

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

God brings purpose to our lives, even in the most unexpected disruptions.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

1. When we were kids, we may have had grand dreams about who or what we wanted to be when we grew up. We may also have had ideas about how we expected our life, marriage, relationships, and career to go. Sometimes they pan out the way we hoped, but for many of us, life takes plenty of twists and turns we would never have anticipated. The disruption points we experience can re-define our lives. God meets us there and can redeem what has gone awry.
2. We might wonder what Mary did for God to choose her. The text doesn't say why God chose her or why he chose most people he used in the Bible. That tells us that it doesn't depend on us. It's God's free and gracious choice. It's his work, and our job is to step into what he calls us to do. That is who God is. God chooses to work through the unlikely and the passed over, and God also chooses the strong.
3. No matter who we are, God's call will be a disruption to our status quo. His work in our lives may have to realign our values, concerns, perspective, or lifestyle. Jesus will call us and challenge us to move beyond our comfort zone. That can be scary, but it also means our life will be full of adventure, meaning, and purpose.
4. Author and speaker Steve Maraboli wrote, "Incredible change happens in your life when you decide to take control of what you do have power over instead of craving control over what you don't." That statement is similar to the serenity prayer written by Christian theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, known by millions through 12-step recovery programs and churches. The appropriate concepts of control, readiness, and surrender are worthy of reflection. An original version from Niebuhr reads:

God, give me the grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.
Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that you will make all things right,
If I surrender to your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with you forever in the next.
Amen.