

# A *light* in the Darkness

ADVENT SERIES • 12/3 - 12/24

## The Light of Hope (Luke 1:28-36, 38) Pastor Tim Peck A Light in the Darkness pt. 1

### THE BIG IDEA

The four weeks of Advent invite us to pace ourselves in our journey toward Christmas. Mary's story reminds us that hope requires waiting and that we play an active part in our hope.

### OPENING

- What's your favorite part of the Advent and Christmas season?
- What's your least favorite part?

### DIGGING DEEPER

- In her book on *Advent: The Season of Hope*, pastor and author Tish Harrison Warren says, "In the church calendar, every season of celebration is preceded by a season of preparation. In Advent, we prepare our hearts, minds, and bodies to receive the good news that awaits us in...Christmas."<sup>1</sup> She goes on to say, "At Christmas, we celebrate how light entered into darkness. But first, Advent bids us to pause and look, with complete honesty, at the darkness. Advent asks us to name what is dark in the world and in our own lives and to invite the light of Christ into each shadowy corner."<sup>2</sup> What do you think of this idea? Why do you think the early Christians thought preparation before celebration was important? What might it mean for you to look with complete honesty at the darkness in our world and in your life this week?
- Pastor Tim suggests that Jesus' birth was different from any other birth because his male body came exclusively from a woman. According to Wheaton College New Testament professor Amy Peeler, "All orthodox Christians who affirm the virginal conception would affirm that he—in a way unique to the human race—embraces

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<sup>1</sup>Tish Harrison Warren, *Advent: The Season of Hope* (InterVarsity Press), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Warren, *Advent*, p. 32.

*female and male in his body because his male body came from a female alone.*<sup>3</sup>  
How does this make Jesus uniquely qualified to be savior for all?

- What do you learn about hope in Romans 8:24? Why is hope so hard for us?
- Re-read Mary's response to the angel in Luke 1:38? How is this response reflected in her song in Luke 1:46-55?

## PUTTING IT TO WORK

- What's one area where you feel like you're sitting in the dark waiting for the light? What might hope look like for you in this situation?
- Make Mary's prayer your prayer each day this week: *"I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled."*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

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<sup>3</sup>Amy Peeler, *Women and the Gender of God* (Eerdmans Publishing), p. 185.