

Turning Worry into Worship

Luke 1:46–56 (ESV)

INTRODUCTION:

“I’m a Mom and I worry. It’s like it’s part of my DNA.”, writes Amanda a Mom Blogger. I wake up at 3:30 in the morning Then my brain starts spinning, and the worry starts creeping in. I worry about things I can’t change. I lie there awake, tossing and turning, for another hour before I fall back asleep, only to be woken up a few hours later by children ready to start their day. I’m exhausted.

Sound familiar? There is a lot to worry about!

ILLUSTRATION: Everyday Health Pregnancy & Parenting surveyed 3,232 women between the ages of 18 and 54 who were either pregnant or have a child 0 to 8 years old.¹

- Over two-thirds, 68% say they are experiencing anxiety, with more than a third (35 percent) reporting clinical levels from moderate to severe.
- 71% of moms list family finances and issues like inflation and gas prices as the largest contributors to their anxiety.
- Other issues revolve around their children hitting certain milestones of progress and a lack of support from those around them.

Well if anyone could be tempted to worry - it was Mary.

- We’ve seen already that she was betrothed to Joseph as a teenager. That in itself could be challenging. I mean her mom and dad picked out her husband who was likely just a few years older than her. I’ve never met a teenager I trusted to marry my daughters. And my kids don’t like anything I pick out.
- Not only was she betrothed, suddenly she was chosen by God to bear the Messiah. Inexplicably pregnant somehow outside of her marriage. She knew it was the power of God that came over her, but would others? Her parents? Her friends? Her synagogue? Even Joseph had his doubts.
- And this Son she would bare. What is a Messiah to do? How does a young girl, in a small town prepare a boy to be the King of all Kings? Would he have to go to war? Would people love Him, would they hate Him?

Many, Many questions...Every mom can relate.

- Is your kid normal? What does normal even mean? Our parents were happy with 10 fingers and 10 toes, but now the world gives us so many categories to worry about.

¹ <https://www.whattoexpect.com/news/first-year/survey-moms-feel-more-pressure-pandemic>

- No longer is a kid high spirited or easily distracted now he has a psychological diagnosis for which he is prescribed very strong medication at a very early age.
- If they are “normal”, perhaps you are doing something wrong in your parenting for which they will have to endure years of trauma counseling in the future to untangle the dramatic effects of your parenting.
- Is she smart? Will she have friends? Will he be good at sports? What if the other boys pick on him? How will we afford braces?
- Then driving! They will have to learn to drive in an area where a good number of the population can't see clearly enough to know when the light turns red or green... apparently. Another part of the population is under the influence of God knows what, and some just seem to drive down from Georgia to pick a fight.
- Besides all that - there is very clearly a concerted effort to indoctrinate your kids and give them a worldview that you don't even recognize
- And college, will they get into a good school? How will we pay for it?
- Then comes marriage - what if they marry someone from a family more messed than ours? I mean you don't have it all together, but have you see these other parents?
- Then you grow old, and the two of them decide which nursing home to put you in.

Do we worry? You are darn right we worry..... **Happy Mother's Day**. Haha!

Well, I think we can learn a thing or two from Mary when it comes to worry.

CONTEXT: So far we have learned a couple of lessons.

- **First** - we have see Mary demonstrate remarkable faith in the Providential power of God to accomplish His purpose through the child she was expecting. When the Angel spoke of what was to come, she simply said, “May it be according to your word”. If God said it - I believe it. Simple faith in the power, plan, and character of God.
- **Second** - we have seen that Mary immediately rose and went with haste to her cousin Elizabeth, a godly friend who could relate to what she was experiencing. Elizabeth encouraged and built her faith.
- **Today** - we see one of the great secrets to dealing with worry - worship.

Today's text are referred to as, “**The Magnificat**” Mary's song of praise. At first glance it seems to be a spontaneous expression of worship, and it is, but a closer look reveals more than meets the eye.

TEXT: Luke 1:46–56 (ESV)

⁴⁶ And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

Notice Mary's attitude - she is rejoicing!

I did a quick search to see how art had depicted Mary over the years. Here is what I found.



From my reading on the text - I think she may have been something more like this:



What caused Mary to rejoice? What turned her worry into worship?

