



December 11, 2022

“Lessons from a Teenager”

[Luke 1:26-38](#)

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Mary the mother of Jesus played a significant role in the Christmas story, but throughout history, she has often been a figure of confusion. What does the Bible say about who Mary was? How do Cornerstone’s views differ from the views of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Mary’s life and legacy? And what can we learn from her life that we can apply to our lives today?

1. [Luke 1:26-38](#) - *“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!’ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.’ Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 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. For with God nothing will be impossible.’ Then Mary said, ‘Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.”*
2. Mary, the mother of Jesus
  - a. Mary was most likely around 15-16 years old at the time of Jesus’ birth
  - b. Throughout history Mary has often been a very polarizing figure
    - i. Some discredit her as a historical figure at all

- ii. Some venerate her or glorify her to an unbiblical extreme
3. How do our views differ from those of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Mary's identity?
- a. The Immaculate Conception
    - i. Belief that Mary was protected from original sin and lived a sinless life
      - 1. Became a dogma of the Roman Catholic Church in 1854
    - ii. [Romans 3:23](#) - *"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*
    - iii. Jesus is the only sinless person to have ever existed
    - iv. Mary—like all humans other than Jesus—was a sinner
    - v. [Luke 1:47](#) - [Mary said] *"And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior."*
    - vi. Mary knew that she was a sinner and therefore recognized her need for a Savior
  - b. The Assumption of Mary
    - i. The belief that upon the end of Mary's life on earth, she was caught up or "assumed," body and soul, into heaven without experiencing earthly death
      - 1. Became a dogma of the Roman Catholic Church in 1950
    - ii. There is no biblical basis for this belief—the Bible does not record Mary's death nor speak of her again after Acts chapter 1
  - c. Mary as co-mediator with Christ
    - i. Belief that Mary participates as some sort of mediator between man and Christ as a heavenly mother or heavenly queen
    - ii. [1 Timothy 2:5](#) - *"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."*
4. What does the Bible say about who Mary was and was not?
- a. Who Mary was not
    - i. Nowhere in Scripture does Jesus or anyone else direct any praise or glory toward Mary
    - ii. The Apostles did not give Mary a prominent role in the church
    - iii. Scripture says nothing about Mary ascending into heaven or having an exalted role there
    - iv. The Bible does not indicate that Mary can hear our prayers or that she can mediate for us with God
    - v. Our praise should be fixed on Jesus and Jesus alone
  - b. Who Mary was
    - i. Mary clearly served a unique and amazing role in the Christmas story
    - ii. God selected her from all the women in the world to be the vessel He would use to send the Savior of the world to us
    - iii. She was still a virgin when the angel Gabriel came to visit her to tell her that she would become the mother of Jesus

- iv. She was “betrothed” to Joseph—they were legally married, but in Jewish culture, there would be a year between the marriage ceremony and consummation of the marriage
  - v. We are not to venerate Mary, but we are to respect her
5. What can we learn from Mary that we can apply to our lives today?
- a. She submitted to the work of the Holy Spirit in her life
    - i. **Luke 1:35-38** - *“And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 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. For with God nothing will be impossible.’ Then Mary said, ‘Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.”*
    - ii. Although this was a unique work of the Holy Spirit in human history, Mary’s submission to that work set an example for every believer
    - iii. God wants to do a unique work by the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of every individual, but we must submit ourselves humbly to the Lord and to His work in our lives
    - iv. **Galatians 5:16-17** - *“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”*
    - v. We need to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit
    - vi. **Luke 11:13** - *“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*
    - vii. We were never meant to navigate life on our own; we need to ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit
    - viii. **1 Corinthians 6:19** - *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”* (1984 NIV)
  - b. She recognized her need for a Savior
    - i. **Luke 1:46-47** - *“And Mary said: ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.’”*
    - ii. Mary understood that she needed the Lord
    - iii. A person cannot be a Christian without first recognizing his/her need for Christ
    - iv. **John 3:16-18** - *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,*

*but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.”* (1984 NIV)

- v. Francis Schaeffer said, “It is one of the existential realities of the Christian life to stand before God consciously recognizing our need.”
- vi. We need to recognize how much we need the Lord
- c. She understood God’s power is magnified most in our humility
  - i. **Luke 1:48-55** - *“For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth 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 on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. 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 seed forever.”*
  - ii. **2 Corinthians 12:9** - *“‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”* (1984 NIV)
  - iii. The Lord will respond when we humble ourselves—He will not use a proud person
  - iv. **2 Chronicles 7:14** - *“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”*
  - v. Jonathan Edwards said, *“Nothing sets a person so much out of the devil’s reach as humility.”*
  - vi. God does not need us, but He chooses us to participate in His plans and purposes if we will humble ourselves
  - vii. **Isaiah 66:2** - *“‘Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?’ declares the Lord. ‘This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.’”* (1984 NIV)
  - viii. **Micah 6:8** - *“He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”*

## Discussion Questions

1. Read [Luke 1:26-38](#) to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Discuss the differences between Cornerstone's view of Mary and that of the Roman Catholic church. Why do we disagree with these particular dogmas? (See #3 above)
3. What does the Bible say about who Mary was and was not? (See #4 above)
4. Reread [Luke 1:35-38](#). How did Mary model submission to the Holy Spirit? (See #5a above)
5. Read [Galatians 5:16-17](#), [Luke 11:13](#), and [1 Corinthians 6:19](#). What are some practical ways you can practice submission to the Holy Spirit in your own life? (See #5a-iv through #5a-viii above)
6. Read [Luke 1:46-47](#). Do you always recognize your need for the Lord? Why do we sometimes fail to recognize how needy we are? (See #5b above)
7. Read [Luke 1:48-55](#). When is God's power most magnified in our lives? (See #5c above)
8. Read [2 Corinthians 12:9](#), [2 Chronicles 7:14](#), [Isaiah 66:2](#), and [Micah 6:8](#). Why does God value humility in the lives of His children? Are there practical things we can do to become more humble?
9. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV).