



Week 1: Mary's Song

The guide follows the usual format: three questions followed by prayer. There are additional questions at the end in italics to further help guide discussion.

Read Luke 1 and focus your attention especially on Luke 1:46-55.

What does the text say? In this section we are seeking to make as many observations as we can. I encourage you to mark up the text above you (underline, circle, draw lines connecting verses/words, write short comments, etc).

- Summarize the context...what was said in the preceding verses? How does this fit within Paul's thought process?
- What are key words/phrases in the passage?
 - What are the repeated words/phrases? Why are they significant?
 - What are important connecting words and how do they help us understand Paul's point?
 - What themes or ideas are being emphasized?
 - What does this passage say about God? Man? Sin?
 - What questions do you have?

What does the text mean?

- Describe Paul's main point in a sentence or couple sentences. What is the big/main idea?
- What are some of the subpoints? Summarize Paul's thought process and some of his supporting points.
- What other passages could be helpful in understanding this text better?

How do I/we apply this passage?

- What are we to think/feel/do?
- What sins does this passage expose in you/us?

Pray

- What is there to praise God for from this passage?
- What sin(s) is there to confess?
- What is there to ask God for?

Here are a few additional questions for Mary's Song:

- *What themes is Luke emphasizing in chapter 1?*
- *Why does Mary go see Elizabeth?*
- *How does Mary describe God in her song? What do those words and descriptions mean?*
- *What causes Mary to sing? Especially notice the word "for" in verse 48.*
- *How does Mary contrast herself with God?*
- *Evaluate the statement: "Mary does not believe this is an isolated incident. In other words, God's way of dealing with her is in keeping with how God has acted throughout history." Is that statement true? Why or why not?*
- *How does the Bible teach that God gives grace to the humble and opposes the proud?*
- *If God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble, why do so many humble people still suffer and many proud people enjoy easy lives? Do these verses teach prosperity for the humble and calamity for the proud? One of the keys to answering this question lies in understanding how our timing differs from God's (God views things from an eternal perspective. It is true in the end that God will exalt the humble and bring down the proud).*
- *Why does Mary mention the promise to Abraham in verses 54-55?*
- *Luke's Gospel has a special concern to call attention to God's concern for the poor. How do we see that here?*
- *Are you amazed that God would be mindful of you? Why? How do you struggle to be amazed?*
- *How does this passage and the Christmas season encourage us to be humble? How do you need to grow in humility and how can this Christmas season help you?*