

## **"The Man Who Gave Up the Throne for Love"**

**Luke 1:26-56**

**10 December 2017**

It happened 81 years ago today. The man who gave up the throne to marry the woman he loved. He gave up everything to be with the woman who captivated his heart. Who was this romantic guy? King Edward.

King Edward VIII did something that monarchs do not have the luxury of doing — he fell in love. But he fell in love with the wrong woman. King Edward was in love with Mrs. Wallis Simpson, who was not only an American, but also a married woman who was already once divorced. So, in order to marry the woman he loved, King Edward was willing to give up the British throne — and he did, 81 years ago today, on December 10, 1936 at 10 A.M.

To some, this was the love story of the century. A man gives up the most powerful position in England to be with the woman he loves.

King Edward's infatuation with Mrs. Wallace Simpson had grown so extreme that he was severely distracted from his State duties. Some thought she might be a German spy handing State papers over to the German government. People were worried about these 2 lovebirds.

And in time, the relationship between King Edward and Mrs. Wallis Simpson came to an impasse when the king received a letter from Alexander Hardinge, the king's private secretary, that warned him that the press would not remain silent much longer about their relationship and that the government might resign en masse if their relationship continued.

So King Edward was faced with three options: give up Wallis, keep Wallis and government would resign, or abdicate and give up the throne. King Edward chose the latter. He chose love. King Edward decided that he wanted to marry Mrs. Wallis Simpson, the woman that he loved.

And at 10 A.M. on December 10, 1936, King Edward VIII, surrounded by his three surviving brothers, signed the six copies of the Instrument of Abdication:

*I, Edward the Eighth, of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Emperor of India, do hereby declare My irrevocable determination to renounce the Throne for Myself and for My descendants, and My desire that effect should be given to this Instrument of Abdication immediately.*

adapted from:

(<https://www.express.co.uk/expressyourself/208547/Edward-VIII-The-man-who-gave-up-the-throne-for-love>)

(<https://www.thoughtco.com/king-edward-viii-abdicated-for-love-1779284>)

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/theroyalfamily/8191041/Kings-lover-Wallis-Simpson-was-miserable-second-rate-American-woman.html>)

And just like that, he gave it all up for love. And people were not happy about it. People did not like this woman, Mrs. Wallace Simpson. In fact, BBC founder Sir John Reith, after he learned Edward VIII was to abdicate the throne in order to marry her, said this about Wallis Simpson: she is a "miserable second-rate American woman." That's what John Reith wrote in his diaries the day King Edward gave up the throne. Reith wrote:

*"...It was awful that all this crisis was caused by a miserable, second-rate American woman."*

But for King Edward, Wallace Simpson was not a miserable, second-rate American woman, she was his true love. He gave up everything to be with the woman that he loved. And shortly after abdicating the throne, Edward gave a radio address in which he said these words-

*"But you must believe me when I tell you that I have found it impossible to carry the heavy burden of responsibility and to discharge my duties as King as I would wish to do without the help and support of the woman I love."*

That should remind you of Someone. That should remind you of King Jesus. Paul tells us in Philippians 2-

*"...who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."* Philippians 2:6-7

Jesus gave up the throne of Heaven, momentarily for 33 years, so that He could be with the woman that He loved: His Bride, the church. And in order to win her love, Jesus had to enter the womb of a woman, the womb of a teenage girl. He had to humble Himself and become a human being. And that's where we pick up in our story in Luke chapter 1. And what this pimple-faced teenage girl named Mary will hear when she gets the shocking news that she is pregnant, is this-

## REST IN THE FAVOR OF YOUR SAVIOR.

When Mary's world gets turned upside down, she will rest in the favor of her Savior. And when your world gets turned upside down- by a phone call, an email, a confession, a conversation, etc you need to do what Mary does here. You need to learn to rest in the favor of your Savior.

LOOK AT VERSES 25-33...

*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

So we pick up in our story and we realize that Luke has hit the fast-forward button on the remote control and we are now 6 months into the future, 6 months into the pregnancy of Elizabeth. But the setting has changed. We are now in the city of Nazareth. This is quite interesting as Luke notes that Gabriel, the messenger of the Lord, was sent *from God to Nazareth*. It is staggering enough that an angel can come from God's presence to the earth, but for Gabriel to appear in Nazareth, of all places, is staggering.

