

Mary, the Handmaiden of the Lord

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Introduction: What does it mean to be highly favored of the Lord?

- A. Mary was described this way by God Himself through Gabriel. **(Lk 1:28)**
 - 1. How was Mary to be “highly favored” and “blessed?”
 - 2. She was given a hard and difficult work. The world would not consider this a blessing.
 - 3. To the child of God there is no greater purpose in life than to be used by the Lord for His glory. **(Phil 2:17-18)**
- B. Mary is a powerful example of how a biblical faith brings great blessings.
 - 1. Examples teach us in a special way. **(Phil 4:9; 1 Cor 11:1)**
 - 2. We need to better understand where the true blessings come.

I. Mary had developed a great faith in God.

- A. No one has been able to choose their own parents except for one in history.
 - 1. What kind of parents would God choose for His Son Jesus?
 - 2. He did not choose a mother who had riches, who was popular with the world, or one who had no time for children.
 - 3. Notice the things that characterized Mary and the things that did not. **(Lk 1:46-55)**
 - 4. Would you want your child be raised by one of these characteristics?
- B. Much credit could be given to her parents.
 - 1. Mary’s faith almost certainly was planned and nourished by them. **(2 Tim 1:5)**
 - 2. Notice the choice of a mate for Mary. Consider the description of her relative Elizabeth and her husband. **(Lk 1:6)**
 - 3. Jesus was linked to His parents throughout his life. **(Lk 4:22)**
- C. Mary’s description of herself showed that she knew the Lord.
 - 1. What does it mean to be a “handmaiden?” **(Lk 1:38, 48)**
 - 2. When we see the glory of a living God then we too will rejoice to be a lowly servant for Him.
 - a. Consider how Paul describes himself and others? **(Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Col 4:12)**
 - b. How did Jesus come to earth and live? **(Phil 2:7-8)**
 - b. When we forget this we run for God’s blessing and end up fighting God. **(1 Pt 5:5-7)**
- D. When she needed friends to visit with they too were those of faith. **(Lk 1:39-40)**
 - 1. What do people of faith talk about when they get together? **(Lk 1:45-46)**
 - 2. In order to build a strong faith you must learn how to protect and nourish it.
 - a. There are some conversations not worth having. **(Eph 4:29; 1 Tim 1:4)**

II. Mary had a faith would be tested

- A. This is true for everyone. **(1 Pt 1:6-7)**
 - 1. The one God blesses the most will receive the greater tests. **(Rom 5:1-5; Phil 1:29-30)**
 - 2. What God would give her would not seem “worth it” by the world.

B. The tests of Mary.

1. She had to tell Joseph about her child and then wait for the Lord to inform him.
 - a. This was a test for Joseph too. **(Mt 1:18-25)**
 - b. Do you have a faith that will “wait on the Lord?” **(Psa 37:7-9)**
2. She had to raise a child that was very different than others. **(Lk 1:41-51)**
 - a. We cannot fully understand the challenges this brought to her.
 - b. Likely Joseph died at some time before the ministry of Christ. This would have greatly added to her burden.
 - c. There were things that Jesus said in His ministry that would have challenged her. **(Mt 12:46-50)**
3. She had to overcome the obstacles to believe that He is the Son of God.
 - a. This was a struggle for the whole family. **(Jn 7:3-5)**
 - b. Some mothers do not react well when children differ among themselves.
 - c. Building a biblical faith has major roadblocks to overcome for all.
4. She had to watch Him die.
 - a. God through Simeon had warned her of this occasion. **(Lk 2:34-35)**
 - b. Could you have done this? **(Jn 19:25-27)**

III. The blessings Mary received

- A. She could know that she was a part of blessing the whole world.
 1. She knew that the birth and rising of the Messiah would bless many.
 2. She knew her role was only as a tool to be used. She was in the background!
 3. Every Christian must have this attitude. We are all bondservants. **(2 Cor 4:7)**
- B. She also could know that the example of her faith would bless others too.
 1. Who would need to see and remember her faith the most?
 2. She was successful here! What a blessing! **(Acts 1:14)**
- C. She knew that she would continue to have the care of God.
 1. Jesus made arrangements for her. **(Jn 19:25-27)**
 - a. John had a blessing here too.
 - b. Many consider their elderly parents a burden. **(1 Tim 5:8)**
 2. Did Jesus continue to take care of Mary?
 3. Jesus will care for all who trust Him. **(1 Pt 5:6-7)**
- D. She was able to go to heaven.
 1. Was it worth it? **(Rev 21:3-5)**
 2. How many have been blinded to the true riches because of seeking after things that will not last? **(Rev 3:17-18)**
 3. We all must go through the fire so that God can make us something for Him to keep forever.

“Our lusts are cords that bind us. Fiery trials are sent to burn and consume them. Who fears the flame which will bring him liberty from intolerable bonds?” - Charles Spurgeon

Conclusion: Do you want also to be a “handmaiden of the Lord?”

- A. There is no great place than that of a servant. **(Phil 2:5-7)**
- B. We must begin by dying to self and living for Him. **(Gal 2:20)**