

# Mary: Blessed Among Women

## Introduction:

### A. Luke 1:42

1. Because of the errors of Catholicism that surround Mary, we seem to over-react and shy away from teaching about her. Yet her life is filled with rich, valuable lessons for us.

### B. Mary (Hebrew: מרים, Miryam; c. 18 BC – c. 41 AD)

1. There is significant diversity in the Marian beliefs. The Catholic Church holds distinctive Marian dogmas; namely her Immaculate Conception, the perpetual virginity of Mary, and the Assumption of Mary into Heaven
2. Protestants minimize Mary's role within Christianity, based on the argued brevity of biblical references
3. Luke's gospel mentions Mary most often, identifying her by name twelve times, all of these in the infancy narrative (1:27,30,34,38,39,41,46,56; 2:5,16,19,34).
4. Matthew's gospel mentions her by name five times, four of these (1:16,18,20; 2:11) in the infancy narrative and only once (13:55) outside
5. Mark's gospel names her once by name (6:3) and mentions her as Jesus' mother without naming her in 3:31.
6. John's gospel refers to her twice but never mentions her by name. She makes two appearances in John's gospel. She is first seen at the wedding at Cana of Galilee - John 2:1-12. The second reference in John has the mother of Jesus standing near the cross, together with Mary Magdalene, and Mary of Clopas, described by John as her sister - John 19:25-26
7. John 2:1-12 is the only text in which the adult Jesus has a conversation with Mary. He does not address her as "Mother" but as "Woman"
8. In the Book of Acts, Mary and the brothers of Jesus are mentioned in the company of the Eleven who are gathered in the upper room after the Ascension. (Wikipedia)

## I. HER PURITY

A. First meeting of Mary in Scripture, she is a virgin - Luke 1:27

B. Virgin defined: One who has never had sexual relations; a pure and chaste person in relation to sexuality.

C. She was a betrothed, espoused, engaged, virgin waiting for the final stage of her marriage, the "home-taking"

1. By Jewish law she was already considered a wife for she had been promised to Joseph.
2. Joseph is called her husband; she is his wife - Matt. 1:19-20
3. The purity of virginity and the honor of marriage are both seen in her
  - a. Heb. 13:4

D. After the birth of Jesus, she became the wife of Joseph in the complete sense of the term. Contrary to Catholic doctrine, she was not a perpetual virgin.

1. Matt. 1:25

2. When they arrived in Bethlehem prior to Jesus' birth, she was still his betrothed wife - Luke 2:5
3. After the birth of Jesus, the full husband/wife relationship existed; at least four sons and two daughters were born to them - Matt. 13:55-56

## II. HER PLACE IN GOD'S PLAN

- A. Mary was chosen for a special work; to be the mother of the Lord.
  1. It was a favor that God bestowed upon her - Luke 1:28, 30
  2. This shows her to be a recipient of blessings, not one to whom a person is to pray for her to bestow blessings upon him.
- B. She was blessed among women - Luke 1:28, 42
  1. One of a woman's greatest earthly blessings is her children
    - a. Prov. 31:28-31
  2. Her firstborn was not only a blessing to her, but to all - Luke 11:27-28
- C. She knew her role was one of subjection. She is never shown in control of or making decisions for Jesus.
  1. During the infancy of Jesus, God dealt entirely with Joseph
    - a. Matt. 2:13-22
  2. When Jesus was twelve and caused her grief by remaining in Jerusalem, she shows a submissive spirit - Luke 2:42-51
  3. At the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, she makes a limited suggestion
    - a. John 2:1-12
  4. Jesus denies her any special favor or place in His kingdom
    - a. Mark 3:31-35
  5. The spiritual relationship is greater than the physical relationship
    - a. Matt. 10:37-38
- D. At His death, Jesus makes provision for her care - John 19:25-27
  1. The last mention of Mary in Scripture is when she is seen with John in Jerusalem - Acts 1:14

## III. CHARACTERISTICS TO BE IMITATED

- A. Her purity and virtue - 1John 3:1-3; Phil. 4:8-9
- B. Her humble faith - She identified herself as maidservant of the Lord (ASV: handmaid, bondmaid).
  1. Elizabeth her cousin, who was the mother of John the Baptist, calls her, "she who believed" - Luke 1:45
  2. She did not always understand, yet she believed - Luke 1:34, 38

### Conclusion:

- A. Let us never be afraid to say "Mary was a great woman."
  1. She was favored by God because God knew who she was and what she would become.