Can God use me. I who am I who am I that God would use me who can God use me and that's a question that so many people ask has as they begin this journey as they're trying to figure things out you hear people talk all the time about how well I got to just figure my life out first and then I can come to church and then God can use me and you know we put all these obstacles in the path of God really being able to use me and can I tell you that that's not that's not really the heart of the Christmas story at all and as we begin to look through this and this we begin to talk about some things today I really just want to point out how average the people in this story are. They're just normal people they're you know I mean we talk about them we put them in stand glass windows and so now they're saints and so we think of them as super heroes right like Saint Mary and show you all these like we don't think of them as real people they're saints. And when that begins to happen we lose the reality of the story and we really lose the purpose behind the story because Mary wasn't St Mary she was just a scared teenage girl. Joseph wasn't anybody he was from the line of David but he wasn't part of the ruling family that's why he lived in Nazareth and not in Jerusalem. All of these different people that we see as we go through this are just normal people who are willing to say yes to God Now before we go into this we're going to be talking about the angelic visitations today as we do this and so I have a pet peeve and if you've been around here very often you already know what I'm about to say. If you're new and this might be new to you but I

absolutely despise the way that angels are depicted like the way that most of us think of think of angels because of the way they show up in all of the different art and all of those things it just bothers me so again I just did a really basic Google search I made sure not to use my my computer and I did make sure to do it in public because if you search angel there might be several things that show up in a Google search you don't want to see OK but I did. Right back there all right and the very first image that showed up when I searched Angel was this. Right this really nice peaceful looking lady with wings right and I'd say for a lot of us this is probably the majority of the types of angels we see represented right I mean this or maybe it's this one this was number two on my Google search right there now I know it's cute OK and least I'm told it's cute. I find it incredibly annoying I look at those pictures and I'm just annoyed like I don't appreciate the art I'm just annoyed by the entire representation of the whole thing because when I read the Bible no in no way does that represent the angels that we read about in Scripture All right do you know what the first words of N.G.O.s that show up almost exclusively are in the Bible is Do not be afraid. If that showed up in your bedroom would you be afraid right you know you'd be like oh. What a cute little angel. This is in no way represents angels from the Bible now usually right now I would find some pictures of warrior angels and put them up there but I really like I know some of your imaginations are broke so this is going to be hard for you OK. But for most of you I want you to fill in the gap what type of angels that would show up that would still be good we're not talking about darkness or anything like that these are representatives of God They're creations of God but they show up and it would make you afraid. Right what what what would show up if it just showed up standing right here would terrify you. Right usually big they're described they're described in the Bible as being warriors most of them are fighters most of them are involved in some sort of warfare that's that's the type of thing that's described as as an angel in scripture so I just wanted to put this up there because if this is what you view when you think of the Christmas story I need you to change the way you think about it because no wonder you've lost the wonder doesn't that doesn't fire any wonder. OK That in no way represents what we read about when we read these stories all right so little rant over correct you can go back to our other image I'm done I'll step off my soapbox now other then I want you to keep in mind you need to get that view of angels out of your head if you're going to understand what you're reading in the Bible OK you need to get it out. We're going to read about story different three different angelic visits and we're going to start in Luke chapter one OK Luke chapter one there's three different times in the immediate Christmas Story where we see angels show up on the scene Luke chapter one is the first one if you're totally unfamiliar with your Bible. The New Testament Luke is in the it is in the New Testament it's in the back half of the Bible if you just are flipping through you're going to read a whole bunch of really confusing names and then you're going to get to Matthew Mark Luke and John K. Put a finger in Matthew because we're going to go there in just a second Luke chapter one is where we're going to start today All right Luke chapter one verse twenty six it starts Luke's starts with the story of a Lizabeth pregnancy which is kind of a part of the story but it's kind of the beginning before we really get into the the part that we're talking about today so I kind of skipped that one but Luke chapter one verse twenty six is where we're going to start today if you have an electronic Bible if you're flipping on your phone to log OS or you version or some like that you liked. Read the same words that I'm going to read when I read the New Living Translation and L.T. OK if you've got your own favorite that's just fine but some people like to read the same words so Luke one twenty six says this in the six months of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the Angel Gabriel to Nazareth a village in Galilee to a virgin named Mary she was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph a descendant of King David Gabriel appeared to her and said Greetings favored woman the Lord is with you verse twenty nine confused and disturbed Mary tried to think what the angel could mean don't be afraid Mary the angel told her for you have found favor with God you will conceive and give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus he will be very great and will be called the Son of the most high the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David and will he reign and he will reign over Israel forever His kingdom will never end Mary asked the Angel but how can this happen I am a virgin verse thirty five the angel replied the Holy Spirit will come

