

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"MARY THE MAGNIFICENT MOTHER OF THE MESSIAH" | LUKE 1: 26-56 | PASTOR BRIAN

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What would be the best way to receive life-changing news?

"Mary and Gabriel" (Luke 1: 26-38)

God chose a young, uneducated poor girl to birth and raise His son. What does that say about God and His character?

"Mary and Elizabeth" (Luke 1: 39-45)

Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth who is also experiencing a miraculous pregnancy. What kind of impacts happen when believers are able to see and share what God is doing in their lives?

"Mary and the Lord" (Luke 1: 46-56)

Mary chooses to worship God, creating a song about Him. How can people today take time and energy to praise God?

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Mary writes a song about who God is and what He has done for her, her family, her community and the world. Have you recently taken time to specifically praise God for who He is and what He has done, listing specifically His characteristics and blessings that have impressed you? Take Mary's example as a challenge to make space to do that and pray God meets you as you honor Him.

Mary the Magnificent Mother of the Messiah

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-7 Lar: Starting Pnt. R&R. REAL. C@R. MLK. Men's.
- B. Slide8 JM11: Our 2 speakers are: John Cotton Richmond, former US Ambassador, attorney, diplomat, and co-founder of the Human Trafficking Institute and Bella Hounakey, survivor consultant at iMPACT Virginia. *It is an incredibly rare opportunity to hear from them and learn more about the issue and what we can do as a Church to make an impact.* There will also be **workshops** you can attend during the other services to learn more, and a **BBQ** for the entire family.

II. Slide9a Intro: *Mary the Magnificent Mother of the Messiah*

- A. My goal with this “Christmas section” is strip the *Christmas* out of it. What I mean is, *strip away the decoupage/lacquer from our Nativity Set*. Shift our thinking of *the Holy Family*, to a regular Joe (lit.) Slide9b & little Mary from down the street, *who fell in love, was engaged, & planning a wedding, and then ... it all happened.*
- B. **Who** better to ask and find out about *a virgin birth* than Dr. Luke MD to ask the hard questions. Most likely interviewed Mary himself.
- C. **Mary** the most significant woman in the world. *Mary the Magnificent Mother of the Messiah.*

III. Slide10a **MARY AND GABRIEL (26-38)** *Read 26-38*

- A. Joseph's story is told in Mt.1, this is **Mary's** story here.
- B. (27) Mary was probably between 12 and 14 years old. In that day she could be betrothed at 12, and married by 13. Funny, we don't trust a 7th grader with a *drivers license*. How about with *caring for God*?
 1. Slide10b Mary wasn't sitting on a throne with embroidered clothes, gold halo, and a son with *perfect hair* ... like this picture.

2. Let's picture *a peasant girl, either in sandals or bare dirty feet, most likely illiterate, from a small town, and definitely poor.*

C. **Slide11a** (31) Mary is first mentioned in Gen.3:15 (God's punishment to the serpent in the garden) *I will put enmity between you* (satan) *and the woman* (Israel/Mary), *and between your seed/offspring* (satan) *and her offspring* (Jesus); *he* (Jesus) *shall bruise your head* (satan. i.e. Rm.16:20 *the God of Peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly*). Under *our feet* emphasizes our participation in His victory over Satan & his minions), *and you* (satan) *shall bruise his heel* (Jesus, on the cross).

1. This is God's 1st announcement of the coming of the Savior. It is called the *Proto-evangelium*, Latin for *the 1st Gospel*.

2. **The OT** is the record of *the 2 seeds/offspring in conflict*. **The NT** is the record of the *birth* of Christ *and* His *victory* over Satan, *thru the cross*.¹

3. *Her seed/offspring* - *her* (not thru Joseph); *seed* (informing us the Savior would be a **human being** *not an angel*).

D.(34) This vs answers the important age old question, *Mary did you know? well she didn't know this? How will this be since I'm a virgin? :*)

E. **Slide11b** (37) *For nothing will be impossible with God* -

1. God can take an elderly woman like **Elizabeth** and open her womb. God can take a virgin like **Mary** and give her a son. God can **take on human flesh** and enter into human history as the man Jesus Christ. God can **raise** from death. God can **raise us** from death. God can **forgive our sins** through the cross of Jesus. God can **hear an answer** prayer. God can **take enemies** and make them **friends**. CM **Nothing is impossible with God**.

F. **Slide11c** (38) *Let it be to me* - greatest response to *God's bidding*.

1. Here is *a simple woman, from a simple town, with a simple faith!* **BUT** it's a *sincere and simple faith*.

¹ Warren Wiersbe

2. If she's illiterate, *as most all young girls in little towns were in that day*, **then** she only has *bits and pieces of Scripture* in her heart. **But she has faith**. She **believes** *what God says!* (...according to Your word)
- You and I have *far more* information than her, **and far less** faith in it.
 - Some think, *I need to learn so much more* (maybe), **but first things first**, **believe** what you've already been taught.

