

Advent 2022 - Week 2

Mary

**Luke 1:26-55**



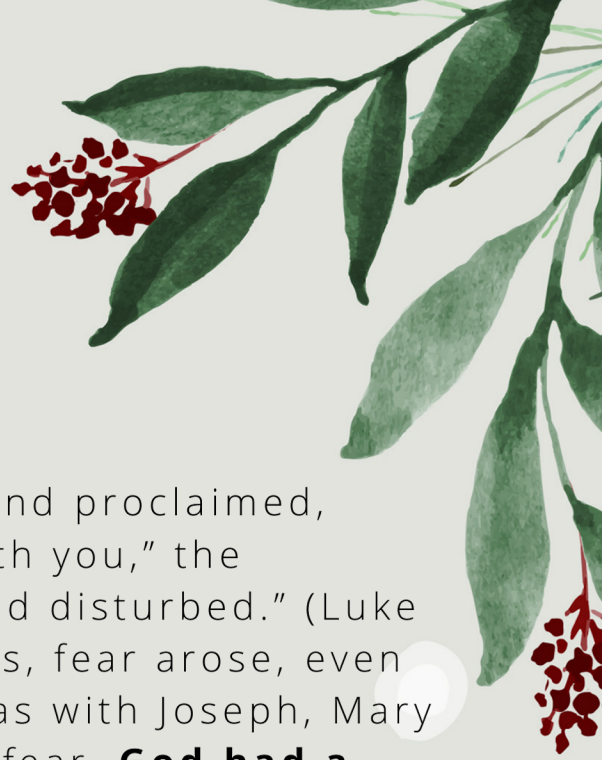
There is a song that asks, "Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?" I love to hear it around Christmastime. It fills me with anticipation and reminds that *Mary didn't know everything about her baby boy when she submitted to God's plan.*

When the angel Gabriel appeared to her and proclaimed, "Greetings favored woman! The Lord is with you," the scriptures say that Mary was "confused and disturbed." (Luke 1:28-29) As she tried to make sense of this, fear arose, even before she heard what it meant. But just as with Joseph, Mary was reminded that there was no need for fear. **God had a plan and the plan included Jesus.** She, a virgin, had found favor with the Lord and she would "conceive and give birth to a son...He will be very great and will be called son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him a throne...and His kingdom will never end."

Wow! That is a lot to digest. It is not surprising that Mary doesn't just say, "Ok! I'm all in." No, she does what I expect you and I would do. She fixates on a very obvious problem with God's plan (at least it's obvious to her) and asks for an explanation. The problem? She is a virgin, so how can she possibly conceive and give birth to a baby?

*Have you ever done that? You hear God calling but you cannot quite overlook the problem with His plan.* When we view the unknown as the impossible, we fail to remember that with God all things are possible. When we fixate on the obvious, we diminish His power to do miracles we cannot imagine. And, when we ask a question, like Mary, we are met by a patient, kind, and understanding Father who will help us walk with faith when we respond, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true."

When reading the scriptures this week, invite the Lord to answer your questions as you seek to humbly follow Him with a heart like Mary.





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!"

MARY ASKED THE ANGEL, "BUT HOW CAN THIS HAPPEN?"

I AM A VIRGIN."

THE ANGEL REPLIED, "THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL COME UPON YOU, AND THE POWER OF THE MOST HIGH WILL OVERSHADOW YOU.

SO THE BABY TO BE BORN WILL BE HOLY, AND HE WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF GOD. WHAT'S MORE, YOUR RELATIVE ELIZABETH HAS BECOME PREGNANT IN HER OLD AGE! PEOPLE USED TO SAY SHE WAS BARREN, BUT SHE HAS CONCEIVED A SON AND IS NOW IN HER SIXTH MONTH. FOR THE WORD OF GOD WILL NEVER FAIL."


MARY RESPONDED, "I AM THE LORD'S SERVANT. MAY EVERYTHING YOU HAVE SAID ABOUT ME COME TRUE."

AND THEN THE ANGEL LEFT HER.

Luke 1:26-38 NLT

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God's favor does not automatically bring instant success or fame. His blessings on Mary, the honor of being mother of the Messiah, would lead to much pain...If sorrow weighs you down and dims your hope, think of Mary and wait patiently for God to finish working out his plan.

