

## THE CHARACTERS OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY

### “Mary”

Notice...

#### I. WHAT KIND OF CHARACTER MARY DEMONSTRATED AND WHY WE SHOULD VIEW HER AS A SPIRITUAL ROLE-MODEL

A. Mary was a virgin who kept herself pure before the Lord and others (Luke 1:26-27)

1. Notice as a result of keeping herself pure Mary found favor with God (Luke 1:28-30). It wasn't that she earned God's favor above other virgins but being a virgin was a prerequisite to receive God's blessing.

We live in a day when so many young ladies are concerned with finding favor with their peers and being accepted as one of the “in-crowd.” Oftentimes this means sacrificing one's purity in order to fit in. A recent survey revealed only two percent of female high school seniors had kept themselves pure and were truly virgins. The survey also pointed out that those who had kept their virginity were subjects of ridicule and harassment. When I think of a young lady giving up her virginity in order to fit in with the world's crowd, I think of a sign in a pawn shop window describing a certain item. It read, “Slightly used, greatly reduced in price.”

2. As a result of keeping herself pure Mary was rewarded in a very special and unique way (Luke 1:30-33).

It was no doubt the Messianic hope of every young virgin in Israel that she might be chosen to be the mother of the Messiah. And as a result of keeping herself pure, Mary was blessed to be chosen for this unparalleled privilege and calling.

As we would apply this truth, those who follow Mary's spiritual role-model and keep themselves pure will be rewarded by the Lord in a multitude of special ways. They'll live to rejoice one day over their virginity when they come into marriage, rather than regretting the loss of it to gain the world's favor.

B. Mary was submissive to what the Lord's will was for her life (Luke 1:34-38)

Oftentimes young ladies are not submissive to what the Lord's will is. And they mess up their lives because they are not willing to wait on the Lord and be obedient to His Word.

1. Notice being submissive to God's will rules out the present-day practice of living together out of wedlock (I Thess. 4:3-7).
2. Being submissive to God's will prohibits any kind of relationship with an unsaved person (II Cor. 6:14-17).

3. Being submissive to God's will may require a time of waiting on the Lord (Psa. 27:14). Consider the trouble in Abraham's house because he failed to do this.

C. Mary went about believing what the Lord said, praising Him for using her and reaching out to help others.

1. We notice Mary's *faith* in what the Lord said through the angel by her response to visit her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-40).

Real faith is always accompanied by a proper response. A person who really believes will demonstrate it in a number of evidential ways. He'll be in church services, he'll support the Lord's work, he'll live a pure life before others just to mention a few.

2. Secondly, we notice Mary's *praise* to the Lord for choosing her and using her when Elizabeth was spirit-led to say what she said (Luke 1:41-55).

This ought to be our response to the Lord daily for saving us and using us in His service. We ought to praise Him for all the various ways that He uses us as instruments of blessing in the lives of others.

3. Thirdly, we notice Mary's *reaching out* to others in her visit and care for Elizabeth (Lk. 1:39,40,56).

When Mary was given the news that Elizabeth had conceived and was in her sixth month, she went to visit her. And since it is said that Mary abode with Elizabeth 3 months she apparently was there to help her and witnessed the birth of John the Baptist.

Mary's example of reaching out to help others ought to be our example as well. The Bible says we as believers are to do good to others (Gal. 6:10).

Someone has well-said, "No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care."

Oftentimes as we reach out to help others in various ways this will open the door for us to introduce someone to the Lord and to tell them how they can be saved.

4. Finally, we should notice that the Scriptures do not support what some teach concerning Mary.

According to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, Mary herself is believed to have been conceived without original sin and that she was also taken up into heaven where she now reigns as a mediator through whom prayers are to be made. In Orlando, Florida, there is a large cathedral with huge sign letters attached across the front of the building which read, "*Mary the Queen of the Universe.*" But the Bible gives no such veneration to Mary and refutes these teachings. Mary was not divine but a sinner like every other human being who needed a Savior (Romans 3:23). Mary

did not ascend into heaven. Mary needed to be saved by faith in Christ and Mary is certainly not a mediator (I Tim. 2:5).

As we consider the kind of character that Mary demonstrated we do not worship her as deity or divine nor do we pray to God through her as Mariolatry would teach, but she does present a spiritual role-model that every young lady would do well to mimic.