

# Face to Face

with  
Mary

*First Day*

*Her Story*

*"But all of us who are Christians have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transformed in ever-increasing splendor into His own image, and this is the work of the Lord who is the Spirit." (II Corinthians 3:18 PHILLIPS)*

*"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18). What could be more incredible than the verse we have just read? It is a statement written in such simplicity, and yet relaying the most amazing message ever told. Jesus Christ, the promised Savior, born of a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit. And that young virgin is Mary, the subject of our lesson this week. We will begin by looking at what Scripture tells us about Mary. This is her story.*

Read the verses listed below and, in a few sentences, summarize the events described there:

**Luke 1:26-56**

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**Matthew 1:18-25**

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Luke 2:1-19

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Matthew 2:1-23

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What was Mary's *shame*?

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What was her *triumph*?

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What did she *learn*?

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*Second Day*

*Her Manner*

*Who is She?*

*"...Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love." (II Peter 1:5-7)*

*Mary's name means "bitterness."*

It doesn't seem right that this sweet young maiden's name would mean *bitterness*...or does it? Although we see that Mary is the favored one of God and that she is the most blessed of women, we also see her as the one whose soul would be pierced with a sword (Luke 2:35), not once but many times.

Today we will be looking at the *character* of Mary. Considering the **Luke 1** account of Mary's story, use the following words to describe her:

- *Her strength*
- *Her weakness*
- *Her humility*
- *Her yieldedness*

From Luke 1:26-27, share what you know about Mary. \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there anything in this list of facts that indicates why she was the one chosen to bear the Son of God? \_\_\_\_\_

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What truth are we given in I Samuel 16:7? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What kind of a person might we have chosen to bring the most holy Son of God into this world?
- What kind of person did God choose?

How did Mary's *character* make a difference in the way she handled her difficult situation? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you learn from Mary? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Third Day

## Her Hope

*"And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord." (Luke 1:45 NASB)*

Considering the incredible announcement made to Mary by the angel Gabriel:

What was her *need*? \_\_\_\_\_

What was her *hope*? \_\_\_\_\_

What was God's *promise*? \_\_\_\_\_

As previously stated, Elizabeth's pregnancy was a sort of forerunner to the miraculous pregnancy of Mary. Elizabeth's pregnancy was actually a sign to Mary. Mary's question in Luke 1 was, "*How can this be, since I do not know a man?*" Gabriel not only gave her an explanation, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you...*" but a sign, "*Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren,*" and then the promise:

### *Memory Verse:*

**"For with God nothing will be impossible"** (Luke 1:37). This is our memory verse this week – begin memorizing it today!

What is the impossible thing in your life today? (If it is too personal to record here, make a mental note or note and date it elsewhere for future reference.) \_\_\_\_\_

- Would it take a miracle for this thing to be done?

Oswald Chambers has said, "*The thing that taxes almightiness is the very thing which we as disciples of Jesus ought to believe He will do.*"

- Do you believe that our God is Almighty? What do Jeremiah 32:17 and 27 say about the power of God?

Mary's response to Gabriel was, "*Let it be to me according to your word*" (Luke 1:38). Can you say this to God in regard to the impossible thing in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

How did Mary's surrender prove that her faith was in God alone? \_\_\_\_\_

## Fourth Day

## Her Gifts

Think for a moment what your life would be like if you could see into the future and know what lay ahead. Imagine, if you will, how you would feel if....

- An angel announced to you that God was about to favor you with a special unique mission in life?
- You were asked to do something that no other woman in history had done before?
- Strangers from a foreign land traveled to pay homage and lay gifts at the feet of your newborn child?
- A man prophesied that your child would "be rejected by many in Israel"; but he would be "the greatest joy to many others?"
- You were informed that a sword would pierce your very own soul?

Is it any wonder that Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart? She was asked to follow God by faith down a road no woman had ever walked before, and she did it with the humility and devotion of a maidservant.

***"Behold the maidservant of the Lord."* (Luke 1:38)**

In Biblical times the role of a *maidservant* or a *handmaid* was to sit quietly, waiting for hand signals from her mistress which she would then immediately obey without question. Clearly, Mary no longer regarded her will as her own, but completely accepted God's will for her life, even though it meant that nothing in her life would ever be the same!