LIFE APPLICATION STUDY BIBLE

Advent 2022 - Week 2- Day 1

Mary

**Read Luke 1:26-38**

**What is the first detail confirmed about Mary in verse 27?**

**From the same verse, we learn that Mary was also** \_\_\_\_\_ to be married to \_\_\_\_\_, who was a descendant of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Write out the words spoken by Gabriel to Mary in verse 28:**

**What stands out to you most in Gabriel's greeting?**

**If these words were spoken to you, how do you think you would respond, knowing nothing further?** There is not a wrong or right answer. This is a time for quiet reflection. If we observe Mary closely in verse 29, we learn that while she was confused by this greeting, she "tried to \_\_\_\_\_ what the angel could mean."

Mary

**As you read verses 35 and 37, go slowly to allow time to digest every detail that the angel reveals to Mary and journal how you feel these details may have encouraged Mary in her time of confusion:**

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."

"So the baby to be born will be holy, and will be called Son of God."

"What's more, your relative Elizabeth had become pregnant in her old age. People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month."

"For nothing is impossible with God."

**Reflect on a time when you were faced with uncertainty but you felt God asking you to step out in faith. Write a verse or two from God's word that have encouraged you to walk by faith:**



# Notes



Mary

**Reread Luke 1:26-38**

**What powerful words did Mary hear from the angel just before responding in verse 38?**

**Before we write out Mary's response, take a moment and consider other ways she may have responded given all that she knew about customs of that day, including that the law permitted stoning an adulterous woman?**

**Now, record Mary's response:**

**What words would you use to characterize Mary based on her response:**

**Is there any characteristic you see in Mary that you desire more of for yourself? Use the next page to write a prayer asking the Lord to help you in this area.**

.....speak to me through Mary's story. Help me.....

Speak to me through Mary's story. Help me...

Mary

**Reread Luke 1:35-38**

**Day 1 of this week had us focus on several things that Gabriel shared with Mary that served to help bring clarity and comfort to her, including:**

- 1-The angel first revealed what would happen directly to Mary.
- 2-Then, the angel shared specific details about the baby to be born.
- 3- Next, Gabriel diverts from Mary and Jesus to tell her what God was doing in the life of her relative Elizabeth.

**Why do you think the angel would share about Elizabeth now?**

**Have you ever witnessed God working powerfully in the life of another?**

**Did this encourage you, discourage you, or make you feel another way?**

**Given verses 37,38, and 39, what conclusion can we draw about how this knowledge affected Mary?**



## Advent 2022 - Week 2- Day 3

Mary

We have much more to observe in Mary's life, but let's stop here today and take a deep breath. A purposed and holy pause, if you will. Use the rest of your quiet time to thank God for a time that you've seen Him do the impossible in your life, or the life of another that served as a testimony to you. Ask God to help you share this testimony with someone who needs encouraging. If you struggle to find words, this is a good exercise to help prepare your heart for when the Spirit leads you step out in faith and give a testimony.

A FEW DAYS LATER MARY HURRIED TO THE HILL COUNTRY OF JUDEA, TO THE TOWN WHERE ZECHARIAH LIVED. SHE ENTERED THE HOUSE AND GREETED ELIZABETH. AT THE SOUND OF MARY'S GREETING, ELIZABETH'S CHILD LEAPED WITHIN HER, AND ELIZABETH WAS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. ELIZABETH GAVE A GLAD CRY AND EXCLAIMED TO MARY, "GOD HAS BLESSED YOU ABOVE ALL WOMEN, AND YOUR CHILD IS BLESSED. WHY AM I SO HONORED, THAT THE MOTHER OF MY LORD SHOULD VISIT ME? WHEN I HEARD YOUR GREETING, THE BABY IN MY WOMB JUMPED FOR JOY. YOU ARE BLESSED BECAUSE YOU BELIEVED THAT THE LORD WOULD DO WHAT HE SAID."

THE MAGNIFICAT: MARY'S SONG OF PRAISE

## MARY RESPONDED,

"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.  
FOR THE MIGHTY ONE IS HOLY,  
AND HE HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR ME.  
HE SHOWS MERCY FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION  
TO ALL WHO FEAR HIM.  
51HIS MIGHTY ARM HAS DONE TREMENDOUS THINGS!  
HE HAS SCATTERED THE PROUD AND HAUGHTY ONES.  
HE HAS BROUGHT DOWN PRINCES FROM THEIR THRONES  
AND EXALTED THE HUMBLE.  
HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS  
AND SENT THE RICH AWAY WITH EMPTY HANDS.  
HE HAS HELPED HIS SERVANT ISRAEL  
AND REMEMBERED TO BE MERCIFUL.  
FOR HE MADE THIS PROMISE TO OUR ANCESTORS,  
TO ABRAHAM AND HIS CHILDREN FOREVER."

