

Mother's Day 2021

- Well Happy Mother's Day to all the moms, the grandmas, What an amazing weekend it is. Thank you for joining us here at The Trinity Church. I'm gonna start by thanking my wife Grace for being an incredible mom. When we met at 17... You can cheer for her. When we met at 17, she was this adorable little pastor's daughter, and I couldn't have imagined the epic adventure God would have us on and the five cute kids God has blessed us with. And I can honestly say this about my wife Grace, she has never once complained about the kids or being their mother. I can honestly say that. I can't say that about their father, but I can say that about their mother. I also wanna start by publicly thanking and honoring my mother-in-law Linda, Grace's mom. I love her with all my heart. We get along great. I got a great mom and I got a great mother-in-law, so I got a bonus round. And Linda's part of our church family. And she's moved down to be with our family and church family. We just love and appreciate, enjoy and adore her. And I also wanted to, 'cause I know you're watching online, Mom, I wanted to wish a Happy Mother's Day to my mom. That's my mom. She's the one with the glasses, I'm the one with the white shirt on. All right. Well, we love you. This is gonna be a great, great time together. And I'm gonna be in the book of the Bible called Luke, and we're gonna look at a gal named Mary. And usually she's a great Christmas sermon, but I'm telling you, she's the perfect Mother's Day sermon. And we're gonna look at motherhood lessons from Mary, the most significant mother with the most significant motherhood ministry in the history of the world. So, we're gonna pick up the story right here, that motherhood really matters. Who your mother is is really significant and important. Luke 1:26-33, "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David." That means he's in the kingly line. "And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, O favored, or blessed, one. The Lord is with you.' But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor, or grace, with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus,'" which means He saves people from their sin. "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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever," His kingdom will never end, "and his kingdom there will be no end." So, here's the story. It all happens in a little town called Nazareth. How many of you grew up in just a really small nowhere town? Okay, we've got some of those in Arizona, right? So, if you're from Apache Junction, congratulations, you made it out, and now you know what this means. Okay, so this is a small rural town and it's not the kind of place that anything really exciting ever happened. This town of Nazareth, it's never mentioned in the Old Testament. It's not mentioned outside of the Old Testament. I've got some notes here, but there are ancient documents, like the Talmud, an ancient historian named Josephus, and the Apocrypha, they never mention it. It never registers. It's that little town where God would be unexpected to show up or do anything significant. And in the days when Jesus grew up there, or the days preceding the time that Jesus would live there, it was a very, very small town, for this reason, much like where we live in the desert, it was a barren, desolate land and you really needed a water source, and in that vicinity, there was only

