

## Prompts for Personal Reflection / Application

Psalm 119:18 *Open my eyes, that I may behold  
wondrous things out of your law.*

- 1) If you were Mary, how do you think you would have responded to the angel's message?
- 2) Why do you think Jesus bestowed such an incredibly high honor on a young, seemingly unimpressive woman like Mary and later announced his birth to lowly shepherds?
- 3) Are there any areas of your life today where you're struggling to respond with faith and BELIEVE God for the seemingly impossible? If so, does Mary's response to the angel's good news encourage you? Why or why not?
- 4) Take a moment to pray in response to how God spoke to you today through His Word. Is there anything that encouraged or strengthened you? Anything you need to confess, repent of (and in His strength) begin doing differently?



As we continue to examine the Greatest Story Ever told, it's now time to turn our attention toward the One who was even GREATER. The One who would not only be born miraculously of a woman (as John was), but the One who was born miraculously of a virgin and was also the Son of God

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup> But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup> And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Gabriel makes an UNEXPECTED appearance once again, but this time... to a young woman named Mary in the pretty UNIMPRESSIVE village of Nazareth.

Mary was somewhere between the ages of \_\_\_\_\_ when this occurred. VERY young... at the most... a YOUNG \_\_\_\_\_.

And unlike Zechariah who responded in DISBELIEF... MARY... a 12-14 year old young woman embraced BY FAITH what the angel said and \_\_\_\_\_ . What a beautiful example to us!

Brothers and sisters... LET US NEVER FORGET what the angel said to Mary in v 37... With God, NOTHING is \_\_\_\_\_ !

Sadly, the angel's very special greeting to Mary has been widely misunderstood and embellished by many over the years ("Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!").

If you grew up in the Catholic church or have friends or relatives who did, you may have heard the phrase "Greetings, O favored One" rendered "Hail Mary, \_\_\_\_\_".

The words *Ave Gratia Pleta* are found within the \_\_\_\_\_ (a late 4th century / early 5th century translation of the Bible) written in the common language of LATIN...and embraced by the Roman Catholic Church.

However, the thoughts that Mary was without sin, dispenses grace from God and as one who does... should be prayed to are \_\_\_\_\_.

Brothers and sisters, this is ABSOLUTELY UNBIBLICAL!

The Bible makes it abundantly clear that Jesus Christ is the ONLY (TRULY) SINLESS ONE who has ever walked the face of this earth. The Scriptures never put forth Mary as a DISPENSER OF GRACE... neither is she CO-REDEEMER along with Christ and make no mistake... she is certainly not to be prayed to.

Mary was an obedient young woman who was \_\_\_\_\_ by God... so much so that she, herself acknowledged that all generations would call her blessed.

Mary responded to God's SEEMINGLY UNTHINKABLE plan with unswerving \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_... answering "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."

Now you may have noticed that Mary did ask the angel... How will this be since I'm a virgin? This WAS NOT DISBLEIEF... this was a legitimate question.

And when the angel explained something almost UNBELIEVABLE... this MATURE young woman... BELIEVED and essentially said... I'm ready and willing.

What a GREAT EXAMPLE for ALL of us!