Luke 1:39-55 NLT



Mary

**Read Luke 1:38-45**

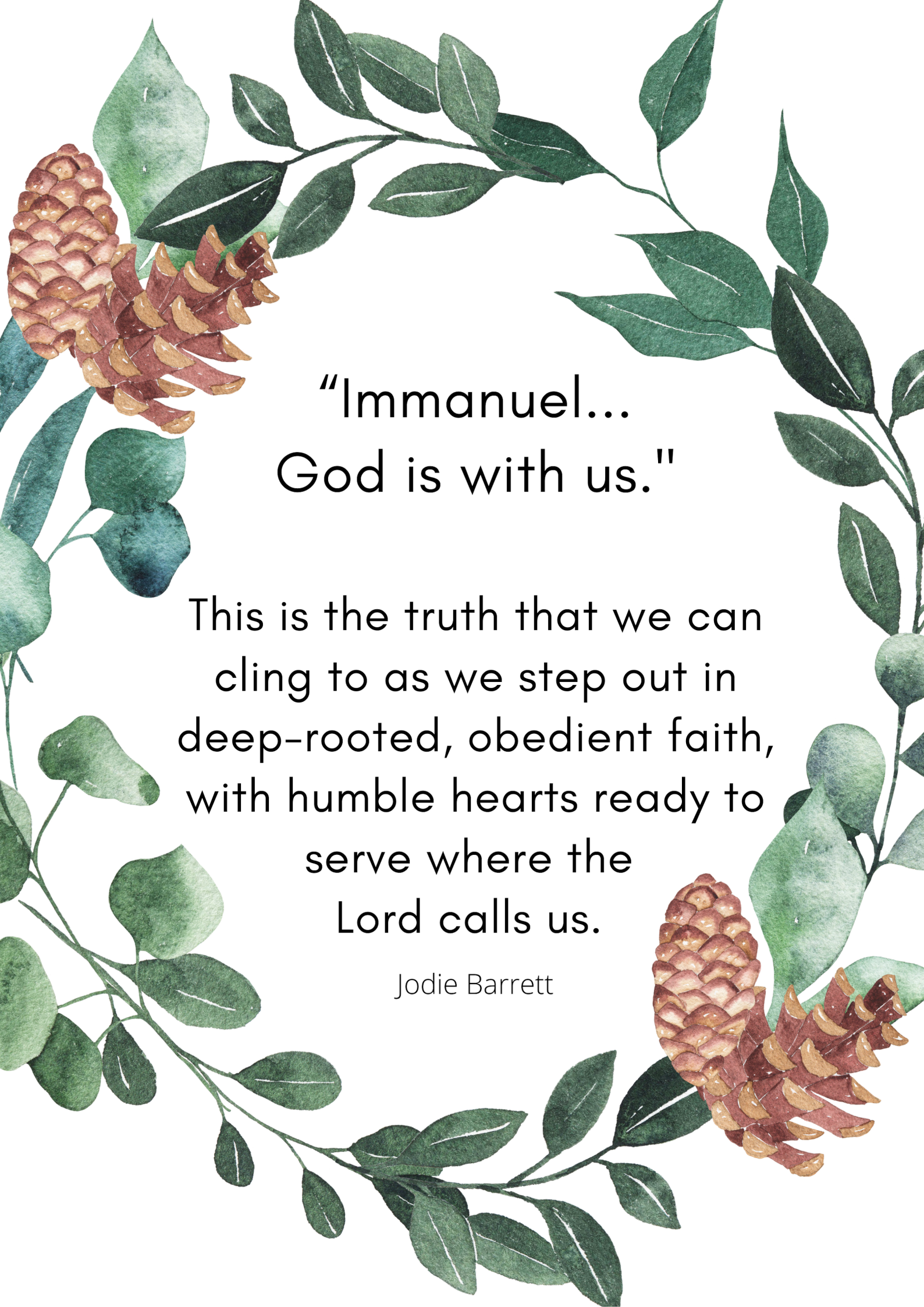
**What happens immediately after Mary says, "I'm all in, Lord!" I know, she didn't exactly say that, but I always think this when I read verse 38. You may recall the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Here I am, send me!" in Isaiah 6:8. Here's the thing, I would imagine that you may be reading this and like me, are thinking, well that's great...Mary is all in and the angel says, "see you later." This may be a good time to remember the name of our study:**

*God is With Us. What will be our response?*

**While the angel departed, God was present.** Those times when we look around and find no one, we can be assured Immanuel is present. This is the exciting promise that we are focusing on during Advent, but more that, this is the truth that we can cling to as we step out in deep-rooted, obedient faith, with humble hearts ready to serve where the Lord calls us.