Nazareth was a city in Galilee, but it was not an important city by any stretch of the imagination. Nazareth was as Podunk and redneck as you get in Israel. In fact, we read in John 1:46 that when Philip told Nathaniel they had found Jesus the Messiah *in Nazareth*, Nathaniel responded by saying, *"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"* We would expect the Lord to show up in Jerusalem, where the temple was, where the most important religious leaders were, but not Nazareth!

Could it be that the Messiah would come out of such a Podunk place? Yes, because the Lord's ways are mysterious. And surprising. As we saw last week, God often takes the seemingly forgotten, the outcast, and the insignificant, and the misfits, and He shows them His kindness and greatness by glorifying Himself through them, sometimes in some of the most surprising ways. Last week, it was Elizabeth, an old barren woman "advanced in years" who becomes pregnant. This week, we have a pimple-faced teenager in one of the most Podunk towns in Israel who is about to find out that she will become pregnant with the King of the universe, even though she is a virgin.

Not only that, but we see Gabriel appearing to Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph. To understand the scenario, we must unpack what it meant to be betrothed. Betrothal was a custom whereby a young girl was engaged to a man, but it was more than an engagement. It would probably be like being in between an engagement and a marriage. It was very serious and would not have been broken off except for evidence of adultery on someone's part.

And Mary was likely her teens at this point, and obviously as the text states, she was a virgin. She has had no intimate relations with Joseph because they are not married yet. But notice what Gabriel first says to Mary in verse 28: *"Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"*

How does Mary respond to this surprise visitor? Verse 29 says that she was greatly troubled. She's confused. She knows that she is a sinner. She knows that people would say that she's just a *miserable, second-rate Galilean woman*. She can't figure out what is happening. Why does he call her favored one?

But notice that Mary is not startled by Gabriel's presence. She's not frightened by this angel, like Zechariah was earlier in this chapter. Mary seems very comfortable around Gabriel. She's greatly troubled *at the saying*, that she is *favored*. That's what freaks her out. She's a teenager. She knows that she's been giving her parents grief. She knows all the drama that's gone on in her house recently. She knows that she hasn't cleaned her room like her mother asked her. She knows that she has fought with her siblings over the bathroom while getting ready for school. She knows that earlier that morning she threw a "teenager fit" and told her mom, *"I have nothing to wear to school. You never buy me clothes. You never do anything for me!"*

That's why Mary is troubled, why she is struggling with being called "favored one." Why? Cause she knows that she is a sinner and has not earned this title. What troubles Mary is not the angel's presence, not even the *"Even though you're getting pregnant"* message that she hears. What troubles Mary is being called "favored one."

So why does Gabriel frontload his message by calling Mary "favored one?" Because that is exactly what will motivate her to obey. As we will see in verse 38, the words that trouble her are what will motivate her

to obey! And that's how grace works. Grace is what motivates us to obey. Shame is sometimes used to motivate people, and it does, it can and will motivate people, but shame never changes the heart, which is what we need. Guilt can motivate, it can and it does, but it can't change the heart. Condemnation can motivate, but it can't change the heart. God is after our hearts. And the only thing that can *change our hearts* and then *motivate us* is grace. More on this in a moment.

But let's look at this word here in verse 28: *avored* one. This Greek word comes from the root word *grace*. The idea is that one is "graced"- they have received grace, they have grace bestowed upon them. In this case, Mary is "graced" by God. God's favor comes upon on her, from God, and it has nothing to do with anything that she has done. That's how grace works. God bestows His favor based on His good pleasure and not on human merit.

That's grace. It's God's favor. It's *unmerited favor*. You can't earn it. But please understand that grace is a two-sided coin. Grace is not just, not merely God's unmerited favor, it's also God's power. It's *unlimited power*. So depending on the context, grace can mean *unmerited favor* or *unlimited power*. And Pastor Greg will be preaching on the *unlimited power* aspect of grace next Sunday evening (Dec 17<sup>th</sup>), so come out for that. But here, in Luke 1, grace is God's unmerited favor that Mary is on the receiving end of. And, as we'll see in a moment, it's God's grace, it's His *unlimited power*, that also empowers Mary to obey.

