

The Glory of Christmas



DailyLife
Five Oaks Church

Week 1: December 10–13, 2016

Day 1

December 12



Pray / Give praise to God for keeping his promises.

AS WE HAVE seen so far through *The Gospel Project*, God consistently uses ordinary people to fulfill his promises and his missions. God consistently accomplishes his will in seemingly unconventional or unlikely ways. The way he brought Jesus to earth and the people he used to accomplish it is no exception.

For this week, we will be reflecting on the separate but parallel stories of Joseph and Mary and their being informed of their part in the mission of bringing Jesus to the world.



Read / Matthew 1:18–23; Luke 1:26–35



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Put yourself into Mary's perspective when she is speaking with the angel Gabriel. What thoughts and questions might have been racing through her mind?

Reflect on Jesus' characteristics, purpose, and identity as they are described by the angels to Joseph and Mary. How do these compare to how you have heard Jesus described by others in your life?

God seldom used the strongest, the richest, the most powerful, or the most popular people in the Bible to fulfill his mission. Does this statement open your mind to the possibility of your being a part of God's mission? Why or why not?

Day 2

December 13



Pray / Give thanks to God for allowing you to act on your faith.

BEING WILLING AND able to hear God's Word takes great faith and great discernment. However, following through and obeying his Word can prove to be extremely difficult, can seem unfair, or be sacrificial.

The many stories in the Bible that give an account of normal or unlikely people being sought out for action by God should give us great encouragement and a realization that anything is possible with God.



Read / Matthew 1:24–25; Luke 1:39–45



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Most people could agree that Joseph's calling from God was extremely significant, something only he would be able to describe, and a calling that would be difficult to obey. If you have ever heard God's call for you to participate in his mission, did you obey like Joseph did?

Today's verses are an account of the actions Mary and Joseph took after responding to their calling. What is significant to you about the actions they both took?

Think of a time in your life when you obeyed God or followed through on a prompting from the Holy Spirit. Did you joyfully obey God? Why or why not?

Day 3

December 14



Pray / For those who are far from Jesus Christ.

FEAR, REVERENCE, OBEDIENCE, joy, and relief are some of the feelings and emotions we feel in God's presence. How we express these feelings can manifest themselves in a variety of ways, including prayer, song, or action.

Experiencing God's presence can elicit a response filled with the Holy Spirit. God can transform seemingly unimportant, everyday people and everyday events into something very special and significant.



Read / Luke 1:46–56



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

In what way(s) does Mary's song of praise compare to the way you pray?

Why do you think Mary responded to God with her song of praise, and what types of emotions do think she was feeling?

In reading through the entirety of Mary's song of praise, it is apparent that she had an excellent understanding of Old Testament Scripture. This is evident by the way she refers to the covenant that God made with Abraham. Why is it important of today's followers of Jesus Christ to understand both the Old and New Testaments?

Day 4
December 15



Pray / Give thanks to God for all his provisions.

SOMETIMES GOD WILL not make his purposes or reasons known to us. However, today's reading gives us an example of God's making his reasons very clear and not up to very much, if any, interpretation.

It can sometimes seem that God chooses random people or random events to reveal and fulfill his mission. While God certainly uses *unlikely* people and events, he has chosen each person and event in a very special and specific way.



Read / Matthew 1:20–23



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Everything God did from the very beginning of creation and up to this point in time was to bring Jesus to earth so he could rescue us from our sins. What does this reveal to you about how much God loves you?

With today's verses in mind, do you think Joseph and Mary were chosen by God at random, or did God have a specific reason for choosing them to bring his son into the world?

For what purpose has God chosen you?

Day 5

December 16



Pray / For someone in your life who is struggling in sin.

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT to us all is his son, Jesus Christ. Through Jesus Christ, we are given the opportunity to live forever in God's eternal kingdom.

Sin cannot be overcome by simple human action. We would be dead in our sins without Jesus Christ. God gave the world Jesus Christ to redeem our sins because he loves us so much. He loves us unconditionally, like family.

God's kingdom is not something we can work or perform our way into. It is instead received by us through God's grace.



Read / Galatians 4:4-5



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Today's verses indicate that we are God's children and are very special to him. Through Jesus Christ, we transform from ordinary to extraordinary. How can today's verses be used to reveal some of God's truths to someone who is not a Christ-follower?

In today's society, there is so much emphasis on who deserves what, personal strengths and gifts, and fair versus unfair. A repeated and common theme throughout much of the New Testament is that even though we do not deserve Jesus Christ as our Savior, God has provided him through his grace alone, so we have hope beyond death. If you are seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ, do today's verses provide you with any hope or comfort in deciding whether to continue your journey?

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