G. *God, I'll let go of Joseph, I'll let go of my reputation, I'll let go of my plans.*

- When Jesus in **the garden of Gethsemane** when He was asked to atone for the sins of the world, He said, *not my will but your will be done*. **Can I say, He sounds just like His mom, let it be to me according to your word.**
 - Some make way too much of Mary and others make way too little of Mary.*
 - She is not an **object** of faith **but** should be an **example** of faith!

IV. Slide12 **MARY AND ELIZABETH (39-45)** *Read 39-45*

A. Running commentary.

V. Slide13a **MARY AND THE LORD (46-56)** *Read 46-56*

A. Slide13b Replace *Worrying* with **Worshiping**

B. Mary is in a season of her life where she has a lot that she *could be* worrying about. **And rather** than **worrying**, we find her **worshiping**.

- Now, it's okay to be *concerned about* your life, and to *make plans for* your future. **But** Jesus says *do not worry*. Take all of that *worry energy* and put it toward *worship energy!* Mary does. *And Mary said/sang ...*
- And Mary lists *17 attributes of God* in one song. This is a young woman singing out of her heart, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

C. Slide14a **17 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD:**

- GOD IS LORD** My soul magnifies **the Lord**.
 - That means *her God is in charge and I trust him*.
 - This is where theology becomes biography that it might culminate in doxology.* [who God is changes *who we are*, **and** it culminates in *how we live*]

- c) Worship is what we were made to do. **Worship starts with God.**
- d) Mary is saying is, even though **my life is uncertain:** *my health, my reputation, my marriage, my family, my future, my poverty, & my pregnancy;* **but my soul is certain** *I just want God to be honored, magnified, lifted up.* **And my spirit is certain** *it just wants to rejoice in God as my Savior.*

2. 14b GOD IS SAVIOR **And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

- a) Some would tell you that Mary was *sinless*; she wasn't. She in fact notes that she herself needs **a Savior**. We're all sinners, like Mary, we all need **a Savior/Rescuer/Deliverer/Hero**.

(1) **Scripture is God's story of human history, and His involvement in it on a rescue mission as the Hero.** He's the Savior. **And** ultimately, her Savior will be **her Son**.

3. 14c GOD IS OMNISCIENT *all knowing* **For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.**

- a) **My God knows everything.** My God knows that I'm **young**. My God knows that I'm **poor**. My God knows that I'm **pregnant**. My God knows that I don't have a lot of **resources** at my disposal. My God knows that my **reputation** is going to be destroyed. My God knows that my life is going to be **difficult** and **complicated**. **My God knows!**
- b) This is where your view of God is so incredibly important. Our God is personal. *He's alive. He's living. He's personal. He thinks, He feels, He speaks, He loves, He knows.* God knows **every hair** on your head, God knows every **longing** of your heart, He knows **every day** of your life. *God knows it all, and He pays attention to it all.*
- c) **What are you distressed about right now? Have you worshiped about it?** Some say, *I don't feel like worshiping.* *Well worship your way into worship.* Sing until you feel it. Mary worshiped.

4. 14d GOD IS RESPECTFUL **from now on all generations will call me blessed.**

a) **It doesn't start that way does it?** For the next 30 years she's going to be called possibly *a whore, tramp, an adulteress*. **But she has the long view of things.** She doesn't hold up her *reputation* as an idol. She lets it go. She says, *"I will be recognized as a blessed woman, I just need to patiently wait."* God here is giving her her dignity. **Our God is respectful.**

5. **14e GOD IS MIGHTY He who is mighty**

a) **Do you believe that God is powerful?** This doesn't mean that everything goes perfect **and** it's always easy **and** you'll be #winner every single time, **so** just think *happy thoughts*. **But** it does mean that **no-one** and **no-thing** can thwart God. **Satan, demons, sin, circumstance can't ultimately thwart God.** He is powerfully **mighty**.

6. **14f GOD IS PERSONAL He has done great things for me.**

a) **For Me.** Is that true? Ask yourself, **What** are the evidences of God's grace that I have recently seen in my life? **Where** have I seen evidences of God's grace?

b) If you're struggling right now with *despair and discouragement*, maybe even *depression* ... **remember**, What has he **forgiven** you of? What is he **teaching** you? How is he **changing** you? Who has he **put** in front of you? What **circumstances** has he saved you from? What **opportunities** is He calling you to?

