

THIS IS JESUS

UNIT 1: THE MESSIAH NAMED JESUS PART 1: JESUS THE MESSIAH

Lesson 3: A Mother's Song

Devotion 1

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
(Psalm 139:13-15)

Mary was an ordinary teenager, yet God chose her to accomplish great things. Today, God still uses ordinary people who are willing to trust Him with their lives to accomplish great things.

Read Psalm 139:13-15.

This passage reminds us that God created, designed, and crafted each of us especially for what He wants us to do. In fact, you were created with the purpose of knowing God and being His image-bearer in the world. The things that we chase in this world that we call our purpose will always pale in comparison to this one true calling in our lives.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:

- How does it make you feel to know that God created you to know Him and make Him known?
- Choose a personal way to express praise to God today. If you only have a few minutes now, set a reminder on your phone to do this later. Be intentional with your praise.

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And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. (Luke 1:28-29)

Have you ever been called to the principal's office? It doesn't matter how well you remember the day; you probably start running back through each minute, trying to figure out what you did wrong and when. If you can't recall anything bad that you've done, you might move on to thoughts of something bad happening outside of the school walls. Should you be prepared for bad news? How bad is the news? Should you grab your backpack and be ready to leave??

Read Luke 1:28-29.

When an angel appeared to Mary, she seemed to have those same thoughts. Was she in trouble? What did she do to get herself visited by an angel?!

But as she would quickly find out, this moment held good importance, not bad. Sometimes when we are called to the principal's office, it's to receive some good news, like winning an award, getting recognition for our great attendance, or even a parent dropping off our lunch that we forgot.

This week, we are talking about how the arrival of Jesus was a long-awaited gift. In a world that often delivers bad news, it is important to celebrate Good News like this! Not only was the angel's message good news for Mary (yay for not being in trouble!), but it was the arrival of a gift meant for all of us!

What does the gift of Jesus mean to you?

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Devotion 3

And she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:42-43)

It's nearly impossible to talk about the birth of Jesus without thinking about Christmas. Especially when we look at moments in Scripture where others are reacting to the arrival of the greatest gift of all time.

Read Luke 1:42-43.

Think about Christmas time for a moment. If you could find the perfect gift for your best friend, how do you think they would react when they opened it? With that image in your head, imagine that you are walking into their home, gift wrapped in hand, and before you even hand them the box, they scream, "I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GOT ME THIS! I'm so lucky!!"

That was sort of the experience Mary and Elizabeth had in today's passage! Before Mary could even tell Elizabeth the Good News of Jesus, Elizabeth was let in on the secret by the Holy Spirit. The baby she was carrying (John the Baptist) did a little happy somersault in her womb when she encountered this incredible gift. And how does Elizabeth respond? She essentially says, "How am I so lucky that the young woman carrying our Lord would visit me with this Good News?"

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:

- Spend a few moments with God today and tell Him how you feel about His wonderful gift. Ask God to fill you with the same joy that Elizabeth experienced when she understood what a gift God had given her!

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And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." (Luke 1:46-47)

Did you realize that the Bible is full of worship songs? You may have heard that the book of Psalms is kind of like a holy song book... but there are several other moments in Scripture where God's people are so overcome with praise for Him that they compose incredible songs.

Read Luke 1:46-55 (below).

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:

- How does Mary's song of praise for the Lord help you understand Him better? What thoughts does it give you?
- If you could write your own version of this song, how would it go? Write it out today!

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She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (Matthew 1:21-23)

Responding to the gift of Jesus can look different for everyone. Today, we will be reading about the response that Joseph, Mary's fiancé, had to the news of this awesome gift.

Read Matthew 1:18-25, paying special attention to Matthew 1:21-23.

In many similar situations, a man who was engaged to be married would hear that his betrothed is pregnant by curious means would cause a big scene. It would have been normal for Joseph to feel betrayed or angry that his engagement to Mary would be the source of town gossip. However, instead of having Mary stoned to death (a public punishment that would have been typical in this time period for those deemed unfaithful), Joseph decided to quietly end the engagement and let her go about her way. That is, until God spoke to Joseph through a dream.

Even 'good' people can have their lives radically changed by Jesus. Joseph was prepared to handle a tough situation with grace and compassion. Which sounds good! Shout out to Joseph for being kind. But God calls us to more than a life of kindness. In the dream, Joseph was told that the gift of Jesus (the baby in Mary's womb) was more than a miracle. This baby was Immanuel, the one promised hundreds of years prior. If Joseph wanted to follow God, he needed to display more than goodness... he needed to practice humility.

Re-read Matthew 1:24-25.

Spend some time reflecting on your own life. Are there areas where you are simply 'doing the right thing' rather than humbling yourself fully before God? How can you take that next step today?