



Key Takeaway: Faith is seeing life from God’s point of view.

Key Scriptures: Revelation 12:3–4, Luke 1:35–38, Hebrews 11:1

INTRO

[**Author Note:** Share about how Christmas decorating happened at your house while you were growing up.]

When do Christmas decorations start appearing at your house? For me, it was always the week of Thanksgiving.

It would look like Santa Claus threw up all over my house. Every room turned green and red, and there were thousands of snow globes and Santa dolls that would appear out of thin air. Our fake Christmas tree would sag to one side because of the amount of ornaments hanging off it. That was just tree one out of three. We had one tree for our handmade ornaments, one for our more fashionable ornaments, and one tree that went out in our front yard.

But those decorations are just the pre-game warmup. It wasn’t really Christmas season until the nativity scenes appeared. My mom always had three different nativity scenes, but my favorite one was an animatronic nativity scene that played one of the most famous Christmas songs of all time: “Silent Night.”

“Silent Night, holy Night. All is calm, all is bright ...” Those are the famous opening words of “Silent Night.” But the problem with these words is they are the opposite of what’s happening in the nativity story. This was not a silent, peaceful night when Jesus was born.

In fact, the nativity scene that you’re used to is incomplete. Sure, you’ve got sweet baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the wise men, some angels, and some farm animals. But you’re still missing a key character. You’re missing a dragon.

THE DRAGON

In Revelation 12:3–4, we see a side of the Christmas story like no other:

Revelation 12:3–4 (ESV)

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.

Have you ever heard a catchier Christmas carol? The only way this dragon can make sense in a song is if it were death metal. Sure, “Frosty the Snowman” makes a great claymation, but have you seen the cartoon about a dragon trying to eat newborn babies? This is straight up crazy.

But this dragon has a name. He is the representation of an Enemy who is trying to stop everything that God is doing. You may recognize this dragon by the name Satan. When you add Satan to the nativity scene, the story changes completely. This is not a gentle, quirky story about being born in a barn. This is a story about an unseen war.

Maybe you haven’t grown up in church, and to you, this idea of Satan sounds like crazy talk. So let’s explain this Enemy in a way you can understand.

Have you ever heard a voice in your head that told you, “You’re not good enough. You’ll never be as good as them. She’s prettier, he’s faster, they’re better, you’re worthless ...” etc. That is the voice of the Enemy. You don’t have to believe in God to experience attacks from the dragon. Satan’s most powerful weapon is his lies, and that’s his favorite way to attack you. And Mary, the mother of Jesus, felt his attacks, too.

MARY CHOSEN BY GOD

You know Mary, right? She’s the woman in the nativity scene holding the baby. Spoiler alert: Mary gave birth to Jesus, who happens to be the Savior of the world. The only problem was that Mary wasn’t a grown woman. Mary was around the age of 12 to 14 years old. Because of her gender and her age, people didn’t regard her as valuable. She was an easy target for the dragon.

If the God of the Universe was choosing someone to give birth to the Son of God, you would think that He would choose a wise princess of a powerful royal family. But Mary was none of those things.

Mary was dirt poor. She was a peasant who didn’t have a dollar to her name, and the man she was engaged with was poor, too. That’s what makes this story so crazy. The Creator of the universe chose Mary, the preteen peasant, to give birth to the Savior of the world. There was nothing Mary did to deserve this honor, but God chose her. So when an angel of the Lord appears to Mary to tell her the news about giving birth to Jesus, Scripture tells us that Mary was greatly troubled.

It’s pretty heavy news to hear that you’re pregnant without ever touching someone else, but Mary was troubled for a different reason. Mary was engaged to another man, and if her community even thought she had cheated on her fiancé, the consequences would be severe. If she was lucky, she would be quietly divorced and be kicked out of her town without a way to provide for her newborn baby. She would be left to fend for herself in the wilderness.

If she wasn’t lucky, she would be dragged into the public eye and executed on the spot for something she didn’t do.

That’s why the angel tells Mary to not be afraid and elaborates even further:

Luke 1:35–38 (ESV)

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’s response is one of the most faith-filled responses you will ever see. She tells the angel, “I will be a servant to God. I will surrender my life into His hands. What God has said will happen, is going to happen.”

The angel never promises Mary that she will be safe, but he promises her that God has favored her. Can you imagine the mental turmoil going on? Mary is being faced with a life-or-death situation with no promise of safety.