



REFLECTIONS

December 4, 2016

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 1:12-13

Reflecting on Christmas—Birth

Who could have possibly known what would happen that day? Nothing about the morning suggested anything unusual or different. But it would be.

Tradition says Mary made her dutiful trip to the well that day, water jars in hand. But whatever her destination, we know she found the angel Gabriel waiting for her there. She may have been startled by his presence, but his message left her breathless.

“Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, his kingdom will never end.”

Stunned by his message, she asked, *“How will this be since I am a virgin?”*

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you,” Gabriel explained. *“So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”* (Luke 30-35)

Now who among us would not find ourselves in some state of wonder if we heard such a message? Disbelief would be common, acceptance rare. But Mary believed. And Mary accepted. *“I am the Lord’s servant. May it be as you have said,”* she answered. So Christ was born in the young Virgin Mary just as Gabriel had promised, *not of natural decent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.* Could such a thing ever happen again? Be careful of your answer. It could happen to you. It likely has.

Remember one dark night when Nicodemus sneaked in to see Jesus. And remember Jesus explaining to a bewildered Nicodemus, *“I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but Spirit gives birth to spirit.”* (John 3:5-6)

The Holy Spirit is the power of God that enables what humankind cannot. The Spirit hovered over the waters when God created the heavens and the earth. By the Holy Spirit Christ was born *in* Mary that very special day. And by the same Holy Spirit, Christ is also born *in* you, not by natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. By the Holy Spirit, Christ lives in you; and you are a child of God.

By the Holy Spirit...

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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