1. Mary Saturated her Worry with Scripture

A close study of Mary's song shows that it very closely based on that of Hannah in the book of 1 Samuel.

You see, Hannah in the OT had been through something similar to Mary. Both ladies were carrying a son who would serve God in a very unique way.

- Hannah would give birth to the Prophet Samuel, who would eventually be the chief prophet for God's covenant people. Samuel would anoint Israel's first Kings, Saul and David.
- Hannah would also have a miraculous conception - we are told that the Lord had closed her womb.
- Hannah was also a willing servant of God she prays in **1 Samuel 1:11 (ESV)** 1...“O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life...”
- Hannah also received supernatural Revelation - The Priest Eli said to her, **1 Samuel 1:17 (ESV)** 17 ...“Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him.”
- Hannah also wrote a song of praise. As a matter of fact, it was nearly identical to that of Mary in our text today. **[BRING UP COMPARISON SLIDE]**

What does that show us? It shows us that when Mary encounter this circumstance that shook her soul. She did what every good Christian Woman or Man should do - she opened her Bible.

Likely, Mary had learned Hannah's song, years earlier in Torah school. Most likely had committed it to memory.

So when she searched the annals of her mind for an answer - the answer was there.

When you find yourself tempted with WORRY and ANXIETY here are couple things that you should learn to do:

a. Ask, “Where does the Bible speak to this issue”

This is where mature godly friends can be super helpful. It may surprise you how much God's word has to say about exactly what you are going through.

That's one of the reasons we encourage people to read the Bible through completely. Get a good study bible that can guide your journey. Take the time to read the introduction at the beginning of each book of scripture to acquaint yourself with the context and interpretive clues.

Song of Hannah 1 Samuel 2:1-10	Song of Mary/the Magnificat Luke 1:46-55
1 Sam 2:1-2 And Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the LORD; My horn is exalted in the LORD. I smile at my enemies, Because I rejoice in Your salvation."	Luke 1:46-47 And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior,
1 Sam 2:2 "No one is holy like the LORD; For there is none besides You, Nor is there any look like our God."	Luke 1:48 For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.
1 Sam 2:3 "Talk no more so very proudly, Let no arrogance come from your mouth, For the LORD is the God of knowledge; And by His actions are weighed."	Luke 1:51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
1 Sam 2:4 "The bows of the mighty men are broken, And those who stumbled are girded with strength."	Luke 1:52 He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly.
1 Sam 2:5a Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, And the hungry have ceased to hunger...	Luke 1:53a He has filled the hungry with good things.
1 Sam 2:5b He will guard the feet of His saints...	Luke 1:53b And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation.
1 Sam 2:5b-10a But the wicked shall be silent in darkness; "For by strength no man shall prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken in pieces; From heaven He will thunder against them; The LORD will judge the ends of the earth..."	Luke 1:52a, 52b He has put down the mighty from their thrones...And the rich He has sent away empty.
1 Sam 2:10b ... The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; He will give strength to His king; And exalt the horn of His anointed."	Luke 1:54-55 He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever."

ILLUSTRATION: Don't be like the guy who would follow the dart method of bible reading. He opened the Bible, slammed his finger down, superstitiously looking for the answer. One day he was troubled, opened his bible, pointed to the verse that said, "Judas went and hung himself". He thought, "that can't be right, let's try again". He reopened and blindly pointed to a verse that said, "Thou go and do likewise".

That is not how the Bible is written and it is a bit insulting to God to read it that way. It's not a magic 8 ball, it's not a fortune cookie. It's meant to be read intelligently, faithfully, and prayerfully.

Paul said it this way **2 Timothy 2:15–16 (ESV)**

¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the WORD OF GOD...

b. Meditate on Truth

Like so many words, "meditation" has been hijacked and redefined by the Prince of this World. It's a bible word. We find it in **Joshua 1:8 (ESV)**

⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

That's the only place in the Bible that success is guaranteed and it's directly connected to meditating on truth.

The word 'meditate' means 'to murmur' or 'to mutter'. It means 'speaking to one's self in a low voice'. Meditation is to the soul what "digestion" is to the body. It means understanding the Word, "chewing on it," and applying it to our lives, making it a part of the inner person.²

ILLUSTRATION: My Pastor used to compare it to a cow chewing it's cud. A Cow's digestion is very different from our's. It is much more dependent on chewing. Early in the morning the cow grazes on the dew covered grass. But then later in the day, it regurgitates a portion and chews more drawing out healthy nutrients. This process continues through out the day until the food is properly digested.

