

“Poetry of Christmas: Mary”

Growth Group Guide

December 14, 2025

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

In this study, we will look at Mary’s poetic song of praise about becoming pregnant with Jesus, the Messiah and Savior of the world. Her song from Luke 1:46-55 (ESV) shines a light on how Mary feels about herself (v48): blessed. The Amplified version adds happy, fortunate, and favored. How do you view Mary? What descriptive word(s) would you use for her? What words would you use for yourself as a child of God?

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Read the verse and poem below. Take joy in God! He has saved us, is mindful of us, and given us belonging in His wonderful family.

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. 1 John 3:1

Thank You that I have a place in You and Your Kingdom that is eternal ... How great is Your love toward me, Father, that I should be called Your child; and such I am. How amazing that I am precious in Your eyes, and that You love me!

Near, so very near to You -- Nearer I could not be, -- For in the Person of Your Son -- I’m just as near as He! -- Dear, so very dear to You, -- I could not dearer be; The love wherewith You love Your Son, -- Such is Your love for me!” (Myers, Ruth. 31 Days of Praise, Day 13. Kindle.)

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. Have you ever felt small and insignificant? Mary did too. How is she an encouragement that God can accomplish extraordinary work in and through you too?
2. **Read Luke 1:18 and 1:34.** Zachariah and Mary both asked questions about the miracles that Gabriel told them would happen. What subtleties in the wording of their questions give away Zachariah’s unbelief and Mary’s belief?
3. **Read Romans 12:1-2.** What qualities in these verses do you think describe Mary? Which qualities would you hope to grow in?
4. Have you had a time when someone spoke encouraging words to you like Elizabeth did with Mary? Did it cause joy to well up in you? How was your heart afterward?
5. **Read Luke 1:46-49.** What had God done for Mary? What character qualities do we see in Mary?
6. **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23.** What three primary elements make up who we are as people? What does Paul desire will happen in each of those areas for us?

7. **Read Luke 1:38 and 1:46-47.** How does Mary show us in a practical way what Paul describes in Thessalonians?
8. **Read Luke 1:50-53.** What has God done for us? What qualities allow us to benefit from what God has done? (Hint: 2 Corinthians 4:18 and 1 Samuel 16:7 - Look beyond the physical to the spiritual.)
9. **Read Luke 1:54-55.** What had God done for Israel? How does that bring benefit to the whole world? (Hint: Galatians 3:16 and 3:29.)
10. **Read 1 Samuel 2:1-10.** What similarities do you find in Hannah’s poetry that you’ve seen in Mary’s?
11. Mary, although she was following God and living righteously, would return home showing signs of pregnancy. People looking only at what they could see externally would have misjudged her, but Mary didn’t waver. How might this inspire us to walk in dependence on Jesus, no matter what others think? How might it also encourage us to discover someone’s story before jumping to conclusions?

WALK *(Living out God’s purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea: What God has done both humbles and inspires us, filling our mouths with words of joyful praise that confirm we belong to Him completely.** Mary typifies a simple, regular person who belongs completely to God and is full of joy and praise. What part of her story stood out to you most? Her humble giving of herself (body, soul, and spirit) to God for His work in and through her? Maybe how she lived fully dependent on God? Or something else? Spend time talking to God about it. How might He be working in you, encouraging you, and inspiring you to grow by hearing her story? Spend time remembering when you became a Christian and all God’s done since then. Remember how He’s changed your story and made you His!

WORLD *(Embracing God’s heart for others)*

Evergreen Network asked a few of their church planters to pause, reflect and share - in their own words - what they’re grateful for in this season of church planting. Here are a few snippets from the most recent newsletter: “One of the things I’m most thankful for in this season of church planting is the strength and blessing it has brought to our marriage. The gift of serving alongside my wife Caitlin...has brought so much joy into our lives. (Filmore Bouldes)” “During this season of church planting...we have seen God moving in people’s lives in some really inspiring ways. We are grateful for seeing others take new steps of faith that include: connecting in community groups, confession, prayer, and deeper discipleship. (Tim Coburn)” “I’m grateful for the lives and families that already have been transformed in our community because of our church...we’re just extremely grateful for the work he is doing in our lives and in our city! (Zeb Greenfield)” Let’s continue to praise God for his work in and through these planters and the churches they are leading. Pray for their families, their reach into the communities they are in, and for the rich expansion of the gospel and discipleship in their congregations.

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