one well. And we've been there as a family some years ago. To this day, they still call it Mary's Well. It's the place where, when Jesus was a little boy, He would have went with his mother Mary to pull water for the family for the day. Well, the existence of only one well would limit the population size that could grow in that area. And so these things are investigated by historians and archeologists, and they've come to the conclusion that maybe there were 10 to 20 families that lived in that tiny town of Nazareth. Maybe there was 50, 100, maybe no more than a few hundred people. You're looking at a very small town where people live for generations, everybody worships together, everybody works together, everybody looks out for each other. It's kind of like one big extended family and everybody knows your business. We've been there and investigated it, and in the days that Jesus lived there, the homes were very small. So if you drove here and you parked the car, the homes in Nazareth were about the size of your parking stall. And that would have included the kitchen, that would've included the living, dining room, the bedroom, and also a small pen for the animals and livestock. You're looking at very poor rural families that are really living on minimal resources. The result is there's a guy in the Bible in John 1:46 named Nathaniel, he asked this question, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" This is where they ultimately grew up, in this tiny little town. Well, before all of this, we learned too about a guy named Joseph. And the story of Joseph is this, so Joseph is betrothed, they're engaged to be married. How many of you guys are, any guys engaged, betrothed? Okay. Right. Or any willing to publicly admit it? I mean, that's good too. How many of you guys are about high school age, you're teenage guys, or maybe early college? He's about that age? He's a young guy. He's very young. Most commentators believe that Mary and Joseph, they're probably mid-teen years, like middle school or high school. So Joseph is a very young man. And a couple of things about Joseph, he's not only young, he's a carpenter, he's a blue-collar tradesman, he's working with his hands. He's a very sort of common guy in that day. In addition, he's in a poor family and in a poor neighborhood. He doesn't come from luxury, he doesn't have a lot of wealth or riches. He does, however, come from the family line of David. David was a king, and he is a descendant of King David. Now, way down the family line. He's not in a significant noble position, but he is in that family tradition. And he really loves a gal named Mary. And they probably grew up together. How many of you grew up in a small town, and there's like 20 boys and 20 girls, and everybody's trying to make their pick, right? You're like we gotta get this right. I mean, there are limited options here in this small town. And so probably at a young age he saw Mary and his heart was opened toward her, and my guess is, my assumption or presumption is, they sort of figured this out and the families would have been involved from a fairly young age, and you would get married at a very young age. But now there's something that's going to happen, the story is going to change. He's not going to just marry a gal named Mary, he's going to marry her as a single mother. And this is really, really crucial. Joseph's plan was not God's plan. Oftentimes your plan is not God's plan, my plan is not God's plan, but God's plan is a better plan, okay? Now what Joseph is needing to determine is, is he going to follow an obey God's plan, that comes with a lot of complications, quite frankly? Because throughout the course of his life, the story would be told, well, Mary was unfaithful to you and she is a good liar and manipulator, and she created something called the virgin birth, and you were foolish enough to fall for it and raise somebody else's kid. Now he's going to have to choose a path for his life and his marriage and his family that was not the path that he had

ultimately chosen for himself. But would he be willing to walk the path that God had chosen for him? And for those of you men who are single, let me just say this, don't overlook the single mothers. Ultimately, when Joseph marries Mary, she is pregnant, and he is marrying an unwed single mother. And he is going to adopt her child, His name is Jesus, and he's going to raise that child as the father. And the point is this, the greatest mother in the history of the world was a single mother, don't overlook who God might put in front of you. It may not have been your plan, but it may be His best plan for you. So we find ourselves in this city with this man, and then a messenger is sent from God in the unseen realm to go communicate to this young couple, and it's an angel. An angel is a divine being created by God. Just like we're human beings, they're divine beings. As we live in the physical realm, they rule and reign in the spiritual realm. They're worshipers. We see them singing to and glorifying and honoring God. In addition, they are messengers. God will give them messages to deliver, which is going to be the case here, and they're also ministers. Sometimes God sends them out, like He would church staff, to go serve people and to help people and to try and alleviate burdens. The Bible speaks of angels in about 90% of the books of the Bible. Angels are mentioned about 300 times in the Bible. They're a mega theme in the Scriptures. And sometimes people will ask, "How come I've never seen an angel?" Well, you may have. The Bible says in Hebrews 13:2 that sometimes they come incognito, they come undercover, that sometimes we've entertained angels and not known it. You ever seen that television show, "Undercover Boss?" They stole the whole concept from the angels. That's what they did. Sometimes the angels show up undercover. There are categories of angels in the Bible, like the archangel, the commander, the cherubim, the seraphim, the guardian angel, and Revelation 2 and 3 says that each church in that day had an angel that would be divine leadership in addition to human leadership, which may mean, to this day, there is supernatural oversight and protection for churches as they're experiencing supernatural warfare. Only three angels are named in the Bible, Lucifer, the fallen angel who becomes Satan, and then there are two godly and obedient angels that are named, Michael and Gabriel. So those are two senior leaders. If you get one of them, you know that your issue is very significant. I'm gonna just tell you right now. Like, if somebody shows up and they're like, "I'm Gabriel," like, it's a big deal. That's a big deal, all right? If one of these two guys shows up, it's a very big deal. And then they show up and they're bringing a message for Mary and Joseph. It's also recorded over in Matthew's gospel, where we get more information about the message that was given to Joseph, but he were learning primarily about what was communicated to Mary. And the angel brings this message, and it says that she was betrothed. And for us, this category is a little different, because we have engagement and then marriage. In their day, they had betrothal, and this was in two parts, marriage is two parts, its covenant in the sight of God and then consummation between the man and the woman. And so they would covenant and then they would wait a year to consummate their relationship. During that time you were betrothed, you were legally married to. In the relationship you would literally have to file for divorce. So consider it, not exactly like, but you got engaged and you filled out the paperwork and now you were legally married, but you weren't living together and you hadn't yet consummated your relationship by sleeping together. It would be a year. And so they're in that season when they receive this message. And ultimately it says that not only is she betrothed, she is favored by God. The word here is grace, that she is chosen for two things, salvation and service. If you

belong to Jesus, you have been favored, you've been chosen by grace for salvation and service, to have your sins forgiven and to have a relationship with God that never ends, and service, to have some things that God is asking of you in your life that help others to know about and to grow in relationship with the Lord Jesus. So she receives salvation and now she's going to get a calling on her life of service. And I want you to see this as a ministry. Mary's ministry is motherhood. I just want that to be absolutely, inexplicably clear to you. How many of you mothers know that you're in full-time ministry? True or false, a mother is in full-time ministry? I had a woman ask, she recently said this. She has a bunch of kids. She's like, "It's so weird, when I was growing up, I felt like I was gonna be called into full-time ministry, and now I'm a mom." I said, "I'll let you in on a little secret. You're in full-time ministry." If you're a mother, you're in more than full-time ministry. If you have more than two kids, you're in way more than full-time ministry, amen? It is a ministry that God has called you to. And sometimes the most important ministry we do is preparing the next generation to do their ministry. But sometimes it is our children and grandchildren that will serve the cause of Christ far beyond us. And sometimes it's not about what we do with our life, it's what we do to prepare entire generations to serve Christ with their life. That's the ministry calling that is on this family. And ultimately, they're told that they're going to be the parents of Jesus. How many of you would not want this job? Let's just be honest, amen? God's like, you get the parent Jesus. Like, no, that seems like a lot. Number one, you could probably find somebody better. Number two, I don't wanna raise a perfect kid. Every time something goes wrong, it's my fault. I can't handle that much pressure. Can you imagine that? You're the mom or the dad, you're arguing with Jesus, and he's like, "Well, whose fault do you think this is?" You know, like, it's always your fault. You pull out the wooden spoon, He's like, "that's for you," you know? Right? Raising a perfect kid's a little complicated. But they're gonna be the parents of Jesus. And Jesus literally means He saves people from their sins. So they're going to serve the Savior who is going to save us. And it says of Jesus three things, that He's fully man, that He would be the son of Mary, that He is fully God. This says that He would be the Son of the Most High. And they had this concept of divine rulers and human rulers, and above them all was the Most High. And so God alone, God the Father alone is the Most High. To say that He is the Son of the Most High is like Father like Son, that he has the same pedigree, He has the same attributes, He comes with the same authority. This is the declaration that their son would be God. Now just think of that for a moment. Imagine parenting God. Does that seem like pressure? It does. It's a lot of pressure. She's a junior-high girl. Not only does Mary have faith, so does God. That's what I'm saying. How many of you have seen a 14-year-old girl, and you're like, I wouldn't give her a phone? I can't trust her with that. I can't trust her with a phone. How about God? That's a big assignment. She's going to execute faithfully. And that ultimately Jesus would come as King. And it says that He would rule on the throne of David forever. And so Jesus is adopted by Joseph. This is in fulfillment of a prophecy in 2 Samuel 7, that the Messiah, the Savior, the Lord Jesus would come as King of kings, and He would come through the line of David. Well, now Joseph, the adoptive father, is from the family line of David. So Jesus is adopted into the family line of David to fulfill the prophecy. And it says that He will be great. Now, those who would have heard this in its initial communication would have heard this in a different context, because the significant ruler in their day, his name was Herod the?

- The Great.

- The Great. And what the angel was saying is, actually, you teenage kids in a little tiny town, who are broke and engaged to be married, your son is gonna be the great one, and His name is Jesus. It doesn't matter how great someone is that ultimately Jesus Christ is the one who is the greatest. And so we then learn, secondly, that motherhood is ministry. Luke 1:34-38, "Mary said to the angel, 'How will this be, since I am a virgin?'" True or false, that's a fair question? She's like, I've heard about how babies are made. I'm not sure what we're gonna do now. Okay? This is a complicated situation. 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, sinless, perfect, the Son of God." Your son is gonna be the Son of God. Fully God, fully man. "And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age," she lives far away, she's barren, she's older, "has also conceived a son." His name is going to be John the Baptizer. "And is in the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing is impossible with God." Doesn't that sound good?

- [Congregation] Amen.

- Some of you right now, you're in a circumstance, you're like, it's impossible. Good thing God does the impossible. Good thing. Goes on to say, "And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the servant or the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And then the angel departed her." Mary here is realizing that she is the fulfillment of prophecy. The Bible, which we love and believe, is 25% prophecy at the time of its writing, anticipating, predicting, foreshadowing events that are going to happen in the future, because God knows and rules of the future. You and I are wondering what's gonna happen, God already knows. And as a result, most of the prophecies are about Jesus. Here's where He'd be born, here's what His mother would be like, here's what His life would accomplish. 700 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah prophesied this, and this is the great verse you get on your Christmas card every year. Isaiah 7:14, "The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel, which means God with us." That He's the Son of God become the son of Mary. That God has entered into human history through the birth of Jesus Christ. And she is now the fulfillment of that prophecy. Now, you young ladies, imagine this. Imagine you're in synagogue, church, you're growing up and you memorize Isaiah 7:14. You said, someday God's gonna choose a young virgin woman who loves Him, and she's gonna give birth to Jesus, the Savior of the world, the Messiah, the Son of God. And then one day you're like, that's me. Not only did I memorize the verse, I'm now going to be the fulfillment of the verse that I memorized. This is a shocking, staggering moment for a young woman. And how many of you ladies in hearing this, young girls, your first instinct wouldn't be, yes, Lord, whatever you ask? You'd be like, no, wait a minute. We gotta negotiate some stuff. First of all, what's gonna happen to my fiance? Is he gonna stay or go? Then what am I gonna tell my parents? 'Cause do you think the parents at first were, she's like, Mom and Dad, I know this is weird, but the angel said... So I promise you, I'm still a virgin. Trust me, the angel said. How many of you are parents, and you're like, my kids already tried that and I don't believe it? Right?

In addition, now what's her reputation going to be for the rest of her life? They're gonna think that she's the most godless woman in town, and the truth is she's the godliest woman in town. Her reputation is destroyed for obeying God. And she could have a lot of fear about her future, she could have a lot of discussion with God about her frustration with God. Instead, her immediate response is incredible. She said, "I am the Lord's servant. Some of your translations will say handmaid, that means the lowest female servant. What she's saying is, God, whatever You want, that's what I'll do. She has a servant's disposition. And what she's giving to the Lord right now is her reputation. How many of us are just constantly fighting for our reputation? She's like, you know what? I'll just give You my reputation. People can say whatever they want about me for the rest of my life, as long as I know that You and I are good, I'm good. Number two, she gives her marriage to the Lord. Is there any guarantee at this point that Joseph is going to sign up for this lifestyle and this lifetime commitment and this lifetime of, really, slander against he and his bride? There's no guarantee. In addition, she is now giving the Lord her future. What's she's saying is, I don't know what the future's gonna hold, but I'm your servant, whatever You ask, that's what I'll do. See, she is a young woman, but she is a deeply, profoundly mature woman. And sometimes we make this error of connecting age and maturity. Some people say, when you grow older and wiser. Okay, for you older folks, have you ever met somebody who's older but not wiser? Yes. We're in Scottsdale, they're everywhere, okay? What happens is... Okay, shots fired. Okay, so... Hey, it's Mother's Day be nice. I am. Come back next week, it's way worse. The way it works though is just because you get older doesn't mean you get wiser. Sometimes you can just make the same foolish or evil decisions year after year. And just because you're young doesn't mean you're necessarily irresponsible or immature or foolish. It's where Paul tells Timothy, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you're young. Set an example for them." Don't make an excuse. Instead, make a plan to be an example. That's Mary. She's young, but she's very mature for her age in particular. And what I love about Mary, God gives her this very hard task. And what she says is, basically, I'm paraphrasing, "Your will be done." Does that sound familiar? I believe on the cross, when Jesus is dying in our place for our sins as our Savior, He is echoing the prayer that His mother prayed when she heard that she was going to give birth to Him. What she says is, "Your will be done." Jesus on the cross says, "Your will be done." There are times in His life that Jesus echoes His mother Mary. Okay, if you've got a godly mother, it's a good thing to, on occasion, echo her throughout life. A couple of things here, just, number one, does Mary have questions for God?

- Yes.

- Yes. Does she have unbelief in God? No. So there's a difference between unbelief and a question. You need to know that. Mary, she believes in what God is going to do. She says, "Okay, I'm gonna be the mother of Jesus and I'm chosen, and this is what's going to happen by a miracle of the Holy Spirit," okay? So she believes, now she has questions. How's this gonna happen? You need to know that there is a big difference between unbelief and questions. Unbelief is, I don't believe what God says. A question is, I believe what God says, I'm not sure how He's gonna do that. Some of you, the enemy has confused you into thinking that if you have any question, you're demonstrating a lack of faith or unbelief. You may not be. You may be

just like Mary, filled with faith and seeking understanding for questions that you might have. So Mary has questions for God. She's not questioning God. She has questions for God. In addition, let me ask you this regarding Mary. Regarding what she knows, is her knowledge small or big? Her knowledge? It's small. She doesn't know much. The truth is most of the young women her age in that day were illiterate, not formally educated. Now, we don't know about Mary. We just don't know, quite frankly, but it is possible that she is uneducated or at least poorly educated. In addition, she just got a visit from an angel. And how many of you, that's just a day in and of itself? Right, you're a teenage girl, angel shows up, you're like, okay, I gotta process all this. She knows very little. Question, does she... Her knowledge is little, is her obedience big or little?

- Big.

- It's very big. So the point is this, sometimes it's not how much you know, sometimes it's how much you obey that which you know. And we live in a day when a lot of people are like, I just need to know more. Ah, maybe not. You may need to obey what you already know. And sometimes what happens is God teaches us things and we're not obeying it, and we keep learning, looking for more information, and what He's looking for is more obedience. Some of you don't need to read another book, you need to do what the last book said. Some of you don't need 10 more sermons, you need to do with the last sermon said. Some of you don't need to have 17 more meetings with a counselor, you need to do what they said in the last session. And sometimes it's less information and it's more obedience. And one of the great deceptions is that the more we know the more mature we are. We're not mature until we act upon what we know. Okay, so she has little knowledge, but she has big obedience. In addition, we learned that motherhood is miraculous. Luke 1:39-45, "In those days Mary arose and went with haste." So she's in a hurry, she's gotta go see somebody. "Into the hill country, into a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah." That's a relative, male relative. He's a priest, which is kind of like a rural pastor. They pastor a small flock in a small town. "And greeted Elizabeth." And now Elizabeth is his wife. They've been wanting a baby their whole life, and they couldn't have children. They were incapable, unable. Now she's beyond childbearing years. For those of you who know the Bible a little bit, which couple does this sound like? They're older, they can't have a kid, they really wanted a kid. Abraham and Sarah. Abraham and Sarah sinned against God. They went and got a girlfriend, got her pregnant, put her in the middle. It made everything worse. Moral of the story is, stick with your wife. Write that down. Okay, now here, what happens with Elizabeth and Zechariah, they find themselves in the same difficult circumstance, but they respond in obedience and faith. They're willing to not have a child and obey God than have a child and disobey God. And what God does, He blesses them with a child. It goes on to say, "When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary," so these two women come together. The, what?

- Baby.

- Baby. The baby, let me just pull over and just sit here for a minute. The baby. The man who's writing this, his name is Luke. He is a medical doctor. This is a medical diagnosis, by the power

of the Holy Spirit. So you've got a doctor empowered by the Holy Spirit making a diagnosis that what is in the womb of Elizabeth is a baby. Now, Dr. Luke uses this same word. I can't get into all of the references, not in a short sermon today, but this same word for baby in the original Greek text is *brephos*. Luke uses it for babies that are in the tummy, babies that are being held by their mommy, kids that are running and playing, the children who come sit on Jesus' lap. He's gonna use this also in his ensuing book, Acts. And this same word is used for children, whether they're in the womb, in the arms, or in the park, because they're all?

- Babies.

- Babies. They're all human life, made in the image and likeness of God. John the Baptizer is in his mother's womb. He is filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. That is only possible of a human being. Furthermore, as they come together, you're gonna see in a moment, he leaps. John the Baptizer is worshiping Jesus as God from his mother's womb. Not only is it a baby, it's a baby with a name and a destiny, known and chosen by God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and worshiping. Let me just submit to you, that's a person.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- That's a person. That's a person. So the story continues, "And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry," she's gonna pronounce a blessing over Mary. Usually the younger woman would bless the older. Here, the older blesses the younger. "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord." See, these women know exactly what God is doing. And though Elizabeth is an older woman, she looks at Mary and says, "In your tummy is my Lord." This is incredible. These are two incredible moms. Mary's gonna raise Jesus. Elizabeth is going to raise John the Baptizer. Jesus calls him the greatest man who has ever lived in the history of the world. These are the two greatest men in human history. The God-man, and then His relative, John the Baptizer. And let me submit to you, this may mean that these are the two greatest mothers in the history of the world.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- They're the two greatest mothers in the history of the world. "Why is it granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy." John the Baptizer worshiped Jesus as soon as you guys showed up. Even a baby can sense the presence of God. "And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." This is miraculous. The birth of a child is miraculous. How many of you mothers, when you became pregnant, you realized this is a miracle? The first mother, Eve, in the Old Testament, when she gets pregnant and births a child, she's just kind of shocked. She's like, "With the help of the Lord, I've made a man." I mean, she's like, this is crazy. Like, I make people. Like, that's unbelievable. Right? It is, right? How many of you mothers you were like, this is a miracle? This

is unbelievable. See, and as men, we got nothing like that. We got nothin'. Men can't do anything like make a baby. That's a whole 'nother thing right there. But let me say what we see with both of these mothers, and what makes a great mother, is they have faith. Faith is an internal action. Excuse me, it's an internal conviction that leads to an external action. So the angel shows up, says, "Mary, you're gonna have a baby." Internal conviction, external action. "Okay. You told me that Elizabeth is gonna have a baby as well, and we're both pregnant at the same time? She's old, I'm young, she's barren, I'm a virgin. I gotta go see this." She then makes a walk of about 100 miles. You know you love God when you go for a walk of 100 miles in the desert and you're pregnant. I'm not pregnant, I won't walk 100 miles in the desert. If I was pregnant, I would have a good excuse not to walk 100 miles in the desert. This is possibly a dangerous journey, but she hears from the angel what God is doing with Elizabeth, she believes it, and as a result she responds to it. And I really love this. These two women, what you've just learned, is that motherhood is a miracle and motherhood is a ministry. And let me just say that, as we have so many little kids here at church, and so many kids are being born, that sometimes the most important thing we do is to raise our children to love and serve the Lord, okay? That's why we say we open our Bibles to learn, we open our lives to love, so that lives and legacies are transformed. You know, you're not gonna be there in the future, and neither am I, but wouldn't it be nice if we raised up people who love Jesus, and they were there in the future? See, that's what Mary and Elizabeth are doing. So we just wanna honor the miracle of birth, and we want to honor the ministry of motherhood. And then here is the final section, motherhood is magnifying. "And Mary said, or sang," this is called Mary Song. It's called the Magnificat. It comes from the first word, "My soul magnifies." She's gonna worship. Mary is a worship leader, she's a songwriter. "And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Some of you were raised Catholic or Orthodox. I was raised Catholic, and you were told that Mary was sinless. She's not. She's a sinner, and Jesus is her?

