

SESSION

3

MARY'S TRUST

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WHAT DO YOU TRUST TO WORK EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T KNOW HOW IT WORKS?

THE POINT > EMBRACE GOD'S CALL ON YOUR LIFE.

▶ LUKE 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰ Then the angel told her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end."

³⁴Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?"

³⁵The angel replied to her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ "And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel left her.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

ONLY EIGHT PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S CURRENCY IS PHYSICAL MONEY.¹ THE REST EXISTS ONLY ON COMPUTERS AND HARD DRIVES, AND WE DEPEND IN A BIG WAY ON TECHNOLOGY FOR OUR EARNING AND BUYING.

We interact with things every day which, basically, we're clueless about. Nonetheless, we trust and use them. For instance:

- You may be reading this from a physical, printed book. Few of us understand the printing process and how presses work.
- For those reading from a digital device, the technology inside our phones and tablets is mind-blowing.
- The texts we send, the cars we drive, and the video games we play all work in ways we can't even begin to understand.

When I left for college, I had no clue what I wanted to do for a living. Even though I'd wanted to study medicine for most of my life, all of a sudden I had a scholarship to study music. I understood clearly God was leading me in that direction. I didn't know what the future held, but I trusted that, if I followed God, He'd take care of the rest.

Mary, Jesus' mother, surely didn't understand what was about to happen, but she trusted God. We see from her experience, even without fully comprehending everything in God's plan, we can trust and embrace what He wants us to do.

LUKE 1:26-30

1 Why might it be troubling to be singled out by God?

2 Which passage from Scripture brings you comfort when you find yourself in unexpected circumstances?





LIVE IT OUT

▶ CHRIST

We often dream big dreams, but when they become reality, it can be pretty frightening. For instance, I wanted to be a singer, and within a matter of months, I sang in front of 15,000 people—scariest day of my life! When we pray for big things, God has a way of delivering.

▶ **Read Psalm 56:3.**

What things are currently causing fear in your life?

How can you grow in trusting God?

▶ **Memorize Psalm 56:3 and make it a point to pray it every day this week.**

▶ **Write a brief prayer asking God to help you follow Christ fearlessly.**

► COMMUNITY

Mary's response to Gabriel's message was to humbly declare her position as God's servant. God has also called us to lives of service.

8 What "impossible" situations are you aware of in your church?

9 How can you comfort or encourage someone by serving them?



► CULTURE

Israel was looking for a Messiah who would reign from David's throne and meet their temporary, earthly needs and desires. However, God had something much better in mind.

10 List some examples of the ways our culture focuses on the here-and-now and not on the eternal.

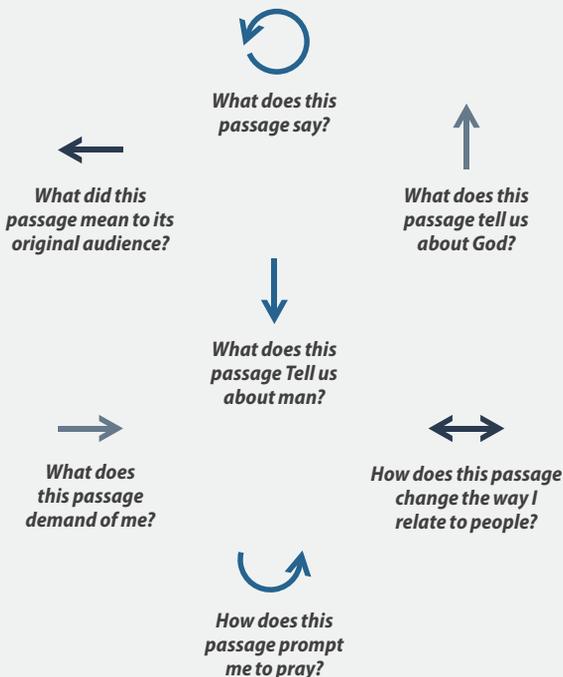
11 How will you help a non-believing friend to see Jesus is the answer to our deepest, eternal needs?

Make it a point to pray every day for your lost friends, and be willing to live fearlessly so God would work through you.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



THE 7 ARROWS OF BIBLE READING



DAY ONE JAMES 4:6

Prior to the fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed a close relationship with God. However, their pride caused them to choose their own way instead of living by faith in obedience to God. This rebellion made them enemies of God. However, God wasn't satisfied to leave them in that broken state and separated from Him. He had a plan to make things right, so He gave His people the law, which included promises of a Savior. As long as we continue in selfish pride, we remain enemies of God, just like Adam and Eve when they sinned. However, God's grace is greater than our sin, and if we're willing to give up our pride and, in humility, follow Jesus, we will receive forgiveness. God opposes the proud, but He lavishes grace on those who humbly turn away from their sins.

- **In what ways are you tempted to be prideful?**
- **What would humbling yourself look like in real ways?**

DAY FOUR

JAMES 4:9

Many times, when we think of the changes Jesus brings to our lives, we think of all the good things—forgiveness, grace, joy, love, and on and on. And rightly so! We have more good gifts in Jesus than we could ever imagine. However, James tells us that we should “be miserable and mourn and weep.” That doesn’t sound like much fun, does it? Here’s the truth. Sin takes a devastating toll on our lives. Sin separates us from God, it robs God of the honor He deserves, and ultimately leads to our death. Yet somehow, time and time again, even though we know this, our pride and selfishness cause us to choose sin. Sometimes we like to ignore our sin or pretend it’s not really a big deal. The right response, however, is to mourn and weep, acknowledging that sin is serious stuff. When we appreciate sin for what it is, we’re on the right track to experiencing restoration in real ways.

- **When have you minimized sin and refused to acknowledge how serious it is?**

- **What is involved in true repentance?**

DAY FIVE

JAMES 4:10



Mary was a humble and devoted servant of God. When the angel told her of God’s plan, it meant all kinds of complications for her life. However, her response proved she was a true servant of God. God has a specific calling for each of our lives, as well. Many things He calls us to are explicitly stated in Scripture—don’t lie, love others sacrificially, obey your parents, don’t forsake gathering with your church family. Others aren’t as clear, such as where to attend college (if at all) or who to date. In those instances, we’re to pursue God’s will and devote ourselves to obeying Him in the best ways we know how. When we demonstrate this kind of humble faithfulness, we can know for sure that God will bless us and use us for His purposes.

- **How does your life give evidence of humble devotion to God? In what ways do you need to grow?**

- **How have you seen God lift you up when you’ve chosen the path of humility?**