So here is how grace works: we hear words of God's grace (His unmerited favor) and then we are empowered by God's grace (His unlimited power).

But back to this Greek word in Luke 1:28: *avored* one. This word only occurs in one other place in the New Testament, in Ephesians 1-

"...In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved." Ephesians 1:4-6

There it is: "*blessed us*." Paul is telling us that because of God's glorious grace, we have been blessed or favored in Jesus. Because we are in union with God's Beloved Son, we are favored, we are blessed. We have been "graced" in Jesus. We have been favored in the Beloved, just like Mary. And it has nothing to do with us. In Jesus, the Beloved Son, we are favored. We are "beloved sons" because we have been favored and blessed and graced in Jesus, the Beloved Son.

Did you know that Paul also uses this word *beloved* later in Ephesians 5:1?

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Ephesians 5:1-2

The word *beloved* was used of an only child. In other words, God loves you, just as if you were His only child! Isn't that amazing?! God loves each of His children just as if they were His only child. All of that tremendous, overwhelming, concentrated love flowing down to one person. I'm so glad that I'm on the receiving end of that! And why am I, why are you loved by God as if you were His only child? Because you have been favored in the Beloved Son of God. So God says to you, right now, "*Greetings! O favored one!*"

That wonderful truth ought to calm your troubled heart this morning. If you have a tender conscience this morning and you wonder if God cares, if God loves you, if you are accepted, even if you wonder, "*Does he even like me?*" listen to these words-

### **REST IN THE FAVOR OF YOUR SAVIOR.**

You can rest, even though you are a sinner. Messy. Broken. Damaged. If you feel like a *miserable, second-rate American man or woman*, rest because you have been favored in Jesus.

Back to our story. In verse 30, Gabriel reassures Mary that she need not be afraid because she has found favor with God. Twice now Mary has learned that she has found favor with God. That calms her heart.

Then Gabriel tells her that she is not only miraculously pregnant, but the baby to be born will be none other than the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Savior whom God's people had been looking for since Genesis 3. And that's exactly what Jesus' name means! Jesus- whose Aramaic name is *Yeshua*, which comes from the Hebrew name *Joshua*- His name means, "Yahweh is salvation."

Yes, Gabriel named Mary's boy and it was one of *the most common* names of the day. Mary didn't get to pick some cool name for baby. She couldn't use that glorious name found in Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7: *Darkon*. That's such a cool name. *Darkon*. I wanted to use it for one of my kids, but I didn't discover the

name *Darkon* until after we had 3 boys. So no surprise that I couldn't convince Heather to name one of our 3 girls *Darkon*.

So Mary doesn't get to use *Darkon*. Gabriel tells her that she will name the boy *Jesus*. She will name her boy "Yahweh saves." And this baby boy would be the son of the Most High God. And He would rule over the throne of David, rule over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom would never come to an end.

Now, in order to understand what is happening here and how significant Gabriel's words are, we have to know a little bit about the Old Testament. We have to know that the kings of the Israel and Judah were, for the most part, scoundrels. There were a few good ones, but even they were sinful and not the perfect king. Names like Saul, David, and Solomon should remind you of how bad these guys were. Adulterers. Murderers. Womanizers. Drunks. Idolaters. These guys were bad.

And the failure of the Davidic kingdom sets you up for this promise in Isaiah 9-

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.* Isaiah 9:6-7

Did you catch the phrase "*on the throne of David and over his kingdom*"? Gabriel uses those exact words! So Gabriel is telling Mary that the promise in Isaiah 9 is coming true. Inside her. And she's a virgin. Think about this: it has been some 700-800 years since Isaiah prophesied. The nation of Israel has waited 700-800 years. But the last 400 years, God has been silent. They haven't heard a word from God in 400 years. From Malachi 4:5-6, the end of the Old Testament, to Luke 1:13 it was all crickets. But now, God is speaking.

They had been waiting for a king for so long! They wanted a real king. A true king. One who wouldn't blow it. One who would be faithful. Not like the kings in the Old Testament. They wanted an Isaiah 9 kind of King. And Gabriel tells Mary, "*The King you and all of Israel have been waiting for and longing for all these years, He will be growing inside you soon.*"

And because of Jesus we are swept up into this story too. We want a king. We want to be a part of a kingdom that will last forever. And right now we are a part of God's kingdom that is advancing in this world. But sometimes we want to be the king, right? We all have built up our own little kingdoms of self where we want to rule. We want to get our way. I mean, we should, right? After all, I'm the king! Give me what I want!

That's what we all think and live like. Maybe not overtly saying that, but the way we live proves that we all want to be king. So let me ask you today: Where do you want to rule in your life? Where do you want control in your life? Where have you set up your own little kingdom plans that you desperately want to see realized?

As your pastor, let me remind you that your kingdom will not satisfy you like you think it will. Take it from this deposed king. Take it from a guy who has led so many coups against King Jesus. And I have failed every single time. I want my way. I want to rule. I want control. And Jesus loves me enough to say, "*I'm shuttin' that stuff down.*" He lovingly frustrates my plans and destroys my kingdom so that I realize His kingdom is the only one worth living for.

Let me ask you: Where do you want to rule in your life? Where do you want control in your life? Where have you set up your own little kingdom plans that you desperately want to see realized? Listen, give up on that stuff. And bend the knee to the real King. What do you need to do today? What do you need to do everyday? You need to bend your knee. What do you need to do in the morning when you wake up, before you brush your teeth, before you shower, before you even have your coffee? You need to bend your knee. That's exactly what a pimple-faced teenager in a Podunk town in Israel does.

LOOK AT VERSES 34-38...

*And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

Mary was just a teenager and she gets this bomb dropped on her. She had no idea how it would all happen. She was a virgin. How could she become pregnant? She took a health class at school. She knew the birds and the bees. She knew how this whole pregnant thing worked. So she's a little confused. How can this be? And then she learns that the Holy Spirit is going to make it happen. Gabriel tells her that nothing is impossible with God. And that's enough for Mary.

Mary's like, *"Okay. Let me get this straight, Gabriel. The Holy Spirit is going to overshadow me. Check. My barren, advanced in years, can't figure out the internet aunt Elizabeth is preggers. Check. Nothing is impossible with God. Check. Okay, Gabriel. I'm the servant of Yahweh. Let it be to me according to your word. Let it be. Let it be. When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to me...Wait, I'm Mary. When I find myself in times of trouble, the angel Gabriel comes to me, speaking words of wisdom. Okay, Gabe. Let it be. Let it be."*

Mary obeys. And what empowers obedience? Grace. Favor. 2x Mary hears that she is favored, that she is graced. And her response to God's favor and grace? *"I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word."* That's where freedom and joy are found. Let it be, Lord.

What will empower you to obey? God's grace. Let me ask you something, and please be honest, okay? Are Christians supposed to read their Bibles? Raise your hand if you know this is true. Are Christians supposed to read their Bibles? Okay. Are Christians supposed to pray? Okay. Are Christians supposed to serve and love others? Okay. Are Christians supposed to give financially to their church? Okay. Look around.

We all know that we are supposed to read our Bibles, pray, love and serve others, and give some of our finances to the church and a whole bunch of other stuff. What motivates us to do that? God's grace. Hearing the Gospel. Not being shamed or guilted into it. So where do you need obedience today? Giving financially? Serving? Loving? What motivates you to do the things that you know you need to do? Grace. Hearing about God's grace to you empowers you by God's grace to obey. Hearing about Jesus is what will change your heart.