- Savior.

- Savior. You only need a Savior if you're a sinner. In worshiping, what she's saying is, "I am a sinner, my son is my Savior." This is amazing humility. How many of you women would not worship your child? Right? This is amazing humility. "For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant." She's like, I'm poor, I'm young, I'm single. I live in a small town. "For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed." And we are to this day, her prophecy has come true. "For he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy, it's not just for me, it's for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his offspring forever." What she's doing here, she says, "My soul magnifies the Lord." The Bible says that we're made in the image and likeness of God, that means we were made to mirror. God is love, and we love people with God's love. God is gracious, we're to give God's grace to others. God is generous, as we're generous, we're reflecting something of the character of our God. And what she says

is, "I'm here to worship God. I want to magnify Him, I want to reflect him, I want others in this moment to learn about my God." And what she does is she sings a song. Now we don't know, was this something impromptu by the power of the Holy Spirit in her heart, where she just made a song, or was this a song that she had already written to the Lord? Either way, Jesus' mother is a worshiper. It's amazing. She's a worshiper. And she stops and worships. And in this, I wanna just hit what she teaches us, and what she's teaching us is what I will call God-centered worship. A lot of people sing, and some people will even sing to the Lord. Worship is where we not only sing to the Lord, we sing about the Lord. We're declaring who God is, both to others and to the unseen realm. She, here, tells us 17 things about God. It's very God-centered. Number one, He's the Lord. He's above all and enthroned, and she's His servant. He is in the position of Lord, she's in the position of servant. Number two, Savior, that her God is a rescuer, He's a deliverer, He's a forgiver. Number three, that He is omniscient or all-knowing. She says, "He has looked on the humble estate of His servant." She says, "I know He knows who I am and He knows where I am, and he knows what I'm dealing with, and He's got involved in my life because He knows. He knows all." He's also respectful. She said, "He's blessed me." What that means is, He's given her her dignity back. See, in that culture, her dignity would have been taken, but in calling her blessed, God has returned dignity to her, because He's a respectful God. He's also mighty, uses that word. What that means is, if He's got a plan or a purpose, it will prevail and cannot be thwarted in any regard. And also that God is personal. She says, "He has done great things for me." And sometimes we look at the world, we're like, well, God does great things for them. And sometimes it's good to say, you know what? God's done some good things for me. And she says, "He's done great things for me." He's very personal. He's also holy. She says that her God is holy. That means He's without sin, He's perfect, He's altogether different, He never makes a mistake, He never has to issue an apology. When He writes a book He doesn't have to rewrite it because He got it right the first time. That that God that she worships is perfect and Holy. She also says that He's merciful. That not only does He love, His steadfast love is to generations. Some of you are still praying for your kids and your grandkids and your great-grandkids. Well, just cling to that promise that God can be faithful to generations, because His steadfast love endures for generations. In addition, she says that He is worthy of reverence and awe and respect. There are so many people and things that we honor in our life that really aren't worth it. We get excited about politicians, we get excited about the stock market, we get excited about our latest trip that we get to post on Instagram, we get excited about the latest celebrity. We tend to glorify and magnify a lot of people and things that, quite frankly, aren't worth it. But this God, He's altogether, only and always, worth it. He alone is the one who deserves this kind of honor. Goes on to talk about His power with the strength of His arm. You know, when you're in trouble, it's really nice if somebody reaches down to help you. If you're drowning, it's really nice if someone reaches down to save you. What she says is that Jesus Christ is like the hand of God coming from the Father down to rescue and to redeem those of us who are in desperate situations. Also says that He is gracious. He exalts the humble, and He humbles the exalted. That's what she says. That God is very gracious to the humiliated. What she says is, I'm a lowly servant, but He's exalted me, He's has been very gracious to me. Also that He is very generous. She says "He fills the hungry." See, when you pray for your daily bread, don't forget to thank God when He answers the prayer and you eat it, that He fills the