That's very similar to what we are to do when we meditate on truth. You get up in the morning and spend time in God's word. Then when you have a moment, your bring it up in your mind. You think on it. You draw out more of the meaning. You do this all throughout the day. Perhaps you place triggers around your home to remind you to mediate. Post it notes on your desk, dry erase notes on your mirror.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), Ps 1:1–3.

If you practice this regularly, I promise you - the day will come when something that used to worry you and keep you awake at night will be robbed of its power.

The similarities between Hannah's song and Mary's song prove that she had done this.

NOW - How many of you committed Mary's song to memory this week? No wonder your are worried. God's word doesn't return void, obviously mine does. :)

Mary saturated her worry with scripture

2. Mary Trusted God's Good Providence

⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done **great things** for me, and holy is his name.

There was much that Mary didn't know.

- She didn't know that her home town would reject her Son.
- She didn't know that the religious authorities would call Him the Lord of the Flies - Beelzebub. Which meant the Lord of Dung.
- She didn't know that she would gaze at her Son as He was nailed to a Roman Cross.

But she did know that - Romans 8:28

²⁸ ..God is able to cause all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Mary believed that God is good even when people are not. She recognized that whatever was happening in all of this... what other's meant for evil, God meant for good. Why? **Because He IS GOOD.**

Think of it - what if God were not Good? What if he were like the pagan myths who acted like humans filled with hate, lust, and greed? What if God were like Loki of Norse mythology who loved to bait and trick people and watch them suffer.

No, the God we serve is a good God. You can be assured that whatever your are going through - HE MEANS IT FOR GOOD.

You say well that's true for Mary, but what about me?

⁵⁰ And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

NOW - let me be clear. The kindness and mercy of God is NOT universal. Mary makes that clear in verse 51 -

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; **he has scattered the proud** in the thoughts of their hearts; ⁵² he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;

IF you are proud, if you don't recognize your need for God. You should worry.

Humility is a prerequisite to mercy. Christ died for SINNERS... not those who refuse to acknowledge their sin.

ILLUSTRATION: I've learned that embracing your shortcomings is a type of divine JUDO. When Satan tells you how weak you are, when he tells you how sinful you are, when he tells you how messed up you are... stop arguing with him. Own it! Say, yes you old Devil, I am quiet a sinner, but Christ is quiet a friend of sinners.

ILLUSTRATION: One of my favorite stories in the Bible is in **2 Samuel 16:5–12 (ESV)**

King David visits a city called Bahurim. One of Saul's descendants comes out and begins to throw stones at him and curse him. One of David's mighty men said, "King, why don't you let me cut his head off and put a stop to all this". David said, "¹¹ ...Leave him alone, and let him curse,.. It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today."

David knew that humility was always a good place to be. If his enemy wanted to humble him, let him do it. In the end it would only strengthen David's position.

God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Humility is like a beautiful perfume that attracts the presence of God. Allow worry to humble you and allow God to rescue you.

3. Mary Saw Herself in a Story Much Bigger than Her

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

She saw what happen to her, wasn't just for her. Notice she says, "He has helped Israel".

When God gives blessings TO YOU, His intention is ALWAYS to bless others THROUGH YOU.

Imagine if Mary had said, "Yes! This is all about ME!". NOoooo... she said, this is about all of Abraham's offspring... which we learn later, includes you by faith.

Do you remember that when you are blessed?

- When the spotlight is on you, do you reflect it onto others?
- When your plate is full, do you look for those whose plate is empty?

If you do - God will know that He can trust you to be His conduit to bless others.

If you don't one of two things will happen.

1. The Flow of Blessing will Stop
2. The Blessing will become a Curse

Malachi 2:2 (ESV)

² If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the Lord of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings.

Never let it end with you - pass it forward.

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

I love that Luke tossed in that verse. We all live on the Florida coast, people visit. But there are some guests that just stay a little too long. Which of these two would you want to move in for three months?



If you don't want a bad attitude weighed down with worry for 3 months... why would you let it be in your soul for an entire life? Don't give it one more day... Turn your worry into worship.