

MARY: OBEDIENT FAITH

SIMPLY TEACHING THE WORD SIMPLY—PASTOR CHUCK SMITH

This article was edited by permission and taken from the book Faith by the late Pastor Chuck Smith of CC Costa Mesa, CA.



“Whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.”—Jesus, MARK 3:35

Before I asked Kay to marry me, I said, “I am not looking for an assistant pastor. I am looking for a mother. I love children, and I want to have children. I am not looking for you to have an active role in the church, but to have an active role as a mother in training and guiding our children.”

Kay has had such a godly influence in our home. Never underestimate the importance and the power of a godly mother! God certainly didn’t when He chose Mary to be the woman who would bear and rear His own Son, Jesus Christ.

WHY MARY WAS CHOSEN

A Protestant backlash to the worship of Mary keeps many of us from fully appreciating this remarkable woman. The Bible never calls her the Mother of God, of course, nor does it declare that she was conceived without sin, nor that she serves as an intermediary between believers and Jesus, nor that she ascended into heaven. Protestants rightly object to elevating Mary to a higher position than the Bible gives her.

It must be noted, however, that God chose Mary and granted her the highest honor of any woman who ever lived: to be the human instrument through whom He brought His Son into the world. Mary was a deeply spiritual, godly young woman. Most scholars think she was in her teens at the time she gave birth because in those days marriage usually took place at a very young age.

Many experts believe that Luke personally interviewed Mary before he wrote his gospel, enabling him to hear of Jesus’ earliest years directly from her—from His miraculous conception and birth to the temple incident when He was 12 years old. This is why Luke’s gospel contains many details of Jesus’ life that the other gospels do not.

The narrative of Jesus’ birth began when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary in Nazareth and said, **“Rejoice, highly favored one, the**

Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” (Luke 1:28b). The unexpected greeting startled and troubled Mary, so Gabriel continued:

“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” LUKE 1:30b-33

The name “Jesus” is the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Yeshua*, which means “Yahweh is salvation,” one of the compound names of God. God gave Jesus a name that

Never underestimate the importance and the power of a godly mother!

is above every name, that at the name of *Yeshua*, every knee should bow, ... and that every tongue should confess that *Yeshua ha’Mashiach* [*Yeshua the Messiah*] is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11). The word used here for “Lord” in the Greek is *Kurios*—the New Testament name for Yahweh. Jesus is God.

Can you imagine how you might react to such news as a young virgin? Mary replied, **“How can this be, since I do not know a man?”** (Luke 1:34b). The angel explained that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and the power of God would overshadow her so that the Holy One born of her would be the Son of God. That is how God intended to fulfill two of the most famous prophecies of Isaiah:

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and

shall call His name Immanuel [which means ‘God with us’].” ISAIAH 7:14

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ISAIAH 9:6

A lot of people today object to the idea of the virgin birth, but their problem isn’t really with the virgin birth. Their problem is with their concept of God. For Gabriel told Mary, **“With God nothing will be impossible”** (Luke 1:37). Why should any believer have a problem with the virgin birth? If you can believe the first verse of Genesis, then you should have no problem with the rest of the Bible. If your God is great enough to create the heavens and the earth, then He’s big enough to do anything—and that includes arranging a virgin birth.

Mary responded with simple surrender and submission: **“Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word”** (Luke 1:38a). Mary initially felt **troubled at his saying** (Luke 1:29), but she instantly decided to obey whatever the Lord might ask her to do.

Right after Mary received this news, she hurried to her elderly cousin, Elizabeth. As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s voice, the Holy Spirit inspired her to say, **“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ... Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord”** (Luke 1:42b, 45).

Twice, Elizabeth calls Mary “blessed.” Why was she so blessed? Because no matter how staggering God’s Word might have seemed to her, she believed it—and thereby proved both her purity of character and her joyful willingness to obey the Lord, whatever He required of her. 🍀