

Mary Praises the Covenant-Keeping God

Main Lesson: Mary Submits to God's difficult plan for her life (**Luke 1:26-38**).

In this session we witnessed Mary's first experience of God's remarkable call on her life---to be the mother of Jesus the Messiah. In the passage we were given insight into an incredibly interaction between two servants of the Lord, The angel Gabriel and the blessed (soon to be) mother of Jesus Christ. Mary, a young woman who was probably still in her teens, was confronted by the angel Gabriel with the news that God intended to use her to fulfill the greatest promise of His Covenant (**Gen. 3: 15; 2 Samuel 7: 4-16; Isaiah 9:6**).

“ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the
government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be
called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.”

- Isaiah 9:6

Many times, God uses his creation to fulfill his will and the bible is full of these accounts. Whether physical beings, spiritual beings, animals or even the very forces of nature, nothing that is created is outside of the God's sovereignty. Here are a few examples:

- God calls the prophet Isaiah to spread his message to his people. (**Isaiah 6**)
- God commands the angel Gabriel to deliver his messages to Mary. (**Luke 1: 5-25**)
- God used a donkey to dissuade Ballam's plans of harming the people of Israel. (**Num. 22: 22 - 35**)
- God used a storm and a whale to bring Jonah to his destination so that the people of Nineveh may come to repentance. (**Jonah 1 -3**)
- God calls on a teenage virgin girl to birth his Son who will bring reconciliation between himself and mankind. (**Luke 1:26-38**)

When God called on Mary her final response was to say, “I am the Lords servant, may it be done to me according to your word”. In other words, Mary chose to let go of her doubts, worries and uncertainties and chose to step out in faith submitting her will to the will of God, opening her heart to follow Him obediently. Mary responded in faith and has become an example for all Christians on how receive God's will obediently.

“Say your prayers”, “ask God for forgiveness when you do something wrong”, “give your tithes”, “tell the truth”, “be kind to others even if they are unkind to you.” These simple commands are what any God-fearing parent teaches their children and when the children obey they fulfill the will of God in their lives (**Eph. 6:1**). Obedience can be defined as being the act of following and/or living out the commands of another. The Christian life for many of us began with a simple act of **obedience**, one that was quite childlike in nature.

The thing is, someone can obey without truly agreeing or even down right rebelling against the one whose command they are carrying out. In other words, a person can obey begrudgingly, where outwardly they follow the commands but inwardly, they rebel against them. God is seeking people who will follow him outwardly and submit to his rule within their

hearts as well. While obedience is good, and wholly necessary in our walk with Christ, it is not the final destination. As our beloved sister mentioned in our last meeting that “***Obedience is an immature form of submission***”.

Submission on the other hand, happens when we allow the Spirit of God to come into our hearts and transform our inner rebellion into something different. It is when we give up our will to choose and decide what is right for ourselves and instead, look to God to direct our path. It is when we step out in faith and meet God in His word, making His promises our reality. It is when we move from the driver’s seat of our lives to the passenger seat and allow God to take the wheel. This is not an easy thing, but God is committed to our transformation (**Phil. 1: 6**). All we need to do is to keep our hearts fixed on Christ. For when we look to Him:

“... we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

- 2 Cor. 3:18

In our own lives, we must recognize that God calls us to obedience even when it is costly. When we ***submit*** our hearts to God and choose to walk in ***obedience***, we magnify God. We say, with our very lives, that we trust the plan that God has laid out for us.

Christ Connection

In submitting to God’s plan for her life, even though it would bring suffering and heartache, Mary chose to magnify God. As a result, her faithfulness is an example to us. Likewise, Jesus magnified His Father through His obedient life, and He submitted to God’s plan, even to death on a cross, so that we could be saved.