

My Prayer for Today

Our kind heavenly Father, thank You for accepting me as Your child. I choose this day to receive Your acceptance and to walk in the path You have designed especially for me.

Sharing

Each day we have the privilege of reaching out to another person who is carrying a burden and finding it difficult to realize they are people of worth.

Women in the Bible:
Mary
and me

Acceptance



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LESSON



Mary

A Name Associated with Bitterness

Women in the Bible: Mary and Me

Key Scripture: Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-20

Introduction

Mary stands as one of the most honored women of all time. The record of her life shows that she was able to rise above the scandal that must have accompanied her pregnancy. In spite of this, she knew she was accepted by God. He chose her to be the mother of our Savior.

As we study her life we will discover that she was able to rise above the negatives and accomplish the task given her by God. Her love for the Baby Jesus and her willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit made her an ideal mother.

The story of Mary, mother of Jesus, attests that God accepts women and trusts them. To Mary He gave the job of nurturing and teaching the One Person who would have the greatest impact in the history of the world. God knew Mary had a heart filled with love, and had a teachable spirit.

Discover

- * Her Willingness to Be the Mother of Jesus
- * Her Faithfulness as a Mother
- * Her Continuing Love for Jesus

Going Deeper

1. What was significant about Mary's ancestry? (Luke 1:26-27)
2. What were the first words the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary? (Luke 1:28)

3. What do you think were Mary's feelings as she heard these words? Why?

4. Read Mary's response in Luke 1:38. What does her response tell us about her?

5. What was Joseph's reaction to the news that Mary was pregnant? (Matthew 1:18-21)

In those times, an engagement was considered as binding as a marriage. Knowing this, we can understand Joseph's surprise at the news of Mary's pregnancy.

6. How do you think Joseph felt when an angel spoke to him in a dream? Why do you think he did not just dismiss it as merely a dream?

We have only a few brief mentions of Mary after Christ's birth. Let's look at several of them.

7. What occasion is described in Luke 2:41-50?

Note: When Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple, they chided Him. His reply pointed them to His true mission.

8. What lesson is there for us in this?

9. What event is recorded in John 2:1-12?

10. The last time Mary is mentioned is at Christ's crucifixion. Remembering what the angel had told her before Jesus' birth, how do you think she may have felt?

11. At this time of grief, what provision did Jesus make for her care? (John 19:25-27) What does this suggest about their relationship, even when He was an adult?

Words for Today

12. How does Mary's acceptance by God and by her husband, Joseph, relate to me today? How do I know I am accepted by God? (Isaiah 43:1) How do I respond?

13. Does God accept all people, or only some? What does Peter say in Acts 10:34-35?

With outstretched arms Jesus is ready to receive and welcome us. He assures us that we will find rest, peace, love and acceptance within His embrace.

14. List Jesus' promises to us as we accept His invitation. Matthew 11:28-30

Questions for Discussion

1. Try to imagine Mary's Son as He played, studied, and worked; His attitude toward His playmates, His parents, the natural world. Was He different from other children?
2. What do you feel is the most important lesson we can learn from the story of Mary?

Words of Wisdom

Mary is an amazing example of faith and trust in God. She accepted the most profound responsibility ever entrusted to humanity. She accepted God's plan for her life—with the joys and sorrows that she could vaguely discern lay ahead. She also had a simple faith that God accepted her, just as she was, a person of a lowly background but trusting Him in all things.

Today Jesus calls each of us and invites us to become His children, to accept His plan for our lives. The choice as to whether we will accept is ours. Will we value His trust in us, His acceptance of us, His loving concern for each person?

Notes: