

Mary & Joseph

Luke 1:26-56, Matthew 1:18-24

PPT Title

Mary & Joseph

Main Point: God graciously invites people who believe in Him to be a part of His plan.

Key Verse: *The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.* - 1 Samuel 16:7b NIV

Props: Mary costume or headdress, Mary and Joseph Nativity figurines

BACKGROUND/REVIEW



Last week we talked about an older Jewish couple named Zechariah and Elizabeth. Zechariah was a priest who was serving in the temple when an angel, one of God's messengers, appeared to tell him some wonderful news. **Ask:** Can anyone remember the angel's good news? *The angel said that Zechariah's wife was going to have a baby.* **Say:** That baby would be named John. He would be blessed by God and would announce that the Messiah, the Savior of the world, was coming. At first, Zechariah wasn't so sure this would happen. **Ask:** What happened to Zechariah because he doubted God's message? *He couldn't talk the entire time Elizabeth was pregnant.* **Say:** But as soon as John was born, Zechariah wrote down the name John. This showed he finally believed all that the angel had told him. Suddenly he could talk! First he praised God, and then he spoke blessings over his son.

GOD SENDS AN ANGEL TO MARY (Luke 1:26-38)

Say: Part of our story this week overlaps what we learned last week, so we need to back up a few months. Three months before John was born, the same angel who had appeared to Zechariah came to earth with the best news ever told.



Gabriel appeared to a young Jewish woman named Mary. Mary was Elizabeth's cousin. She lived in the town of Nazareth, about a three-day trip from where Zechariah and Elizabeth lived. She was not married, but was engaged to marry a man named Joseph. Way, way back in Joseph's family line was the Jewish King David. But Joseph wasn't royal; he was a simple carpenter. It was the custom of that time for girls to become engaged when they were young teenagers. Mary was probably somewhere around 14 or 15 years old.

The angel greeted her and said, "The Lord has given you special favor. He is with you."



Mary was very upset because of his words. She wondered what kind of greeting this could be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary. God is very pleased with you." - Luke 1:28-30

Say: Can you imagine a mighty angel suddenly appearing in your bedroom one evening? No doubt, you would be terrified. What if he came to tell you that God was pleased with you? Mary was no one special. She wasn't royalty; she wasn't rich or famous. Why was God pleased with her? Hebrews 11:6 says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." There was nothing Mary had done to please God (Isaiah 64:6). Mary's belief in God was pleasing to Him. Then the angel said:

You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. **You must name him Jesus.** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make Him a king like his father David of long ago. He will rule forever over His people, who came from Jacob's family. His kingdom will never end." - Luke 1:31-33

Mary asked how she could possibly have a baby when she was not yet married.

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come to you. The power of the Most High God will cover you. So the holy One that is born will be called the Son of God. Your relative Elizabeth is old. And even she is going to have a child. People thought she could not have children. But she has been pregnant for six months now. **Nothing is impossible with God.**"

"I serve the Lord," Mary answered. "May it happen to me just as you said it would." Then the angel left her. - Luke 1:35-38



Say: Just imagine, Mary was the first person to hear the name of JESUS! The name Jesus means, "Jehovah is salvation," or "The one true God saves." This was the name by which all people could be saved from the punishment of their sin (Acts 4:12). This was the name of the Messiah that people had awaited for thousands of years! This is the name by which our prayers are heard and accepted by God (John 16:23). What a privilege for Mary to hear the angel speak the name of Jesus.

Application: Mary believed God (Luke 1:45). Unlike Zechariah, Mary did not doubt God's power to make this incredible thing happen. Mary was completely willing to be used by God to accomplish His plan. This would not be easy for this young Jewish girl. How could she explain to people that she had a baby without being married? People might think she was crazy, or a liar. Still, Mary trusted that God would take care of her and she followed Him completely. We must each come to a place where we trust God and are willing to follow Him completely, even when our circumstances look difficult.

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH (Luke 1:39-56)



After hearing the angel's news, Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Mary must have felt that no one in the world could understand what she had been told better than Elizabeth. Both women were given miraculous pregnancies from the Lord. Elizabeth was too old, and Mary was too young and not yet married. Mary hurried to the town where Elizabeth lived. (Luke 1:39-40)

The Bible says that as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's voice, the baby inside her jumped for joy! God's Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth and she spoke. With a loud voice, Elizabeth called out, "God has blessed you more than other women. And blessed is the child you will have!" (Luke 1:42) Elizabeth called Mary, "The mother of my Lord."

