



DAY 14

Saturday, December 15  
(Candle of Love)

LUKE 1:26–45

*“Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!”*

—Luke 1:45

## *A Child-like Faith*

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If you were to ask me about the best Christmas present I ever received, I wouldn't have to think long for my response. It was the year that I was four (or perhaps five?). We were living in Texas at the time, and just a few short days before Christmas my favorite kitten went missing. We searched high and low, but to no avail. I was devastated.

Christmas morning arrived, despite my willing it not to. The presents were nice, but it was the phone call that brought the best gift of all. It was the local police, wondering if the kitten, apparently trapped in the car next door, could possibly belong to us. I was overjoyed! A quick rescue mission brought my cold and hungry kitty back home. I clearly remember lying on the kitchen floor and watching my little kitten eat for the first time in days. I decided that it was the most beautiful sight in the whole world. God had heard my prayers.

And oh, I believed! I believed with a child's heart that is complete in its trust. I believed that God was good, that he answers prayer. Wasn't that what Christmas was all about, anyway? Believing and receiving the best of all possible gifts? Celebrating in the wondrous thing that is life? Wasn't Christmas to be about love, not just the getting and giving of gifts?

The years have gone by, and the memories of that Christmas have faded. And somewhere in the process of “growing up” I lost that ability to believe. That childhood trust has been exchanged

for doubt and unbelief. Whereas I once surrendered fully to God's goodness and providence, I now have to wrestle simply to believe that God really does love me.

And yet love me He does. In spite of me. In spite of my doubt, my unbelief.

At this season I often think on Mary, and her great example of faith. She surrendered so whole-heartedly, with child-like faith. Mary was in fact little more than a child when she was told that she was to become the mother of the Savior of the world. And yet her surrender began her on the greatest of journeys, the journey that began in her womb and led her to the foot of the cross.

May we return to this child-like faith. May it be the gift that we offer up to our God this Christmas.

### RESPOND:

**DO:** Ask a child in your church, your home, or in your neighborhood if he/she has any prayer requests.

**PRAY:** For that child, that he/she might come to saving faith even as you pray for your own faith to return to a child-like space.