



**Educate
+ Engage**



WHAT CHILD
IS THIS?



Mary - The Surrender
of Hope

OVERVIEW

The birth of Jesus changed everything. His birth brought hope, transformed lives, and revealed God's presence with us. For those present, their view of this Emmanuel, God with us, shaped their faith and their future.

Let's start with Mary. Mary was selected by God to be the mother of Jesus. She was engaged to Joseph and had no doubt started the process of mapping out her future. She received the angel's message and began to embrace a future she had not planned. Her obedience teaches us that true hope isn't in our own understanding or building our own future, but in trusting God's plan and purpose for our life.

Scripture Passage

Luke 1: 26–33 (NLT)

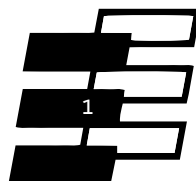
In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

EDUCATE

If we place our hope in God, that will require a surrender. We surrender our hopes, dreams, and plans to God. Mary's response to the angel's message shows that true hope isn't found in our ideas but in trusting God's process.

Point 1: God's plans interrupt ours.

Mary was in the middle of what must have been an ordinary day when suddenly there was an interruption. Luke 1:29 tells us that Mary was initially confused and disturbed. She wasn't looking for a message from Heaven.



Lesson 1

Mary's initial confusion at the disruption gave way to hope. In Isaiah 55:8-9 we are reminded that God's ways and God's thoughts are higher than ours.

Have you ever had a disruption of hope? What does that look like for us personally?

Point 2: Trust God's Word over fear.

When Mary heard she was going to be a mother, her immediate thought was how can this be? Naturally speaking, it didn't make sense. The faith of hope says we trust what God says.

Second Corinthians 5:7 reminds us that we walk by faith and not by sight. Mary had nine months to trust God's Word. She had to face the fear of what others might think or what they might say. She was alone when the angel gave the message of Heaven. Mary could focus on the opinions of others and live in fear over what they might think or she could trust in God's Word.

What can we learn here from Mary's example?

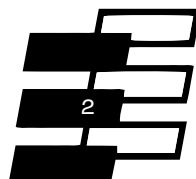
Point 3: Rejoice in God's promise.

Hope is exciting. Mary's life was disrupted. Mary had to choose faith over fear. But on the other side of her decision to surrender her hopes and dreams, Mary gave birth to the Hope of the World. Mary rejoiced in the role that she played in the story that she didn't write. Let's look at her response in Luke 1:46-48: "Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior! For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed."

Closing

Just like Mary, each one of us has a choice to make in our lives. It's important for us to think about our future. It's important for us to make plans and to take responsibility for our growth and development. However, at the end of the day, we need to remember that our ultimate goal is to play the part God has for us to play in the story He's writing. Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Each one of us will have an opportunity in our lives to surrender our hope. Like Mary, hope will most likely bring some disruption. God's plans have a way of disrupting our plans. When that disruption happens and God begins to share His plan for our lives with us, there's a choice we have to make. Will we trust in God's plan and God's will for our lives, or will we shrink back in fear and not pursue God's direction and plan? This is a choice only you can make. When we chose to surrender our hope, like Mary, we find a song of hope on the other side of trusting.



~~THE~~ ENGAGE

What is God asking you to surrender in order to embrace His greater plan for your life? God has a habit of taking ordinary people just like Mary and just like us and using ordinary lives for extraordinary purposes. Will you surrender your plans for His?

Let's close our lesson today with a prayer of surrender. We want God's will. We want God's plan. If that's how you feel this morning, would you pray with me?

