



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions Real Life Stories of God Sightings Series Lesson 29

Lesson Title: Mary, Mother of Jesus

Take Home Point: God uses humble people to point to him.

Warm-Up:

Have you ever tried to put together a team at work, in school, or in a sport? What happens when "team" members only think of themselves and how they can star and receive individual honor? It's not much of a team, is it? Each person is so busy thinking about himself that there is no thought of what everyone might achieve by working together. In fact, typically what happens is that a group of self-focused people accomplish much less than if all had put aside personal glory for the sake of team success. As one of my co-workers once said of someone who was always looking out for himself without regard to others, "That person reminds me of my old music instructor. Its always I-I-I, me-me-me!"

Read: Luke 1:26-38, 46-56

Observation (What happened?):

What was Mary's response to Gabriel's first words?

What was Mary's response to Gabriel's announcement of God's plan?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What qualifications did Mary have to be chosen by God to give birth to his Son?

What was the focus of Mary's song?

Insight:

Humility is such a stumbling block for many people, isn't it? It seems we all have such a fear that we will not receive proper credit, or worse, no one will notice us, or worst of all, that another will get credit we believe is due us! One of the most deeply felt human needs is to be loved and accepted, to have value and worth in another's eyes. And one of Satan's most successful lies is that it is what we do that creates value and worth, resulting in acceptance. Nothing could be further from the truth. God made us just the way we are; he demonstrated our value to him when he gave his Son to take sin's punishment in our place. When we genuinely realize that nothing we do improves our standing with God, we become free from the need to focus on ourselves. We focus on service to him without regard to who gets noticed or receives public acclaim. And it's not just because we secretly know we'll get the credit in heaven, either! It's because it doesn't matter. Only God deserves the credit and only God will truly get it. As we humbly submit to his perfect plan, we become a member of his team to his eternal glory. That's worth far more than any feeble human accolades we might get on this earth.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What has God asked you to do for him? What is your response?

Think of one way you can serve without recognition this season, then do it.

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