

THE FAITH OF A TEENAGER
Luke 1:26-38, 46-55

(Available on Cassette Tape)

We don't know a great deal about Mary and Joseph, but one thing is clear – God had a providential plan for them and has a providential plan for you and for me. The question is, are we seeking each day to fulfill his plan for us?

What the Bible reveals about Mary, the teenage mother of Jesus, should remind us of these things: to keep a balanced view of who Mary was, to know what she was called by God to accomplish and to see her as a woman of faith.

Biblical Teaching Made Relevant in Today's World
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I. Mary and Her Family

Very little information concerning Mary is found in the Word of God. Mary's husband Joseph, who "adopted" Jesus, was a village carpenter. Mary had a number of children. Matthew 13:55 teaches Jesus had at least four younger brothers and a number of sisters. James, the half brother of Jesus, became the head of the Jerusalem church sometime after Jesus' resurrection.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, only appears in a select number of passages. Matthew 1 & 2 and Luke 1 & 2 give the infancy narratives; John 2:1-11 tells of Jesus' first miracle at the wedding at Cana; Matthew 12:46-50 and Mark 3:21, 31-35 speak of Jesus and his brothers and sisters; John 19:25 writes concerning the crucifixion and Acts 1:14 mentions Mary in the upper room.

II. Mary's Faith Sustained Her

The Matthew and Luke narratives concerning Jesus' infancy reveal Mary's faith enabled her to cooperate with God as well as cooperate with her God-ordained leader – her husband Joseph. She lived a life pleasing to God according to Old Testament principles. She practiced meditation, exhibited true humility and above all, had a deep faith.

At the wedding at Cana, Mary revealed her faith in God and her respect for her Savior even though he was her son. (John 2:1-11)

At the Cross on the hill of Golgotha (Calvary) Mary showed faith to submit to those in authority over her. (John 19:25)

In the upper room, (Acts 1:14) Mary once again shows us she was a woman of faith. As a single parent, Mary believed in the power of prayer to change things. Talking to God was an integral part of her life.

The Scriptures reveal rejection was a part of Mary's life. Initially, Mary had no idea her fiancé considered divorcing her. Mary did not know she and her first-born son Jesus would be threatened by King Herod, who sought to kill her son. When the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary, she did not know rejection would be part of her life! Mary had a strong faith in order to handle rejection.

III. Mary's Song

In Luke 1:46-55 Mary glorifies God in song for what he was going to do for the world through her. She was not proud, but in faith, recognized and accepted the gift God had given her.

The song Mary composed reveals the one thing Mary did know. Mary knew she was a sinner and needed a Savior. Her clear statements are foundational when dealing with the many distortions and traditions some have attributed to her.

Protestant Evangelical Christians should honor and revere Mary as a godly vehicle through whom our Lord and Savior entered the world. However, Bible-believing Christians find it unbiblical to worship the Virgin Mary or to pray to her to intercede with her Son on their behalf. The Bible teaches believers are to only pray to the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ..."

Furthermore, there is no evidence whatsoever that Christians in the first century ever worshiped Mary. It was not until the fourth century that certain women in the region of Thrace, an area in Greece, started teaching the adoration of Mary. Little by little, Roman Catholicism and Greek and Russian Orthodox Christians began to exalt the mother of Jesus.

Some of what has been taught about Mary has come from non-biblical literature referred to as apocryphal writings. Those who teach the Immaculate Conception of Mary, her perpetual virginity and her assumption to heaven find no biblical support. Once again, Evangelical believers are reminded of the reformation truth – Scripture alone is the believer's final authority for faith and practice.

- 1) The use of "Savior" in Luke 1:47 is the key to Mary's song, and by this one word, reveals that she understood God's plan for her son as well as her personal need for a Savior. In Mary's song, it is clear she is saying she needed a personal Savior.
- 2) In verse 48, Mary used the word "servant" which in Greek is *doulē* and literally means "a female slave", which clearly speaks of Mary's humbleness.
- 3) The NIV translation on verse 49 states, "The Mighty One has done great things for me." Mary is indicating her deep joy in

being elected to be the mother of the Savior, for sending the angel Gabriel to her, for causing the miraculous conception and revealing the mystery to Elizabeth. These "great things" were and still are truly great! In fact, miraculous!

- 4) When Elizabeth called Mary "blessed" in verse 42 and 45 and Mary called herself "blessed" in verse 48, they both meant "happy" or "fortunate." A person IS "blessed", happy and fortunate when God's favor rests on him.
- 5) The distinguished feature of the song Mary composed centers on faith. This teenager wrote of God's mercy and concluded with assurance that God would fulfill his covenant promises one day to all who believe. (Galatians 3:9, 29)

Moses gave us 365 prohibitions and 248 positive commands in the law. In Psalm 15 David reduced them to 11; Isaiah 33:14-15 made them six; Micah 6:8 bound them into three and Habakkuk 2:4 reduced them all to one, namely, "The just shall live by faith."

The Bible says, "... without faith it is impossible to please God ..." (Hebrews 11:6) So here are some of the many steps you can take to increase your faith:

- Regularly sit under biblical teaching of the Word of God.
- Be very careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit in you.
- Be a seeker of true-truth – no matter what the cost. Jesus said he was the way, truth and life to Almighty God. He also said the written Word of God was THE TRUTH to guide your decision making.
- Face your trials, suffering and afflictions knowing God has placed them in your path to increase your faith, trust and dependence on him alone.
- Remember, "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself in love." (Galatians 5:6b)

SUMMARY & APPLICATION FOR OUR LIVES

Did Mary know all that was happening and would happen to her? The answer is no! Was she a teenage bride with a great deal of faith? Clearly the answer is yes! Mary had a steadfast faith in God under unbelievable circumstances. Mary believed God would turn her confusion, her embarrassment and potentially harmful situation around. She believed what she said, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to accept whatever he wants." The question is – can we say the same thing?

Amen