

Getting to Know Jesus Part 4 From Eve to Mary, the Mother of Jesus

I pray everyone had a great Thanksgiving. A great time of being thankful for the blessings you have received, a great time with family and friends and a great time of eating too much. I know Michal and I spent some extra time Thanksgiving morning giving God our thanks for all He has done over the past several years.

Thanksgiving is a wonderful time when we can connect with family that we rarely see. Up unto just a few years ago I did go back to my grandmother's house where aunts, uncles, first, second and third cousins would gather. We had up to 45 family members gather at times. Since the death of my mother and her brother and since my grandmother is going to celebrate her 101st birthday, we don't get together as much as we once did.

But it is great to connect isn't? There is just something special about connecting with those who are your blood. Those who have common grandparents or great grandparents.

If you were here a couple weeks ago I shared this passage from Genesis with you. **Genesis 3:14-15, "The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle and more than every beast of the field. On your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life; and I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head and you shall bruise him on the heel.'" (Not on outline but put on screen)**

We identified that it was

Jesus was the one who was the seed of the woman (Eve), the one who was going to bring about the bruising of the serpent who we know to Satan.

Jesus came in the flesh as the seed through Eve and all the way to Mary and it is Mary that I wanted us to focus on this morning.

I wanted us now, in this season, to focus on Mary for a moment. Mary, the mother of Jesus gives us quite an example of strength, courage and faith in the face of opposition and traumatic events.

Before we do I wanted to ask this question.

Have you ever been in a situation or event in your life that you weren't sure how it was going to turn out? I am sure most of you have. We have all faced things in our lives that are incredibly hard, hard emotionally, maybe hard physically or even hard spiritually.

The question we want to ask ourselves this morning is, as you look back upon that event how did you handle it? How did you handle it?

As we look at the little bit of information we have about Mary, the mother of Jesus, maybe we can gain some insight from the things that were occurring in her life and how she handled them.

Let's begin this morning with our text found in **Luke 1:26-35, 37-38**,
“²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,
²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And coming in, he said to her, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹ But she was very perplexed at *this* statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was.
³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.”
(NASB)

Let’s consider for a moment the implications of the message from Gabriel and Mary’s response.

First of all, to have an angel come and greet Mary was in her own words very perplexing, confusing and even difficult for her to wrap her mind around. How many of us could handle the presence of an angel? But even though Mary was perplexed and thinking about the appearance of angel and his greeting it was nothing compared to what he was about to say next.

Look back with me at verses 30-33. They are the ones not in bold in this passage. **³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”**

What a shock this must have been to a young girl who was only possibly 14-16 years of age. Even though we are told in Matthew that Mary was already engaged to Joseph, which in that culture and that age was common for a girl of a young age to have her marriage arranged for her, how strange it must have been to hear from Gabriel that she was going to conceive even though she had not had any relations with Joseph.

Naturally she asked the question in verse 34, “**how can this be, since I am a virgin.**”³⁵ **The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.**”³⁷ **For nothing will be impossible with God.”**

PIC of Mary

Again, what a shock this must have been to Mary. Trying to make sense of this incredible thing this angel was telling her. The Holy Spirit of God, whom we can assume she had heard about from the teachings in the temple, was going to come upon her and she would conceive a child.

A couple of things I think we can take from this.

As we think about Mary we also know God choose her. In his greeting to Mary the angel Gabriel said “Greetings favored one!

Mary wasn’t some random good woman God choose. Even though she was young, possibly poor and unsuitable in the world’s eyes to be used by God in this way, God saw in her a quality of trust and obedience in Him. But still God affirmed her with these words.

Vs 28, 30, “The Lord is with you.” Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.”

I think this is the statement that gave Mary the most strength.

- 1. The angel affirmed God’s plan with Mary by telling her God was with her and that she had found favor with Him**

What are some of the other ways God strengthened Mary? Let’s read a bit of the story of Jesus’ birth.

Matthew 2:18-20, “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.’”

To let Joseph in on what was going on God sent an angel to tell him of His plan through Mary. Joseph then accepted this plan and supported Mary.

Beyond the angel of the Lord affirming her, one of the first things God did to continue to strengthen Mary is He shared it with her husband Joseph who then supported Mary.

2. God affirmed His plan to Mary through Joseph

God then used one of her relatives to affirm Mary. Look with me.

Luke 1:39-42, “Now at this time Mary arose...and entered the house...and greeted Elizabeth. (her relative and the mother of John the Baptist) When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. And she cried out with a loud voice and said, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!’”

Before Mary could speak a word about what was going on it was obvious that Elizabeth knew what had happened.

So...

3. God affirmed His plan to Mary through her relative Elizabeth

Look at this next passage.

Luke 2:16-17, 19, “So they (the shepherds) came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in a manger. When they had seen this, they made known the statement which they had been told them about this Child...Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.”

You know the story in Luke. The shepherds were guarding their flocks by night when an angel came and shared the good news and then a multitude of angels appeared in the sky singing and giving glory to God.

4. God affirmed His plan to Mary through the shepherds

In this next passage, a few days had passed since the birth of Jesus and Mary and Joseph took little Jesus to the temple to be presented and dedicated and give an offering of thanksgiving. There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon and he had been told by the Spirit of God that he would not die until he seen the savior of the world.

Luke 2:27-29, 33, “And he (Simeon) came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus...he took Him into his arms and blessed God, and said, ‘Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace according to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation.’ And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him.”

Here we see that...

5. God affirmed His plan to Mary through a Spirit-filled man in the temple of God

Look with me now at this past passage.

Luke 2:13, “After coming to the house they (three kings from the east) saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures they presented Him gift of gold, frankincense and myrrh.”

6. God affirmed His plan to Mary by bringing 3 Kings to worship Jesus and to give Him gifts

These are just a few of the many ways God affirmed and strengthened Mary as she was on her journey with God.

Now I wanted to say this morning that you and I will not be given such an honorable task as birthing and raising Jesus in the flesh. But we are given honorable task of possessing the Spirit of Jesus in our hearts and showing Him to the world and because of this we can expect the similar affirmations and touches from God.

First of all for all of us who have come into a relationship with God through Jesus we can expect that...

a. God will share His plan for your life

As He does this I believe He will affirm you by telling you that you have found favor with Him because of His Son Jesus. He will share with you that He is with you so you do not need to be afraid for all things are possible with God.

Not everything you will go through in this journey will be easy but as we lean upon God, as we look for God we will be given the strength to not only endure but to flourish.

b. God will affirm His plan for your life through family and those around you

c. God will affirm His plan for you through strangers

d. God will affirm His plan for you through Spirit-filled people in the church

I believe that as you walk along with God He will put people into your life to bless you and to give you the strength and comfort you need to go on.

e. God will affirm His plan for you by bringing untold blessings into your life

And I also believe that God will bring people and blessings into your life that will surprise you and knock your socks off.

I firmly believe these will be true in your life but there is a catch. When the angel had delivered the message to Mary look at what her response was.

Luke 1:38, “And Mary said, ‘Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.’”

Mary saw what the plan of God was out in front of her and she accepted it. Was it going to be easy? Not at all. But she had heard these words and believed them. The Lord is with you and nothing is impossible with God.

Likewise, I know when you continue your journey through this thing called life you will encounter things that will be hard. The challenge will be to quietly accept them and then look to God and look for God as He brings those things and people into your life that will give you the strength you will need.

The Lord is with you and nothing is impossible with God.

Let's Pray