7. **15a GOD IS HOLY Holy is his name.**

a) God is not good and evil. He is **good**. **He doesn't do evil, He only does good.**

b) Often we ask ourselves *as believers*, **Is God punishing me?** Now, when we sin there are consequences. *If you eat too much, drink too much, and spend too much, you'll be **unhealthy and broke**.* You reap what you sow. But that's **not** God punishing you, that's just *consequence of folly*. **But no**, God doesn't punish you. **God loves you.** He does great things for you. **Holy, all together good, that's who He is!**

8. **15b GOD IS MERCIFUL God is merciful.** *Connect these 2 concepts ...*

a) *God is **merciful**, He withholds from us what we deserve as sinners. He then replaces it with **grace**, giving us good things we don't deserve.*

9. **15c GOD IS WORTHY God is the one to be feared, revered.**

- a) We become like that which we worship. If you worship God, *who is merciful and compassionate and loving and kind and generous*, you become more like Him. **And** vice-versa if you *put anything else in your life, in that position*, you become like that which you worship, **and** it gets *worse* every day.

10. **15d GOD IS POWERFUL** He has shown strength with his arm.

- a) He's got a *strong arm* (metaphorically speaking). Think of *a soldier, a warrior, a fighter*.
- b) You think of someone reaching down into history and grabbing people and saving them, and defending them, and protecting them, and securing them, **and** embracing them, and cherishing them. What she says is, *My God is powerful*.

11. **15e GOD IS SOVEREIGN** He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones.

- a) Those are big words from a teenage girl in a rural town. She lived under the throne of Caesar, **but** what she says is, *Caesar's not Lord, God is*. He may have a cute little throne, **but** above that ... there's a much bigger throne.
- b) **My king** rules over *all kings*, and **his kingdom** is over *all kingdoms*. If they're proud, **He takes them down**. **And** if they reign as bullies, thugs, and abusers, God strikes them down with the strength of His hand. *He defends the widow, the weak, the poor, & oppressed*.
- c) **Mary's confidence is not in Mary**. Mary's confidence is in Mary's **God**.

12. **15f GOD IS GRACIOUS** He has exalted those of humble estate

- a) What she's talking about here is *those who have been humbled or humiliated*, one day will be exalted. **Before Mary is a life of humiliation**.
- b) Think of when you have you been humiliated. *Parents said horrible things to you? Your father walked out on you? You been cheated on? You been lied to? You been betrayed? You had people say things behind your back, true or untrue. molested? raped? abused?*
- (1) She says, *My God is gracious. He takes those of us who have been destroyed/broken/dismantled/shattered and he gives us dignity*.

- c) God **exalts** those who have been **humiliated**. He uses their life and their story of His redemption as *hope to others* who have been *humiliated*.
- d) Mary doesn't know what will happen, but **she does know who God is, and that changes everything**.

13. **16a GOD IS GENEROUS He has filled the hungry with good things.**

- a) Here's a God who **gives**, doesn't **take**, He's very generous. **Have you ever been hungry?** Mary was poor. She knew what it was like to be hungry, where *if the crops don't grow, you don't eat*.

(1) **Individually and corporately**, let's make decisions to be **good stewards** of the wealth that God has entrusted to us.

14. **16b GOD IS JUST The rich He has sent away empty.**

- a) The rich, meaning *the greedy rich*. Those who **use** people **and love** money, **instead of loving** people **and using** money.
- b) **You either worship your wealth or you worship with your wealth**.
- c) He ultimately *takes it away from them, redistributes*, **and** ultimately **in his kingdom, the hungry will be fed. The poor will be housed. The needy will be cared for. The marginalized will be protected.** **And** that **kingdom ethic** is supposed to be lived out among God's people, to be generous providers, defending women and children, the weak, the oppressed, the widowed, the marginalized, **and** the orphaned.

15. **16c GOD IS HUMBLE He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy.**

- a) He's humble. He's willing to get involved in *your life and your mess and your stuff and your needs* and **help you**. **See**, Mary looks at her life, she has 2 options. **Anxiety: What will happen in the future?** **or History: What has God done?** (i.e. with Hannah, Abraham)

16. **16d GOD IS FAITHFUL He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.**

a) He is totally faithful. *If He says one thing, He's going to do that thing.* He is a faithful God.

17.16e GOD IS ETERNAL Forever.

a) Our God is good forever.

b) *So, our God is what? Lord, Savior, all knowing, respectful, mighty, personal, holy, merciful, worthy, powerful, sovereign, gracious, generous, just, humble and faithful - forever.* Forever. Mary says, *That's my God!*

D. **Pray:** May we **sing** out of our **heart**, like Mary did. May we **sing** because Jesus is our Savior. May we **sing** because we are forgiven ...

E. Keywords: angel, believe, faith, fear, forgiveness, glory, God, gospel, grace, history, Holy Spirit, hope, Jesus, Joy, Life, love, mercy, protection, remembrance, salvation, soul, worship.