Do you already sense the Lord asking you to respond in a way that you haven't considered before? Or perhaps, you know the response He wants but it scares you. Does it feel like it is too uncertain? Does the cost seem too high? Be honest in prayer and ask the Lord to meet you where you are:





"Immanuel...  
God is with us."

This is the truth that we can  
cling to as we step out in  
deep-rooted, obedient faith,  
with humble hearts ready to  
serve where the  
Lord calls us.

Jodie Barrett



Mary

**Yes, God was indeed with Mary, His highly favored, humble servant, the virgin mother of God's son. And yes, the angel has departed, but not before telling Mary everything that would serve her well in the days ahead. Reread verse 39. Where did Mary hurry off to?**

Since we are paying careful attention to Mary's actions, it's important to note **when** she hurried off to visit Elizabeth. "A few days later." Wells, friends, I don't know about you, but my knee-jerk reaction might have been to run immediately to a person that I could lean on during such a time at this. But Mary was made for this time. And you were made for yours. Yours? Yes. That time will come when God says, "Come, follow me. Surrender everything for Jesus." Trust that He will be with you and that He will provide wisdom from His Word that will guide you as you follow Him:

- First, into His arms where you will find strength to walk through seemingly impossible situations.
- Then, into a community of brothers and sisters who will affirm to you who God is and encourage you as you walk in deep-rooted faith.

**What does verse 41 tell us Elizabeth is filled with before she says anything to Mary?**

Mary

**Record some of the things that Elizabeth affirms to Mary in verses 43-45:**

The Life Application Study Bible states, "Mary must have been wondering if the events of the last few days had been real. Elizabeth's greeting must have strengthened Mary's faith...her wise relative believed in the Lord's faithfulness and rejoiced in Mary's blessed condition."

**This is a great time to consider how we can walk alongside our brothers and sisters in ways that will strengthen their faith. How is this exchange between Mary and Elizabeth encouraging you to respond?**

**Write verse 45 out:**

**Now, personalize the verse for yourself, adding your name in place of the word "you."**

## Advent 2022 - Week 2- Day 5

Mary

### Read Luke 1:47-55

**The Lord is with us, what will our response be?** As I began writing this study, God was doing a work inside me while I read scripture and listened to Christmas music. This may be a good time to tell you that I don't typically play Christmas music in all the other months outside of December. And just because I want to be good friends, I will share a little "funny" about me (or at least I think it is funny) ...I often get the best ideas at the worst times, like when I am standing at the sink with wet hair, a toothbrush in my mouth, and no pen and paper in sight. So, picture me, frantically trying to write what God is revealing to me with weary eyes, on a not December morning, while I am listening to songs about His newborn Son with a wet head. I pop open my phone and ask Siri to take a note, wouldn't you?

In my phone notes I began a list that developed over weeks of this same process being played out time and again. First, I would make a cup of coffee, sit in my big comfy chair, sometimes with my blanket, and sometimes not because I live in North Carolina, and you never know if it is going to be a 30-degree morning or an 80-degree morning. Then, I would head to the shower with Christmas music playing, asking God to speak to me. The resounding message remained unchanged no matter how many times I did this. In my spirit I heard the Lord say, "Jodie, God is with you. Immanuel was born to be with you always, what will be your response?" While I didn't have an exact answer, I knew was I wanted my responses to honor God. So, I went back to the scriptures to see the responses of those before me and frantically kept speaking into my phone notes the things God revealed. I recorded things like:

God is with us, let me have a willing heart, willing to bend to God's plans even when I don't understand. (I was thinking of Joseph)

God is with us, let there be praise. (I was thinking of Mary)

A response of praise is what we will see in today's passage. Verse 46,

## Advent 2022 - Week 2- Day 5

Mary

begins "Mary responded, "Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!"

