



**MONDAY**

**Mary, Joseph & Marriage**  
 Read: Luke 1:26-27, Genesis 2:18-25

The institution of marriage is almost as old as the world itself. In our Scripture reading today we read how God created the institution of marriage between the first man (Adam) and the first woman (Eve). Since God created marriage and not man, God’s purposes for the institution should be observed by all mankind.

We also read how Joseph was “betrothed” to Mary when the Angel appeared to her. The culture of Joseph and Mary differs from our own culture. Being “betrothed” meant they were “legally” bound. Joseph had paid a “bride price” to Mary’s father (most likely, if he was living - or a close male relative) and had entered into this “betrothal” period. During this period Mary would still live with her parents until the official marriage ceremony. Once the marriage ceremony was complete, Joseph would take Mary into his own home. We learn from reading the Book of Matthew, after an angel also appeared to Joseph, he married Mary in a ceremony and took her as his wife.

*Do you think it was easy for Mary and Joseph - her being with child before they were married?*

**TUESDAY**

**Mary Found Favor in God’s Eyes**  
 Read: Luke 1:28-30

The word translated “favor” in our Scripture reading is a word akin to the Bible word “grace”. Someone once defined grace as, “Getting what you need and not what you deserve.” The word favor is a little different but still carries with it the general idea of receiving a gift from God. Mary’s “gift” was a Son - not just any son but Jesus who is the Son of God. The “favor” she was showed was not something she earned, but was something she was blessed by God to receive.

The Bible speaks of others in a similar manner:

- Noah found “favor” in God’s sight and his family was saved from the flood - Genesis 6:8.
- Hannah found “favor” in God’s sight and was blessed with a son, Samuel.

While none of these examples mentioned “earned” the gift or favor God blessed them with, they nevertheless were godly people. A lesson we can learn: God blesses who He will bless, but his favor always blesses righteous people.

*How has God blessed your life?  
 How can we show favor to others?  
 What is the difference in earning something and being given a gift?*

**THURSDAY**

**Special from the Womb**  
 Read: Luke 1:31-33

Just like John the Baptizer, Jesus was said to be special from the moment of conception. In our Scripture reading we read the words of Gabriel concerning just how special Jesus was going to be: (1) He will be great and called Son of the Most High; (2) He will be given the throne promised to King David (read 2 Samuel 7:12-13); (3) He will rule over the house of Jacob forever (read Isaiah 9:7); (4) His rule will have no end (read Daniel 7:14).

If you read all of those Old Testament passages above you saw how Jesus’s coming was spoken of in the Scriptures.

Did you know we are special from the womb as well. David wrote in the Psalms that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (read Psalm 139:14). Every child is formed and fashioned in the womb in the image of God (read Genesis 1:26). Christians speak out against practices which harm or kill life in the womb because we believe we are special from day one! In Mary, God performed one of his greatest miracles - Holy God became flesh and it started in the womb!

*What are some ways every human life is special and unique from day one?  
 How do you think God feels when we destroy life (abortion) while He is in the process of creating it in His image?*

**FRIDAY**

**Having the Faith of Mary**  
 Read: Luke 1:36-38

So far in the Gospel of Luke we have seen God choosing unlikely candidates to accomplish His will of ushering in the Messianic kingdom. First we saw a barren, older woman and her husband who would welcome the forerunner John the Baptizer into the world. In our passage of focus this week we see a young, peasant girl who will give birth to Jesus, the Son of God. A common thread we see so far in both accounts is these were people of great faith in God.

Mary was likely a teenager at the time the angel Gabriel appeared to her. Yet, in spite of her young age she was a person of great faith. Mary would welcome Jesus into her arms, see Him from boyhood to manhood, walk with Him through His three years of ministry, watch Him die on a cross, see Him resurrected from the tomb, watch Him ascend to heaven, and participate in the coming of His kingdom - NOW THAT IS FAITHFULNESS! Never once did she ever waver in her trust and commitment to God.

*We are not told much in Scripture, but what do you think Jesus was like as a little boy?  
 Do you think it was easy for Mary seeing her Son become the person he was and die on the cross?*

**LUKE 1:26-38**

**DAILY SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE:**  
 BIBLE STUDY - EXAMPLE: ACTS 17:11

**REST:**  
 DID WE TAKE TIME TO REST, REFLECT & RECHARGE?

**LORD’S DAY:**  
 SUNDAY, JANUARY 31st

