

## “When Doubt and Faith Collide”

Luke 1:18, 34

*“And Zacharias said unto the angel, ‘Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife well-stricken in years.’”*

*“Then Mary said unto the angel, ‘How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?’”*

As we continue our quest for Increase in 2008, we need to stop and look at ourselves this morning.

We know what the Bible says but we also live with a fallen society and live in a house of clay.

I can’t speak for you, but there are several occasions/opportunities presented to me each day to cause me to stop and say, “**Hey God, I give up! What do I have to do to get a break?**”

The most often asked question by the world, and if the truth was known, by believers as well, **IS:**

*“If there is a God, or if God “really cares,” why does He let \_\_\_\_\_ go on?”*  
(You fill in the blank!)

In other words, “Why doesn’t God **DO SOMETHING?**”

Why is everything *so unfair?!*

Why doesn’t He simply **SNAP HIS FINGERS** and bring it all to an end?

Why doesn’t He *stop all the murdering?*

Why does He *let little children go hungry and die* by the thousands?

Why does He *let sickness and disease* destroy so many people?

Why does He *permit wars and famine* to exist?

Why doesn’t God answer when I call?

Why? Why? Why?

Am I the only one here that feels this way or could I get an “Amen!?”

The answer of course, “He **HAS** done something! He sent Jesus!”

While everything **IS NOT FAIR**, God **IS A JUST GOD!**

Someone once said, *“Always doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith.”*

## **I. IN OUR TEXT TODAY, WE HAVE AN ANGEL VISITING TWO MORTALS.**

When God spoke through the Angel, questions, doubts and inadequacies filled both their hearts! Hey folks;

- A. It’s not every day an angel suddenly appears in front of you with a special message from God. Again, this may just be me!
- B. But, that’s exactly what happened to Zecharias that day as he ministered in the Holy Place of the Temple. And, that’s exactly what happened to Mary six months later as she washed dishes, cleaned the house or made the bed.

**Hebrews 13:2** (KJS) **“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”**

(NIV) **“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”**

## **II. LET’S LOOK AT THESE TWO PEOPLE**

A. First, Zacharias:

Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were elderly people (v.7). Both of them came from a Godly heritage (v.5) and we shouldn’t be surprised that *“they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (v.6).”*

After being told what was going to happen (vv.13-17), Zecharias asked, *“How shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife well-stricken in years.”*

B. Now, Let’s move to Mary:

Of all the women born to man, Mary was chosen by the Father Himself to be the earthly mother of His Son! We cannot say more about her than this!

And yet, Mary’s response to the Angel was **“How can this be?”**

Now, having said all this, what I want you to see is both these God Fearing saints ---- **DOUBTED!**

Look at the person beside you and say, **“Its okay to doubt.”**

Both for a moment in time said, **“Lord, have you looked around?”**

Zacharias looked **at his age** and Mary looked **at her lifestyle!**

### **III. BOTH LOOKED AT THEIR FLESH, WHERE THEY LIVED!**

A. And ***“in the flesh, both were right!”***

**Zechariah 4:6** (KJS) **Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This [is] the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”**

Simply stated, we are not going to win -- **AGAINST THE DEVIL** -- using our flesh!

B. But a saved soul **IS NOT** in the flesh and cannot be in the flesh! Watch this:

**Romans 8:9** (KJV) **“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, *he is none of His.*”**

Have you ever tried to play ***“Football”*** and use the rules for the Game of ***“Baseball?”***

Well, my friend, this ***is exactly what we do*** with the flesh and the Spirit!

The same rules **DO NOT** apply, and when we apply the rules of our “flesh body” to the “Spirit Body” --- **UTTER CHAOS IS THE RESULT!**

We **CANNOT** keep from doubting!

Don't let this freak you out, but there are **“two people”** sitting where you are sitting!

B. **Everyone look up here at me!** You see the creation of Lester and Lillie Duvall on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1936 and one day this old flesh body will kill over dead! Why? It is **FLESH**, or of the Earth.

C. Now, don't panic but I am going to speak to my Heavenly Father. **“Father, look at me!”** When He looks at me, he **DOES NOT** see this old body created by Lester and Lillie Duvall! He sees His Son, the Son He created on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1953! Why? It's Spirit, created in the image of my Father and will **NEVER** die!

Somebody needs to shout! Hallelujah!

**In closing, let me share with you my “four insights” as to why God has to allow UNFAIRNESS TO OCCUR!**

He simply **CANNOT violate HIS OWN WORD!**

- ***First and foremost***, there is our **Freedom of Choice**. We make our own choices. Oh, we may blame our upbringing, our parents, our teachers, our lack, our abundance ---- whatever. But it all boils down to the fact that we do what we really want to do, baring medical complications!
- The “***second reason***” unfairness exists is to ***show us how much we need a Savior!*** The song made famous by Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra, “I Did It My Way” won’t play on Judgment Day!
- The “***Third Reason***” unfairness reigns is **the failure of His children to take their proper place**. Oh, how we like to blame others for the conditions of the world! The ACLU, the KLAN, the NAACP, Madelyn Murray O’Hare and the likes, but the problem is with God’s people! 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7:14 says “***If My people ---***”
- And, finally, the “***last reason***” unfairness reigns is **one day God will settle the score**. Remember the “bullies” in grade school? Where are they now? One day soon Christ is returning and the “Bullies” of the world will be paid for their sin --- death --- separation from God for ever and ever.

Look at your neighbor and say, “**This life is as bad as it gets for a believer. I’m just 6 feet away from TOTAL Victory!**”