**If you haven't already, open your Bible and read Mary's Song of Praise (Luke 1:46-55). Underline any words or phrases that stand out to you.** Go slowly and allow your heart time to soak in the words. This is another good time for a purposed pause. Perhaps one you can use to invite God into your response to His call on your life.

It's also a good time for me to pause from giving you questions to share part of my testimony written in the margins of my Bible next to Mary's song, dated December 24, 2018. That year was my first Christmas without our firstborn. After our son was received by his Savior in heaven, I remember looking intently at Mary. She was a mother who knew both joy and loss, and I wanted to glean from her story. Bottom line, I needed encouragement during the deepest valley of my life. When I read these words Mary said, "...the Mighty One is holy, and he has done great things for me." (Luke 1:49) I began to recount the great things the Lord had done for me through Jesus. He indeed was my Savior and He had gone before me to prepare a place for me. He sealed my eternity when I believed, and this could not be taken from me. Nor from my son, because he too knew Jesus personally. And, while grief was real, the peace God had granted me was undeniable. And from that place of peace, even in the absence of understanding, I responded to the Lord on December 24, 2018, with these words, "He has given me great peace in my loss, great joy in my pain. Will I commit to God as much in the desert times as in the seasons of abundance?"

God remained faithful to hold me, carry me, sustain me, nourish me, and fill me. My constant companion never left my side. While I was not comfortable, I was full of comfort. God was and is with me, even though my heart ached and I was able to "rejoice in the Lord...in the God of my salvation!" (Habakkuk 3:18)



## Advent 2022 - Week 2- Day 5 continued

I never intended to write any of the above in this study. But God. He asked me to be Elizabeth to someone reading this today. To be that sister, who would share her story and trust God's faithfulness to prevail in your life, just as it has in mine. Friend, I am praying for you on this very day.

*jodie b*



Mary responded,

"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.  
For the Mighty One has done  
great things for me."

Luke 1:46-49



Advent 2022 - Week 2

# Bonus Section



**for further study &enJOYment**

## WEEK 2

# PLAY LIST

listen using your favorite music source and  
prayerfully reflect, praising God in response

"MARY, DID YOU KNOW..." - PENTATONIX

"MARY, DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR BABY  
BOY IS HEAVEN'S PERFECT LAMB?"



WALK BY FAITH - JEREMY CAMP

"WELL, I WILL WALK BY FAITH  
WELL, EVEN WHEN I CANNOT SEE"



BREATH OF HEAVEN (MARY'S SONG -  
AMY GRANT

"BREATH OF HEAVEN, HOLD ME TOGETHER  
BE FOREVER NEAR ME, BREATH OF HEAVEN"



ONE MORE SONG FOR YOU - CASTING  
CROWNS

"AS LONG AS THERE'S BREATH IN ME  
LORD, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE ONE MORE  
SONG FOR YOU"





Mary



**The response of Mary teaches me to**

Scripture to remember:

**The response of Mary reminds me to be**

Scripture to remember:

**The response of Mary encourages me to**

Scripture to remember:

# Excerpt from Day 5, Jingle & Joy, Praying Beneath the Tree

## Day 5: Pray for the difficult

The difficult situations.  
The difficult relationships.  
The difficult things to understand.  
The difficult decisions we need to make.  
The difficult times we hold tight.  
The difficult people we need to love.  
The difficult things we need to forgive.

Can you imagine how difficult it must have been for Mary, the mother of Jesus?

To hear she was pregnant. No husband yet. Knowing that she could be stoned because of how it looked to be pregnant and unwed.

Difficult decisions had to be made.  
Difficult questions had to be answered.  
She and Joseph had to remain faithful to God and one another even in the difficult.

Telling her parents must have been hard. Understanding would require deep faith.  
Waiting would require patience. Trusting God during the difficult would be vital.

During the difficult Mary praised God

"and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has been mindful  
of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—  
holy is his name." Luke 1:47-49 NIV

Today pray for your own difficulties and the difficulties others face.  
Mary was encouraged by her relative Elizabeth. We can be an encourager to someone walking through unknown, frightening times, where faith is needed.

Lord,  
Your mercy never fails. Your strength is ever present. You fill the hungry! You help the hurting! You restore! We lift to you the difficult. Turn our hearts upward as we wait for resolutions. Keep our minds stayed on you and the goodness of your promises. Bring healing and hope into broken and hurting.  
Thank you, Lord.  
Amen

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