Before answering the questions that follow in today's lesson, take a minute to ask the Lord to search your heart. He will reveal the thoughts and intents that perhaps you are not conscious of, and bring to the surface those areas you have been holding back from Him.

I Corinthians 6:19-20 NLT says: "*Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.*" What do these two verses mean to you personally? \_\_\_\_\_

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In light of what you have just answered, what should be your heart attitude when encountering surprising news or sudden difficult circumstances? \_\_\_\_\_

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In reality, how do you usually respond? \_\_\_\_\_

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***“Let it be to me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38)***

Mary was gifted with a submissive heart, and God wrought a miracle in her life through the power of the Holy Spirit within her. She believed, submitted to the will of God, and allowed God to use her to fulfill His foreordained purpose for mankind. Just as she conceived in a physical sense, we do so in a spiritual sense. When we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him into our hearts, a work takes place in us through the power of the Holy Spirit that allows there to be born within us the life of the Lord Jesus. The challenge to us for the remainder of our lives is to learn to live in such a way that *we decrease while He increases!*

Have you been *born again* of the Spirit through belief in and acceptance of Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? You can be if you bow your heart before Him right now and repent of your sin and invite Him into your heart. If you are making such a commitment, record the date of your surrender here: \_\_\_\_\_

(Share with your group leader or someone in leadership at your church what has just taken place in your life.)

Do you know your heavenly Father well enough to trust Him with your welfare? Can you commit yourself to His foreordained will for your life without hesitation? Please comment. \_\_\_\_\_

Mary faced many joys and sorrows on the unpredictable path she walked, but throughout her life she remained devoted to God: loving Him, looking to Him, and trusting Him with her every need. You, too, can walk your path with the same heart attitude of a maidservant.

According to Romans 12:1-2, define what each of the following phrases mean in your own words: (Please add your name in the space provided).

*I beseech you* \_\_\_\_\_, *by the mercies of God, that you present your body a living sacrifice-* \_\_\_\_\_

*Holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service-* \_\_\_\_\_

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind-* \_\_\_\_\_

*That you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God-* \_\_\_\_\_

Make this the prayer of your heart today!

## *Fifth Day*

## *Her Legacy*

*"For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15:4)*

How will you be remembered? How would you like to be remembered? What will you leave behind of benefit for others? What you do and say today will leave imprints for others to view tomorrow.

### *Taking a closer look...*

- What impression did Mary leave with you this week?
  
  
  
  
  
- How might her example impact women in today's world?

### *Taking a personal look....*

Mary shows us how to walk along the unpredictable road of life marked with joys and sorrows, maintaining a submissive spirit and a devoted heart to God.

- What kinds of things have you pondered in your heart this week?
  
  
  
  
  
- What kinds of things are you expecting God to do in and through your life?

### *Passing it on...*

- What have you learned about God's faithfulness that you can share with someone in the coming week?
  
  
  
  
  
- Did you gain a new insight or understanding into God's character that would help someone you know in his or her difficult situation?

## *Sixth Day*

## *Your Prayer*

Each day this week you have examined up close – face to face – a woman of the Bible: her *story and manner*; her *promise and hope*; her *gifts and legacy*. Throughout the process, as you learned about her, you also learned about yourself.

Now the focus shifts to *Your Prayer*. Each week during your group time you will have the opportunity to pray in agreement with the other ladies for the things you write down on this personalized page. Keep an updated account in the *Praise* list each week as God answers your petitions. This year let's come boldly to His throne and learn to pray the **BIG PRAYER** with expectancy! The only prerequisite for such boldness is being *humble* and *real* in His presence.

*Prayer:* Write out your prayer for each of the following...

*I praise God for* (an aspect of His marvelous character) \_\_\_\_\_

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*I confess to God* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*I thank God for* \_\_\_\_\_

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*I ask God for* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Promise:* Write out this week's *promise* in the space provided...and learn to pray this promise from Scripture.

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*Praise:* If God has answered a prayer request for you this week or fulfilled a desire of your heart, please write it out and date it as a stone of remembrance.

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## This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

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