

WHITFIELD PARISH

St James' Church † St Luke's Church

LIFE Group Notes w/b Sunday 15 November 2009

'The True Spirit of Christmas'

The Bible clearly shows that God delights in using ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

Read Luke 1.26-38

When Gabriel tells Mary she is 'highly favoured' by God, the meaning is not that she herself is anybody special but that she is the recipient of the undeserved favour of God – grace.

1. In the conversation between Gabriel and Mary, Mary is allowed the last word. Why might this be?
2. What do these verses tell us about what God is like?
3. Look at John 1.12-13. What are the similarities between the birth of Jesus and our new birth when we became Christians?

Read Luke 1.39-45

You would expect that Elizabeth would waste no time in telling Mary of her own pregnancy.

4. What does she do instead? Why?
5. What do these verses tell us about what God is like?

Read Luke 1.46-56

6. What do these verses tell us about how God relates to the human race?

Gabriel's announcement to Mary was life changing. She was probably very young – the custom of the time was for girls to be betrothed at around the age of 13 and married a year or so later. Elizabeth was considerably older – Zechariah says earlier in the chapter that she is past the age of childbearing.

7. How does God help Mary at this time?
8. How does Mary respond?

What can we learn from this passage about responding to God? You might like to share times when God asked you to do something which was out of your comfort zone: how did you react and what did you learn from it? How can we help each other to be obedient to God?