upon you and the power of the most high will overshadow you so the baby will be born or so the so the baby to be born will be holy and he will be called the Son of God What's more your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age people used to say she was barren but she has conceived a son and is now in her six months for the Word of God will never fail Mary responded I am the Lord servant everything you have said about me come true and then the angel left her that story can be summed so can become so commonplace to Christians we forget to see details in it right most if you've been around a church for any amount of time could by and large tell me what you what we just read I would've had to read it you know you could you could tell the story you told that story to your kids or you heard it in Sunday School or you've heard preached about Sunday after Sunday after Sunday right every Christmas year you know it comes along and and here it is but we miss so many details if it becomes so commonplace like for instance the angel shows up and he says greetings favored woman the Lord is with you I have heard entire sermons preached on that and I have preached entire sermons on that is not me making fun of it that's just me saying a lot of times we stop right there and we read that what's Mary's response to that greeting by the Angel couldn't fusion and disturbance or fear. So this age will shows up not little diaper baby angel that we just showed up there right Angelus shows up and says greetings favored one of the Lord and Mary is afraid and confused like me right the angel says favored one of the Lord and she's confused. She doesn't view herself as the favored one of the Lord she's just Mary. She's just. A girl. Just just a teenager and this greeting confuses her and I think the big giant angel showing up in her bedroom probably scared her right but this is not something Mary was looking for Mary didn't know the end result of this she's confused because she doesn't feel herself as the favored one of the Lord can you relate to Mary some of you are like in the whole I am the favored one of the Lord let me tell you what. Listen somewhere along the line most of us have probably been able to relate to this listen God has chosen us God as in us God will use us I hope if you are a mature Christian you believe all those things and you still don't feel like God could never use you I hope that you move past that but for many of us this is where our story begins and a lot of times even in the middle of the story those doubts can creep in like how could God possibly use me to do that and she is given this greeting by this angel this amazing greeting favored one of the Lord like if God were to show up Wouldn't that be great to have said about you like Wouldn't that be a good thing but it causes confusion. And fear. And then the baby begins to be described he will be very great and will be called the Son of the most high the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David he will reign over Israel forever His kingdom will never end. No pressure right as a mom. No pressure. You're raising the Son of God is going to be easy right don't worry about it any in any of your mistakes are going to be recorded in history for all time don't worry about it Mary doesn't say Yes Lord at that point right this description again is given and what's Mary's response in verse thirty four What how could this be. A virgin. Like Mary isn't like at this point time psycho Yes Jesus let it be so. Something is missing that needs to be described here OK because this isn't possible right now and the angel comes along and he describes it again Gabriel describes it. Even gives an example of another miraculous thing that's just happened in our family. And there are some words here in verse thirty seven that I think are absolutely critical for some of you in this place today. Because God has given you promises or you felt like he wants you to do something and you feel like you're stuck in neutral and you need to hear verse thirty seven right now for The Word of God will never fail. And I want you to hear that that doesn't mean that the path is always going to be easy it just means God never fails and His word will always be true and it's such an important thing in so many responses I'm God's servant let it be OK. Don't miss the confusion of this young lady though this this young girl most people most scholars and historians believe that Mary would have been between about thirteen in one thousand when this is going down thirteen one thousand year olds and evil men here raise your hand anybody your thirty nine thousand Rebeca thank you for that for is your hand we have absolutely no thirteen in one thousand year olds and here that's lying because I see a ton of high schoolers back here raise your hand. Still won't do it all right this is a young lady. With a lot that can go wrong. Lots to be misunderstood a lot of questions coming her way we've talked about this before right imagine explaining this to your dad