Michael Reeves said, *"I only find that God is my greatest pleasure when you tell me about Jesus. Keep telling me what He's like and then I find, yes, He's actually more desirable than all those other things that would turn me away."*

When you know that you are accepted in the Beloved, it empowers you. God's favor moved Mary's heart to obey, to say, *"Let it be to me according to your word."*

Let it be. That's the posture of discipleship. Let it be, Lord, according to your word. That's bending the knee. So what do you need to do today, everyday? Fall on your knees. You need to bend your knee. That's where freedom is. That's where joy is. The vintage joy that Elizabeth and Mary are experiencing as they experience morning sickness is because they bent their knees to the King. They fell to their knees. They didn't understand it all. They were confused. They had lots and lots of questions. It seemed impossible. But they trusted God's word to them.

So let me ask you: What is happening in your life in this season of Advent, this season of waiting? Where do you lack understanding to God's ways? Where are you confused? Where does it seem impossible? You can trust God's word. It's the only sure thing in this world. When you can't trace God's ways, trust God's word.

Some of you need to hear this today: *"Nothing is impossible with God."* Some of you need verse 37 right now. What some of us need for Christmas this year is Luke 1:37, *"Nothing is impossible with God."* With you, with me, lots of things are impossible. It's impossible for you to be the savior of your kids, the savior of your family, the savior of this church, the savior of this city. But, with God? Nothing is impossible. Nothing.

Back to our story.

LOOK AT VERSE 39-45...

*In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."*

So Mary takes off to see her aunt and when Elizabeth hears Mary's voice, her baby leaps in her womb.

Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and she prays a blessing over Mary and the baby in her womb. Can't you just feel the joy that is present in this house when you read these verses? Elizabeth is happy that the Savior, the Redeemer, the Messiah is coming. The King is coming! It's like that hymn, "*Oh, the King is coming, the King is coming!*" But soon Mary will be singing, "*Oh, the king is kicking, the King is kicking!*"

But before Mary sings, "*The King is kicking!*" she sings another song in verses 46-56. We have called it *The Magnificat*.

LOOK AT VERSES 46-56...

*And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever." And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.*

How do you respond when you've been favored by God in Christ? You worship. You sing *The Magnificat*. Grace leads to joy. Vintage joy. Worship. A thrill of hope. Reveling in God's goodness that leads to worship.

You sing like Mary. That's what you do. You sing your own version of *The Magnificat*. "*The magnificent God is merciful to messy me! The impressively beautiful, elaborate, and extravagant God is merciful to sinful me. The high and Holy one humbled Himself to help hopeless me!*"

Mary's song reminds us that God descends and cares for the weak, the broken, the messy, the hurting, the outcasts, the misfits. That He is merciful! That he cares! He comes down to us, miserable second-rate sinners and He loves us. As John Owen said, "*He loves life, grace, and holiness into us; he loves us also into covenant, loves us into heaven...*" (Communion with the Triune God, ed. Kelly M. Kapic & Justin Taylor, p. 163-164, Crossway, 2007)

And my favorite quote by John Owen captures the loving heart of Jesus for us:

*"His heart is glad in us, without sorrow. And every day while we live is his wedding day... The thoughts of communion with the saints were the joy of his heart from eternity."* (Communion with the Triune God, ed. Kelly M. Kapic & Justin Taylor, p. 233, Crossway, 2007)

The King loves His bride. His heart is glad in us, without sorrow. Everyday is His wedding day. And that means that you can-

### **REST IN THE FAVOR OF YOUR SAVIOR.**

The King left the throne room of Heaven to rescue the woman He loves. Unbelievable. What a love story. Martin Luther explained that one of the best ways to understand the Gospel is by thinking of it as a marriage, a love affair, between a king and a queen. Luther tells the story of this great king, who represents Jesus. And this king is rich and powerful and wise and kind and good. And he marries this poor girl from a poor village. But she's not just a poor girl. She's actually a prostitute. She's not very "proper." And in the story, she represents us- *the church*.

And this girl, this prostitute could never, on her own and through her own behavior, make herself the king's wife. She could never be good enough to marry the king. She could try and clean up her act. She could cut down on the prostitution. She could go to Bible studies and work for the good of her city. She could try to be really good but none of her actions would deem her worthy to be the king's wife.