Then Mary sang this song of praise to God: **Prearrange for a teenage girl to dress as Mary and read Mary's song with great expression.**

Mary said,
"My soul gives glory to the Lord.
My spirit delights in God my Savior.
He has taken note of me
even though I am not important.
From now on all people will call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me.
His name is holy.
He shows His mercy to those who have respect for Him,
from parent to child down through the years.
He has done mighty things with His arm.
He has scattered those who are proud in their deepest thoughts.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones.

*But He has lifted up people who are not important.
He has filled those who are hungry with good things.
But He has sent those who are rich away empty.
He has helped the people of Israel, who serve Him.
He has always remembered to be kind
to Abraham and his children down through the years.
He has done it just as He said to our people of long ago." - Luke 1:46-56*

Just try to picture Zechariah. All he could do was watch and listen to these two women. Remember, he couldn't say a word! Perhaps this visit from Mary helped him to believe that everything Gabriel had foretold was actually happening. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months before she returned home. (Luke 1:56)

Application: God chose Elizabeth and Mary to be a part of His amazing plan. They were not perfect people, or even important people. They were just people who had faith in Him. God still involves people who believe in Him in His plans. Notice how kind God was to give these women each other to understand and encourage one another. God often gives us a friend to help us and encourage us as we follow Him. It is right to encourage those who are doing God's work (1 Thessalonians 5:11). **Ask:** How can you encourage a friend who is doing what God wants him to do? *Pray for him, speak kind words, and help him do his work.*

JOSEPH (Matthew 1:18-24)



Say: We said that Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph. When two people are engaged, that means they promise to marry each other. Nowadays, if two people who are engaged decide *not* to get married, they would simply say they did not want to get married, and their engagement would be called off. However, when two people were engaged in Mary and Joseph's time, they were bound by a contract. Although they lived separately until the wedding, they could not break their engagement easily. They would actually have to get a divorce to break their engagement. Because Mary and Joseph were already bound by law, the news that God was going to make Mary the mother of Jesus would be extremely important to Joseph!

God was now going to send an angel to Joseph. Joseph needed to know that Mary was truly carrying the Son of God, and he needed to know what part he would play in God's amazing plan. While Joseph was sleeping, an angel spoke to him. The angel told Joseph to take Mary as his wife.

The angel said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She is going to have a son. You must give Him the name Jesus. That is because He will save His people from their sins."

All of this took place to bring about what the Lord had said would happen. He had said through the prophet, "The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a Son. And He will be called Immanuel." The name Immanuel means "God with us." - Matthew 1:20b-23

Say: This must have been amazing news to Joseph. To help Joseph understand, the angel reminded Joseph about one of the promises that the Lord had made a long time ago about the coming Messiah. The angel quoted from the book of Isaiah. **Teacher:** **Hold up your Bible, open to the book of Isaiah.** The prophet Isaiah had said that a virgin would have a baby and He would be called "God with us." A virgin means a girl or lady who has never been married, or been with a man the way a wife is with her husband. Joseph believed that Mary was the chosen girl that the prophet Isaiah had spoken about so long ago. Joseph woke up from his dream and he obeyed the Lord. He was not afraid to take Mary to be his wife.

Application: Joseph was not a wealthy or famous man. He was a carpenter; he built things out of wood for his job. But the Bible calls him righteous (Matthew 1:19). This

means he believed in the Lord (Genesis 15:6). Like Mary, Joseph was chosen by God. He was chosen to be the adopted father of the baby Jesus. Even though Joseph's DNA would not be passed down to this special child, Joseph would have a very important role in Jesus' life. He would rock Him as a baby, train Him as a child, and show Him how to work with His hands (Matthew 13:55). One of his most important tasks would be to protect the young Jesus when He was in danger (Matthew 2:13).



When we think of Mary and Joseph, and put their figurines in a miniature stable under our Christmas tree ([Hold up Mary & Joseph figurines](#)), we may think that they were chosen because they were such "good" people. Through the decades, master painters have painted these two people with elaborate clothing and glowing halos. But that is not how the Bible describes them. They were young, regular people who simply trusted God. And because they trusted God, God chose them to care for His Son - the Savior of the world. The Bible is full of examples of God using regular people to be involved in His plan (Judges 6:15, 1 Samuel 17:33-50, Amos 7:14-15)

God still uses regular people to be involved in His plan! The Lord is not looking for people who have great skills to do great things. In fact, He is looking for those who have nothing on their own and who simply put all their trust in Him (2 Corinthians 12:9). God pours out His grace on simple people who believe in Him (1 Peter 5:5). He empowers those He has chosen with the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:19). As with Elizabeth and Mary, He uses those who are young and those who are old. Trust in the Lord, and follow Him completely when He invites you to join in His plan to draw all people to Himself (Psalm 67:2, Revelation 14:6-7).

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