who were not given any indication whatsoever that her father received an angelic visitation right imagine that conversation Dad I'm sixteen I'm not married I'm engaged but I'm not married I'm have a baby in nine months you don't need to sweat it though it's God's baby right. Most He doesn't like oh yeah no problem good job baby so proud of you honey right. This is crazy and yet. True flip back to Matthew Chapter one. To Matthew Chapter one this happens later Matthew Chapter one. We're going to start in verse eighteen. If you're in Luke you got to just go back to be two books OK you're in Luke it's Matthew Mark then Luke. Matthew Chapter one. Verse eighteen. Matthew Chapter one Verse eighteen this is how Jesus the Messiah was born his mother Mary was engaged to be married to Joseph but before the marriage took place while she was still a virgin she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit Joseph to who she was engaged was a righteous man who did not want to disgrace or publicly so he decided to break the engagement quietly as he considered this an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream Joseph son of David the angel said Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife for the child was in her was conceived by the Holy Spirit and she will have a son and you are to name him Jesus for He will save his people from their sins all of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet look the Virgin will conceive a child she will give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel which means God is with us when Joseph woke up he did as the Angela of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife that that prophecy that was theirs is from Isaiah Chapter seven verse fourteen and Chapter eight verses eight through ten meeting at a minimum that was prophesied about four hundred years before any of this happened most likely probably between four hundred fifty and five hundred years. No big deal right predicting the future through the power of God and yet here we are. Again don't be afraid Joseph son of David Joseph probably didn't really think of himself that way a whole lot OK He was of the line of David but he was not of the ruling line he was not of of the line that still had any sort of say or power in this thing he's just a carpenter from Nazareth just a blue collar worker and a backwater town that really is off the main beaten highways so it doesn't have a whole lot of economic future or growth opportunities. It's just a carpenter small town and yet. He becomes. The father figure. Of Jesus Christ now I want to just nerd out for a second as we go into this again OK there's two different genealogies that are given in Matthew and Luke and some people call those contradictions OK that you look at that and you would say that oh man the Bible must not be true because there's two different genealogies how come they couldn't even get that figured out OK let me tell you how that happens how many of you have two parents so your genealogy depending on who you trace back might look slightly different correct right if you trace your mother's side of your father's side they would probably be dead hopefully there would be different names. Right this is not a contradiction this is Jesus is genealogy being figured out through both sides of his family OK It is not abnormal that Joseph bloodline would have been been accounted for Jesus here even though he is the adopted father of Jesus in a Jewish family if you raise a son it does not matter if that child is of your blood they are counted as of your bloodline with all of the perks that that entails All right. So this is just Jesus's blood lines through two different parents which most of I don't think any of us in here were test tube babies OK. Most of us probably had two different genealogies. That's OK OK. But I want you to look at this again right so Joseph was told by the angel in verse twenty Don't be afraid to take Mary's or wife right. Yes to be told that because. That's a lot of shame in this culture they're engaged and she's pregnant and it isn't HIS you think that they have to answer a few questions you think they've got a few sly looks at the market place What's that story. You think it is that happened yes of course it did. Absolutely of course it did for the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit and she will have a son and you are to name him Jesus for He will save his people from their sins again no pressure at all right as a dad right you're going to just marry this young girl who's pregnant with God's baby and he's supposed to be the savior of your people and you get to be the dad think that's a little bit of pressure a little bit of difficulty maybe getting your heads around they're trying to figure out the best ways to do some of this stuff that we've talked about this before a different times but if you can you imagine growing up in that house and not being that child but being one of the younger siblings right like Jesus is your older brother again you know there's no comparisons there whatsoever how many of

you ever heard why can't you be more like fill in your older siblings name. Now imagine if sinless Jesus who never made a mistake who never sinned. That's tough right ever ever think about your your little you know how many of you are the oldest and here I was the oldest thank God for all those children yes you're blessed in this place OK. How many of you had a little sibling that just tailed you everywhere you went you don't even have to be in oldest to have that happen right you got a sibling that just went everywhere you went Now imagine the person that you're following is Jesus. Right the one you're looking to when you're like Man I hope I can be like him someday Good luck with that but Mary and Joseph were anybody. There just. Two people seemingly chosen at random. This young girl from this tiny town. In gage to this carpenter from a tiny town. And yet God uses them to bring Jesus into the world and not just bring him into the world to raise him. Right some of us forget that Jesus was a baby if God is Jesus is fully man what does that mean that means he needed to be fed means you need to be changed I mean he probably had diaper rash rides he's just he's a baby. He's dependent on his parents. Never raise him after being told he's the son of God. He's going to deliver his people and rule in the rain. I want you to turn back to Luke Chapter two Luke Chapter two verse eight Luke two verse eight that night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby guarding their flocks of sheep suddenly and Angela as the Lord appeared among them and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them they were terrified of not just a little scared terrified this is only a boat with only one is showing up so far right. Only one so far but the angel reassured them don't be afraid he said I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people the savior Yes The Messiah The Lord has been born today in Bethlehem the City of David and you will recognize him by this sign you will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth lying in a manger suddenly the angel was joined by a vast host of others the armies of heaven. You are scared of one. Now the Army just showed