It's only if the king chooses her to be his wife. That's the only chance that she has. And so the king does choose her to be his wife. So they get married, *the king and the prostitute*- think about that! And on the wedding day she tells the king, "*All that I am I give to you.*" ("Thanks!" says the king! "Thanks a lot!") So she shares with the king all of her dishonor, all of her debts, all of her shady past, all of her wicked ways, all of her diseases, all of her late nights workin' the streets, etc. Not the best things to share, huh? ("Thanks!" says the king!)

But then the king speaks to her and he says, "*My darling. All that I am I give to you. And all that I have I share with you.*"

And just like that, she is the queen. She has gone from being a poor prostitute to becoming the queen. And she doesn't know yet how a queen is supposed to act. She hasn't changed her ways yet. She doesn't know how to act and behave as a queen. She will one day. She'll learn. But she's messy. She's real messy. She's got baggage. She's rough around the edges- *but she's the queen.* And all the kingdom is hers.

That's the Gospel. The great marriage of King Jesus and His bride. We give to Jesus all of our sins, our diseases, our baggage, our mess, our drama. And He takes it all unto Himself on the cross. And then He shares with us all of His life and righteousness and glory. All of His kingdom.

Jesus takes our sin, we take His righteousness. And so our identity has changed. No longer the prostitute, now the queen. No longer the prostitute, though we still play the part (we still play the part, right??). Now the church is the queen. United in marriage to her King. And all His kingdom belongs to her. So Luther then says that the sinner can confidently display his/her sin, in the face of death and Hell, and say, *"If I have sinned, yet my Christ has not sinned. And all His is mine, and all of mine is His."* Listen to Luther-

*Who then can value highly enough these royal nuptials? Who can comprehend the riches of the glory of this grace? Christ, that rich and pious husband, takes as a wife a needy and impious harlot, redeeming her from all her evils, and supplying her with all his good things. It is impossible now that her sins should destroy her, since they have been laid upon Christ and swallowed up in Him, and since she has in her husband Christ a righteousness which she may claim as her own, and which she can set up with confidence against all her sins, against death and hell, saying: "If I have sinned, my Christ, in whom I believe, has not sinned; all mine is His, and all His is mine..."*

We are perfectly accepted in Christ. We have His righteousness. We have been favored, blessed in the Beloved. It's not a fairy tale, Grace!

### **REST IN THE FAVOR OF YOUR SAVIOR.**

The incarnation is all about the King who gave up the throne to win the woman He loves. Good news to weary sinners like us.

*"long lay the world in sin and error pining  
til he appeared, gift of infinite worth  
a thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices..."*

One of the greatest promises in Scripture comes from Isaiah 33:17-

*"Your eyes will behold the King in his beauty."*

Behold your King today. Before Him lowly bend. Fall on your knees. And you will experience vintage joy.

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"The Man Who Gave Up the Throne for Love"

Luke 1:26-56

Sermon Study Questions

1. Describe the 2 "sides" of the "coin" of grace. Cite a Scripture for each.
2. Ephesians 5:1-2 says, *"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."* Explain how Paul uses the gospel to motivate obedience.
3. Where do you want control in your life? Where do you want to be king? Describe a time when you wanted something so bad and it did not deliver on its promises of satisfaction like you thought.
4. Quotes from the sermon:

Michael Reeves

*"I only find that God is my greatest pleasure when you tell me about Jesus. Keep telling me what He's like and then I find, yes, He's actually more desirable than all those other things that would turn me away."*

John Owen

*"He loves life, grace, and holiness into us; he loves us also into covenant, loves us into heaven..."*

*"His heart is glad in us, without sorrow. And every day while we live is his wedding day... The thoughts of communion with the saints were the joy of his heart from eternity."*

Martin Luther

*Who then can value highly enough these royal nuptials? Who can comprehend the riches of the glory of this grace? Christ, that rich and pious husband, takes as a wife a needy and impious harlot, redeeming her from all her evils, and supplying her with all his good things. It is impossible now that her sins should destroy her, since they have been laid upon Christ and swallowed up in Him, and since she has in her husband Christ a righteousness which she may claim as her own, and which she can set up with confidence against all her sins, against death and hell, saying: "If I have sinned, my Christ, in whom I believe, has not sinned; all mine is His, and all His is mine..."*