



Week 3 - Unlocking the potential of our response

The Advent narratives are filled with stories of ordinary people. Yet through their lives and actions, God's extraordinary purposes were fulfilled. For many who were part of that story, their response required at best that they simply accepted the circumstances around them, and more often that they faced greater adversity in the here and now.

But they responded in faith, and because of their obedient willingness, God's salvation was accomplished. God will seldom call us to acts that would be seen as great in the eyes of this world; he will never require of us more than we can offer, though our commitment to his higher purposes may require acts of selfless sacrifice.

We are not called to achieve success as measured by the standards of the world in which we live; we do not even need to be able to explain or understand the circumstances in which we are immersed. But the lives that we celebrate bear profound testimony of the immeasurable potential of simple and humble obedience. What opportunities could be ours by simply responding to God's call, whatever that might be?

**We light this candle and remember
How once in the midst of the ordinary,
A messenger of light
Declared that God's salvation was dawning**

**Still stunned by the faithful example
Of one young woman's "let it be to me"
We offer ourselves in awestruck anticipation
Of what our living sacrifice might yet become.**

**Let this simple flame be our reminder
Of the profound potential of ordinary lives
Offered in service to the Most High;
God's purpose accomplished in the midst of human frailty**

**Not because we suppose that this world's salvation
Can be wrought through our endeavour alone
But as those who have seen God's miracle of grace
And believe that in these broken vessels, God's rich treasure can reside**

