

May 10, 2020 -

Luke 1:26-38-

“Mary, the Mother of Jesus”

Introduction:

Today is Mother's Day and it is a good Sunday to finally get back to church. In 1914 President Woodrow Wilson issues a presidential proclamation that officially established the first national Mother's Day to celebrate America's mothers. Today it is especially a day to celebrate American mothers. Everyone's lives have been affected by the coronavirus in some way or another but it is moms who have been unexpectedly challenged. Many moms have started homeschooling their kids or been forced to adapt to working from home while managing the household and doing the shopping. Others have lost their jobs while some moms are working overtime—especially those on the front lines like doctors, nurses, technicians, hospital workers and in our supermarkets. For all the Moms out there who have bravely taken on the challenge of being teacher, counselor and caregivers, God bless you. “Happy Mother's Day” and I hope that your day is very special.

Did you know that Mother's Day ranks fourth as the most celebrated holiday in dollars behind Christmas, Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day? In fact, over 145 million cards are sent, \$14.9 billion is spent on gifts and dinners, and 69% of those gifts are flowers. I regret that our Moms won't be able to sit down at a restaurant for a wonderful meal this year. I am sure the husbands or kids will take to the stove. While we certainly want to honor Moms and elevate motherhood today, I recognize that this is also a very tough day for some of you. You do not have your Mom with you and you cannot hug her and visit with her especially if she is elderly, this covid-19 has robbed us for now of this intimacy.

Maybe your Mom is home with the Lord, like my Mom and you miss her very much. Others may have had a mother who did not know how to love or care for them. Don't dread Mother's Day for those reasons. Instead of focusing on your situation think of Mother's Day as a time to reflect on, serve, and honor motherhood. Stop concentrating on your own broken dreams. We need start listening to what God has told us in scripture about the role of motherhood.

This year I chose to speak on Mary the Mother of Jesus. When I think of who in the Bible is the greatest role model for Mothers; it has to be Mary. We are living in an era of much sorrow throughout this nation and around the world. Mary was of course familiar with great sorrow she watched as her son beaten and hung upon a cross. We are living in a time where moms are encumbered with great and unexpected challenges and so was Mary in the very beginning.

I believe that God chose Mary because she exhibited a strong and godly character. God was looking for a woman to raise His Son. He chose a woman who lived in the town of Nazareth. He sent His messenger to a humble cottage, to a poor girl and chose her to be the mother of Jesus. Two times in our text Gabriel told Mary that she was highly favored by God. What was it about Mary that our heavenly Father chose her to give birth to His son? Hidden in the very few and very brief accounts of Mary the inspire writings give us a glimpse into who she was.

The message today will examine these qualities that God saw in Mary. These are the same that our heavenly father desires in mothers today.

I. Mary's Visitation (Luke 1:26-33)

1. When Mary was born the golden age of Israel's history was past. No king had ruled in Jerusalem for over 500 years. The Jews were still waiting for their Messiah that the prophets had promised throughout the pages of the Scriptures. The facts concerning Mary point to a humble, godly Jewish upbringing. Mary's centered on devotion to God and to God's Word. She exhibit one who loved and desire God's word.

2. She was from the town of Nazareth a place with a bad reputation. First century Nazareth was famous for only one thing - its sin. It was located just four miles from the Roman garrison at Sephora's. When the soldiers in the army got a few days leave and some bonus pay, they went to Nazareth where they could find cheap wine and prostitutes waiting for them.

God in the fullness of time send Gabriel to this city of Nazareth... This angel spoke to a young virgin woman; a woman who kept herself pure in a wicked society. Most marriage agreements were made when the children were fairly young. In all likelihood when Gabriel spoke to her, Mary is still very young and living with her parents and betroths or engaged to Joseph.

3. Gabriel says to her **Hail, *thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.*** In essence he said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored!" the word "favored" means agreeable to God. We see Mary's humble existence and God favored that. She was not a prideful person her focus was not on earthly & material things. Next we observe...

II Mary's Reaction (Luke 1:29-38)

1. Mary probably felt insecure, unworthy and inadequate for the great task of being the mother of God's Son, the savior of the world. I am sure that in this crisis many Moms wonder if they have want it takes to navigate their children and family through such a difficult time. We see Mary believed that with God all things are possible...

Mary could have said, "Lord, I'm just a girl. I'm not ready to be a mother. I'm not wealthy, I'm not educated. Maybe it would be better if you got someone else?" But that's not what she said. Mary said, **Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.** "I am the Lord's servant a female slave, bondmaid, may it be as you have said..." She had the right perspective!

2. Mary was willing to face the adversity and rejection even by Joseph to do God's bidding. Moms God has called you to be his hands and eyes and caring heart in a time where children may be frighten. Mary had a huge burden to bear but she did not bear it alone.

An engaged woman was considered married already. A child born during an engagement would have been considered illegitimate. This would have raised the possibility of Mary raising her child alone in a culture hostile to woman. In addition she was jeopardizing her

reputation and her life if she was accused of being unfaithful by Joseph. This had to be troubling, but she trusted in God.- **1 Corinthians 10:13**

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

3. Mary was not a wealthy woman nor was she a powerful person. She was a descendant of the great King David through David's son, Nathan. The angel tells her that she is going to have a baby who is the messiah. It was an honor beyond words and a miracle beyond reason. But would Joseph believe this? Would you believe this? I have a story that illustrates this for Mothers.

4. I can imagine Mary at that moment thinking, "What is Joseph going to say? What is going to happen to me? Mary had every reason to think this because Jewish Law said that the punishment for adultery was death. Mary believed God and her faith sustained her. God said it so she would not die. She could not see nor know the outcome and neither do we...

5. As Mary listened to the angel she must have wrestled with the consequences that would come in her life if she accepted God's call. How am I going to explain this to my family? What about the townspeople? What will they think of me? Am I headed for a life of being a single parent? Mary would probably live her whole life under a cloud of suspicion from her family and neighbors. Mary accepted with humility the challenge. What about you? --- **Titus 2:3-5**

6. When you want to know about motherhood, think about Mary, think about her faith, her submission, think about believing the impossible, think about how an incredible thing had been told and she humbly, simply believed it. Without any regard for all the implications, she rested in the purpose of God as a slave. That's the magnificence of Mary. She faced the impossible!

Are you willing to do God's will as Mary did? Within Mary's decision to be fully submissive to the call of God was her willingness, if need be, to suffer ridicule and contempt and loneliness. Mary willingly embraced what God had for her. But the decision was made with no assurance that anyone except God would ever fully understand. --- *** 1 Peter 4:12**

Conclusion:

In verses 46-56 we read that Mary sings a song of praise to God. Mary knew "the word" and she went beyond that and was one who wholeheartedly and boldly praised God. Mary's solid foundation is an example to mother's today. You can be all you need to be with God's help.

A mother who praises God and knows His word is going to make a difference in her child's life. Children do not come with an instruction manual so Moms must trust the good book. Many mothers give up their lives to give themselves sacrificially to their children. For many sons and daughters these are the things about our moms that we cherish and have some fond memories of.