



Key Text: Luke 1:38

Big Idea: God uses bottom of the barrel people to do the unfathomable!

Intro:

Today we are beginning a two-week series called “Boss Baby.” If anyone deserves the title “Bossy Baby” - it’s baby Jesus!

When it comes to the Christmas story, each of us is probably familiar with a general understanding of the story as a result of the commercialization and publicity of Christmas. However, if you look up the story in your Bible and read it as if it is your first time hearing it, you’ll see that the story of Jesus’ birth is one of the most mind blowing and mind-boggling stories of all time.

In fact, I encourage you - if you are interested in reading your Bible and looking for some guidance - to look up the book of Luke, chapter 1, and begin reading the story of Jesus’ birth. Block out all of the Christmas shows, movies, and music in your head. Pretend you’ve never heard the story before and imagine being the people described in the story. The story of Jesus’ birth, as described in the Bible, is wild!

Jesus’ arrival to Earth is such a big deal, that major things take place prior to Jesus even being born. In fact, Scripture spends more time describing what takes place in the *pregame* and festivities surrounding Jesus’ birth than it does the event of Jesus’ birth itself. Obviously, baby Jesus is a *boss*, and the anticipation of Jesus’ arrival is a gamechanger!

As God prepared the world for the greatest miracle it would ever see, He chose to use “bottom of the barrel” people to do the unfathomable.

1. God chooses “bottom of the barrel” people to do the unfathomable.

It’s been said that God “uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things.” This is true! God does use ordinary people to do extraordinary things! However, in the story of Jesus’ birth, God didn’t just choose to use ordinary

people - instead, God chose to use people at the *bottom of barrel* to do the unfathomable.

Specifically speaking, in this story, God chose *women* to do the unfathomable. Some of the ladies here today might be wondering “Why does it matter that God chose to do something unfathomable through women?” The fact that He chose to do something unfathomable through women is a *huge* deal - especially in ancient culture!

In ancient biblical culture, there was a dreadfully low view of women. Women were nearly viewed on the same level as *dogs*. This was the culture that Jesus was born into, this was *not* the culture Jesus created. Today, women still have *many* challenges when it comes to how they are viewed and treated within our modern culture. However, you can imagine how 2,000 years ago, culture’s low view of women presented 2,000 more challenges!

In ancient biblical culture, men (*not* Jesus) viewed the primary purpose of women to be child bearers. The average age of a woman to be married in that time was 12-13 years old. Generally speaking, women were limited to the roles of cleaning, cooking, and child bearing.

Jesus has radically changed how men view and treat women, in the best ways! Jesus went out of His way to honor, empower, and build up women. These ginormous cultural shifts began prior to Jesus even coming to Earth - during the *pregame* of Jesus’ birth - when God the Father chose to use people viewed by culture as “bottom of the barrel” to do the unfathomable.

One of these “bottom of the barrel” type of people, that God chose to do something unfathomable through, was a woman named Elizabeth.

A. *Elizabeth*

Elizabeth was an elderly woman who had gone her whole life unable to have children. Research shows that Elizabeth was around 70 years old. For the majority of Elizabeth’s life, she had to accept being viewed by culture as a woman who hadn’t fulfilled her perceived purpose. The Bible says that even her nickname depicts culture’s low view of her!

‘the barren one,’ they called her... (Luke 1:36b, TLB)

“The barren one” means the *empty* one. The culture surrounding Elizabeth believed that because she had been empty of children, she was empty of purpose. Ladies, can you imagine having this limited and defeating identity attached to you?

Elizabeth, had tried, and tried, and tried, to have children. However, Elizabeth’s identity had been based on what she *couldn’t* do. In the eyes of her culture, Elizabeth was a person who was at the bottom of the barrel. However, miraculously, God used Elizabeth to give birth to a baby boy, named John, who became known as John the Baptist. John the Baptist changed history as he committed his life to getting people warmed up for the arrival and message of Jesus!

Maybe you’ve heard the story, but one night an angel appeared to Elizabeth’s husband, Zechariah. Zechariah was a religious leader, specifically, a priest. Zechariah had a once in a lifetime chance, a career opportunity, to go into a privileged place called the Holy of Holies and offer a sacrifice (for his position, this was a huge occasion). To Zechariah’s astonishment, he was greeted by an angel named Gabriel. The angel tells Zechariah that his elderly wife, Elizabeth, would give birth to a baby boy. Zechariah seemed more astonished with the angel’s *message* than he was with the angels’ visit because even Zechariah didn’t believe his wife could give birth to a child! Zechariah’s wife, Elizabeth, was around 70-years-old! Despite Zechariah having been a faithful and loving husband to his wife Elizabeth, and a man very familiar with spiritual things (as a religious leader), even *he* could not believe that God could use someone as deep in the bottom of the barrel as his wife Elizabeth. As a result of Zechariah’s lack of belief in the angel’s message, Zechariah actually had his voice taken from him until the baby was born.

God couldn’t have chosen someone deeper in the bottom of the barrel than Elizabeth; even her loving, loyal, and spiritual husband couldn’t believe the angel’s message. God had truly chosen someone at the bottom of the barrel to do something unfathomable.

Transition: The “Christmas story” begins with a 70-year-old lady name Elizabeth. However, there is another person culture viewed as “bottom of

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