up praising God and saying Glory to God and highest heaven and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased when the Angels had returned to heaven the shepherd said to each other let's go to battle hymn Let's see this thing that has happened which the Lord has told us about and I want to talk to you about this again the messiah has been born and then they have to describe how that happened because nobody looking for the Messiah would have looked in a manger. Everybody the magic either three you know the wise men that come however many numbers you want to pick they went and looked where everybody would have just naturally gone and looked they went to the palace of the King. But that's not where Jesus was born. The Messiah was born in a stable and he was wrapped. In rough linen designed for animals and God didn't show up to the priests who would have been in Bethlehem God and God didn't show up to the Levites who would have been there he didn't show up to the people of great import he he showed up. To some shepherds Now we love the shepherds how many were ever shepherds in a play growing up. You rocked the shepherd that was one of the best things for people who are afraid to be in front of people because you don't have to say anything right you just go up there and you hold a shepherd's crook I hated when I was a shepherd I like to be in front of people and talk no surprise right he shows up to shepherds. Who literally in the Jewish culture are almost always ceremonially unclean OK they weren't really even supposed to touch other Jews because of their profession. They didn't have access to showers. OK They're shepherds I know this go was cute this morning. Not an accurate representation they stunk they were taking care of sheep for a living most likely not their own because the people who own sheep aren't usually in the field with them in this culture they're ceremonially unclean most of them are watching somebody else's product. And God chooses to herald the coming of His Son to these people because that's just how God does stuff. So for those of you who would look at yourself and say Who am I. How could God possibly use me. I want to tell you. That that is the story of the Christmas story. A whole bunch of nobodies from nowhere. Who God shows. To bring about a day that not only change for church people are very calendar is determined by this day the biggest event in human history. As Jesus Christ comes into this earth in the form of baby. Being taken care of and praised by a bunch of nobodies story of Christmas so I want to courage you in this place and I want to leave on a depressing note I want to encourage you that if you felt this way or are feeling this way that how could God possibly use me look at my circumstances look what's happening right now look

at look at everything that look at my past don't write yourself off you are a child of God Created by him. And he wants to use you to bring about all the glory he can to let the world know who Jesus is. Because that's the point of all of it all right. So we're in the service a little different today I'm going ask the worship team to come back up here. They're going to start plan one of the songs we did during our worship time we usually give people a chance to choose Jesus in this place at the end of the service and I don't want to just skip over that but we're going to really hit this hard next week right part do is next week. OK. But I want you to hear from me in this place if you're in here and you don't know Jesus you don't you haven't served him before you've never made that decision we want to pray with you about that if you're in this place and you serve Jesus you know all the right answers. But if you were flat honest you would have to say that I have not been living my life for Jesus I've been living it for me. And you want to see that change please come and talk to me at the end of the service you saw our leadership team up here with their spouses talk to one of them talk to the person who brought you let them answer your questions if they don't have any more answers than you do find one of us and let us know don't leave this place without coming to know in Jesus all right but I want to in with this song I know it was a new song OK I know that for some of you you don't know this song and that's OK all right but there's a part in it in the lyrics of this song that I want to sing today just as we end this day all right we're going to sing verse two we're going to sing the chorus we're going to sing the bridge and I want to talk about this here not by power not by might but only by the cross we come alive. You can not earn. God's love. You can't earn his forgiveness and guess what that's good you don't have to. Jesus pave the way for all of that already because not only was he born but he died and then he rose again so that you could be made right with God it wasn't about Hey look at Jesus he's amazing it was about all of us needed it. All right then there's a part of the British chains fall fear by fear and. Jesus you change everything lives. Around here now. Jesus. You change everything. Some of you need this morning you. Need comfort and some of you are just going to praise God because things are going great. Goal situations or all are OK I want to get off because I want to stay. But God is. Here waiting for you this morning. We're singing the song. You're free to go. Hope to see you back next week as we talk about the land you stand up this morning. And sing with. The want to sing that verse of that verse. Did the. Thing. That. Sound. To. You. You. Change it. So I thank you. For that truth. Everything really did change. And I'm so grateful for that. I pray that each one of us goes through this life I pray that you help us to hold on tight. To you all. For those of us who have heard your voice and feel like you have called us to help us to remember those words that your words will feel. For those in here who might not feel good about if I pray God that it's not about us earning anything. We are children of the King of Kings. Thats it. God for those who are having the best season or. For that you health and rejoice in. God We just pray this morning that you use us. To continue to spread who you are. Using us. To make you know. That we think you for who you are for what you do. You are so good and.