Nothing is impossible with God
(Luke 1:26–38)

Jesus Is Coming! Nothing Will Be Impossible for God!

“That’s impossible!” We might remark at news that seems unbelievable. It can be bad—so bad and horrifying that we would never imagine it could happen to anyone. It can be good—so wonderful that we would never dream of hoping that it would happen. It can simply be something that just defies reality—news that some athletic record was shattered or that the difficult-to-find Christmas present was secured.

You might notice that we often use the word flippantly, because clearly, if something happened, it can’t be impossible. And that’s where we have to note a difference between impossible, and impossible for us.

I can watch the gymnast do things and say, “That’s impossible!” and what I mean is that it would be impossible for me to ever do that, which given my general lack of coordination or physical ability is absolutely true. But clearly it’s not fundamentally impossible because there someone has accomplished the feat I deemed impossible for myself.

But there are some things that seems objectively impossible. I can’t jump and launch myself into outer space. People can’t survive more than a few weeks without food, or days without water, or minutes without air. And if someone makes a promise to you that seems to be in the realm of the impossible either for them or in general, there’s a good chance we might dismiss the promise as meaningless. If it can’t be done, why get your hopes up only to have them dashed by reality?

God’s promise surrounding the Savior might have felt impossible. How would God get rid of sin? How would he solve the fact that we’ve been rebellious and hateful toward him? How would he be able to do anything that he promised to do? The truth is that God would accomplish these impossible-sounding goals by impossible-sounding means. And yet, nothing will be impossible for God!

In our Gospel this morning, Mary was met with some impossible-sounding news. She, who was a virgin, who had never known a man in that way, was going to have a child? Impossible! That goes against basic biology. And yet, wasn't that what God had promised to do? The promise to King Ahaz in Isaiah 7 was clear—the virgin will be with child and give birth to a Son, Immanuel. Impossible! But not!

Mary trusts Gabriel's message but is confused. **"**How will this be?" And Gabriel's explanation is vague yet sufficient: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." In summary, Gabriel's message is, "God's power will accomplish this."

He points Mary to Elizabeth, her relative, who was said to not be able to have children. Yet even in her old age, Elizabeth was six months pregnant with John the Baptist, the way-preparer of the Savior. And in this moment we might see that his work of way-preparing begins here as his mere existence points to God's ability to do whatever he needs to do to accomplish his promises.

And Mary's response is pure humble trust: "I am the Lord's servant, May it be to me as you have said."

Do we approach God's seemingly impossible promises like Mary did? Do we really believe that everything—that heartbreak, that loss of a loved one, that loss of job, those financial problems, that troubled relationship, that harsh exchange with a total stranger—everything God is going to work out for our eternal good? Do we even start to doubt the possibility that there is forgiveness for our sins?

Or do we find ourselves trusting Satan's reasoning rather than God's promises? Satan continually lies into our ears, "Sure, God could be forgiving towards him or her, but not you. It's not possible for God to forgive you after what you did or said or thought..."

God accomplishes what seems to be impossible. And he does the impossible because he loves you. This whole scene before us at the last

Sunday in Advent is the God of faithful love beginning to turn the wheels in the machine of his long-promised plan of salvation.

Generation after generation of people after Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden longed to hear these words spoken to Mary. And Mary, too, would have longed to see and hear what you have seen and heard in the Scriptures concerning what would happen with this long-promised child.

Because this child to be born is not amazing because of the circumstances surrounding his conception or even the birth that we're gearing up to celebrate. In some ways, that is the least remarkable thing about him. Because here is the will of the Word—God himself—made flesh. His name is given very specifically: Jesus. It literally means "the Lord saves" or "Yahweh saves".

This is not just some sentimental name to reflect the faith of their parents. No, this child is literally Yahweh, the God of free and faithful love, the one who created the universe, promised to Abraham, called Moses, led his people, supported David, spoke through the prophets. This child is the one true God coming to earth, taking on our human nature, to save us from our sin. Impossible! But, nothing will be impossible for God!

This child, conceived by the Holy Spirit through the power of the Most High, would be born, grow, live a life of perfection and die an innocent death. Tragic, yes, but again, for a purpose. Just like there is purpose in everything God does in our lives. This was the plan. This was God's design. This was his plan to save you and me from sin. Jesus would shoulder the burden of our sin that we committed against him. Impossible! But, nothing will be impossible for God!

And as we draw nearer and nearer to our Christmas celebrations, as we get closer and closer to Bethlehem's manger, don't take your eyes off the skies. Because this same Jesus, born of a virgin, will return. He will return to take you and me away from this world of sin and bring us to himself in heaven.

Based on everything we've experienced in our life, this is completely impossible. We've never seen Jesus return. We've never seen heaven. Everything in our lives, in the world, goes on today as it has every day of our life. We live in this world and thinking that it will come to an end at Jesus' return seems like it will never happen. Impossible! Yet, nothing will be impossible for God!

God kept his promise to his ancient people to send the Savior for all people of all times and was faithful to that promise, so he will not prove untrustworthy with this final promise. Whether he calls us home by death or we lift up our eyes at the sounding of the last trumpet, God will rescue us for Jesus' sake. He will be faithful to this final promise as he has been to every single one that has come before.

We might be venturing into a Christmas season unlike any that we've ever experienced. We might be wrestling with our health, or the health or even loss of loved ones. We will likely struggle with the reality that we won't be able to see the friends and family we are used to, but no matter what changes this Christmas may bring to you this year, one thing remains absolutely certain, something that we can trust and rely on no matter how much worse or better things get from here:

Jesus is coming! Nothing will be impossible for God! All praise and glory be to him forever and ever! Amen.