

Mary, the Mother of Jesus

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:15-19; John 2:1-5; 19:25-27

Focus Scripture: Luke 2:15-19; John 2:1-5; 19:25-27

Key Verse: Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. Luke 2:19

LUKE 2:15-19; JOHN 2:1-5; 19:25-27
(NRSV UE)

Luke 2:15-19

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child,

18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them,

19 and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

John 2:1-5

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

19:25-27

25 And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

LUKE 2:15-19; JOHN 2:1-5; 19:25-27 (KJV)
Luke 2:15-19

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

John 2:1-5

1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

19:25-27

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother,

26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."

27 Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Key Terms

- **Succession** – The lawful transfer of title or status from one person to another.
- **Unabashed** – Not ashamed; without apology.
- **Mediatorial** – Relating to the role of a mediator.

Introduction

We are faced with many choices throughout our lives, but it is impossible to commit to everything.

How do we prioritize our commitments?

We see Mary's commitment to Jesus at significant moments in his life. She is faithful from the announcement of his birth, to his first miracle, to his crucifixion. And she demanded no special privileges. Humility was her hallmark.

Telling the Bible Story

For Jesus to be the Messiah, he had to be

linked to King David. So, God arranged for him to have two parents, both with direct links to King David. Mary was the direct biological link through Nathan, David's son. Joseph was also linked to

King David by law and royal succession. So, there was a deliberate divine purpose in choosing Mary to be Jesus' mother. But Mary also gave Jesus priestly standing, as she was related to Elizabeth, a daughter of the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe.

In her jubilation praise, Mary called herself

humble or lowly. Please understand this is not a reference to moral righteousness but rather an admission of her economic and social regard. She was not a woman of wealth or high social standing: just a poor, ordinary girl. Yet her selection speaks loudly to Christians that God uses such people for his purpose. Unlike what we see in the selection of people

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for leadership roles in society and even church organizations, God is not biased against the economically lowly.

While we must never elevate Mary to the level of chief intercessor in heaven as some do, Mary deserves our honor as the mother of our Lord. Even the radical reformer, Martin Luther, was unabashed in honoring her, even referring to her as the “Queen of Heaven.”

In the text, we see Mary wrestling with the significance of events happening in her life and Jesus’ life (Luke 2:15-19, 2:51, and 2:34-35). In error, we often think that because someone is anointed and claims a relationship with Christ, answers to tough questions are always instant. We must always remember that revelation is at God’s scheduling, not at our command.

Mary needed time to fathom the meaning of it all. Sometime later, when she and Joseph found the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple, Luke tells us that Mary responded the same way (Luke 2:51).

Luke implies that Mary struggled with the questions of faith, particularly during the dark days of Jesus’ death (see Luke 2:34-35). She did not truly comprehend it all until after the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. Mary represents Christians who desire to believe in God but have honest questions and doubts.

The Gospel of John curiously treats Mary. She is never mentioned by name. Rather, John used the title *mother of Jesus*.

It is as if he wants to underscore her special status rather than just a name that is common in scripture. But he ensures her presence is noted at the start and end of Jesus’ ministry.

Sankofa

There are some qualities we traditionally associate with mothers.

One such quality is unwavering support from their children. We see this brightly in the life of Eliza “Mama” Garvey, the mother of Marcus Garvey.

“Mama” Garvey is credited with instilling discipline, dignity, and a strong sense of racial pride in her son Marcus. She was



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an anchoring rock during Marcus' years of public ridicule, imprisonment, and political setbacks.

In one description of his mother, Marcus said, "She was a woman of high moral character ... who would never tolerate falsehoods or weakness." Mr. Garvey's father is said to have given him the books and debating skills, while his mother gave him character. Through her grounding, he developed a sense of responsibility before God. That sense helped him to stand when in his life he was mocked, jailed, and abandoned by people who once supported him. Oh, for the joys of a Christian mother of strong character!

Case Study

Despite his strong anti-Roman Catholic stance, Martin Luther wrote a glowing tribute on Mary – *Commentary on the Magnificat of the Virgin Mary*. This work used Luke 1:46-55 as the biblical anchor.

Luther saw Mary as a model of humility. She was a prime recipient of grace but not a dispenser of it, as the Catholic Church

was holding her out to be. Again, unlike the Catholic dogma, Luther saw Mary as pointing attention away from herself to God, where it rightly belongs.

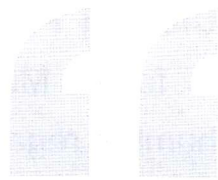
One of Luther's most quoted lines was, "Mary does not desire that we come to her; she desires that we come through her to God." This is noteworthy because it reflects what the Bible holds out. Mary's role is testimonial, not mediatorial. Yes, as believers, we acknowledge the

exalted role God called her to play in the divine scheme of redeeming humanity. However, she cannot be elevated to the role of Christ or revered on his level.

Life Application

The study of Mary should teach us practical humility. One of the failings of church

groupings today is the importance some ministers attach to themselves. Because God chose to use them in ministry, they take on an inflated sense of importance. Mary did not do that. She played her role and stepped back. This is why John's Gospel's sparse treatment of her in Jesus' ministry is notable.



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strong character!

Consider this and evaluate your own status in ministry. How humble are you about what God has been able to do through you, whether much or little? Note Jesus' warning to his disciples not to lord themselves over others.

But take the analysis a step further to those you serve with or serve under. And where you see a prideful attitude, take note. Remind yourself and those with whom you have a working relationship of how God is disgusted by false pride. Proverbs 6:16-17, Proverbs 16:18, and Isaiah 2:11 are great reminders to respect.

Questions

1. How can thoughts about Mary assist

us in our Christian walk?

2. What in Mary's *Magnificat* appeals to you?
3. In your mind, what is the difference between honoring Mary and revering her?

Closing Devotions

Closing Hymn: "Now Thank We All Our God" (AMECH #573)

Closing Prayer: Dear Father, help me to follow Mary's example of remaining humble regardless of what you can use me for. I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

July 27–August 2

Monday	Isaiah 55:6-11 (Seek the Lord; Call on God)
Tuesday	Jude 20-25 (Have Mercy on Those Who Doubt)
Wednesday	John 14:1-7 (How Can We Know the Way?)
Thursday	Psalms 50:7-15 (Call on the Lord)
Friday	Deuteronomy 4:27-31 (Seek God With Heart and Soul)
Saturday	John 20:19-23 (So I Send You)
Sunday	John 20:24-29 (My Lord and My God!)