hungry with good things. But to the greedy, He is just, and they are quote-unquote, "empty-handed." That our God is a God who can take from the people who should not have, and give it to the people who are in need. And this is not injustice, this is God being generous. It also goes on to tell you that God is humble. You know what's amazing, friends? We need God's help. You know what's amazing? God helps us. God helps us. Not only does Mary say that she is the Lord's servant, she raises her son to be a servant. Jesus comes to serve us through His sinless life, through His death for our sins, through His resurrection for our salvation. That her service to God is serving a God who serves, and she's raising Jesus to be our servant God. She says that He is faithful, that He keeps His promises for generations, and that He is eternal, that He is gracious forever. The big idea is this, true or false, in this moment does Mary have a few things to worry about?

- [Congregation] Yeah.

- Just run the list, okay? I just met an angel. Okay, that's the thing. He said I'm gonna be pregnant. True or false, just being pregnant, just the normal old way, it's a thing. And I'm gonna be a virgin, I gotta explain this to my folks, I gotta convince my fiance. Best case scenario, he sticks with me and I give birth to God. I gotta nail this. This is a lot of pressure. I gotta drop out of middle school. I got a lot to do. She has a lot to worry about, but instead of worrying, she spends her energy worshipping. Let me say this, friends. It's not that she has nothing to worry about, but she invests her energy in worshipping rather than wasting her energy in worrying. And this is true for all of us. The more difficult your life becomes, the more devoted you need to be to the worship of God. It's where you remind yourself of who God is. You invite Him in and you transfer the burden to Him. That's exactly what she is doing. What we see in the life of Mary is that she does raise the Lord Jesus. She's the most significant mother in the history of the world. We celebrate her every Christmas. I feel like we should also pay attention on Mother's Day. She did a great job.

- She did.

- Amen.

- In addition, her worship of Jesus continues. After His death, burial, resurrection, in the opening chapter of the next book of the Bible written by this man, Luke, is called the book of Acts, and it gives us the testimony of the early church. It says in chapter one, verse 12, that there was about 120 people gathered as the first Christians. And with them was a woman named Mary. She saw her son live and die and rise, and she testified publicly, "My son is without sin. My son died. I was there at the cross when I saw my son die." She was looking them in the eye. "I know my son was buried. I was there when they buried Him. And I know my son rose from death. I'm His mom. I'm a worshiper of God. I'm a devout godly woman. I'm not lying, I'm testifying." And she's there worshipping her son as God. Now what's amazing, in conclusion, is the legacy that comes from the ministry of motherhood through Mary. It says this in another book of the New Testament, Jude 1:1, "Jude, a servant of Christ Jesus and brother of James." Jude is a

half-brother of who? Jesus. He's got another brother, half-brother of Jesus, named James. Jesus was the firstborn, the oldest child in the family, but Mary and Joseph consummated their covenant after Jesus was born, and they had a lot of kids. The Bible says, on one occasion, that the family came and they said, "Jesus, your mother and your brothers and your sisters, your mother, brothers, sisters, they're all here, your whole family." So He's got multiple brothers, multiple sisters. Some of you like me were raised Catholic, and you were told Mary was a virgin for the rest of her life. Number one, no. Number two, Joseph's already been through enough, okay? He's already been through enough. Right? Probably shouldn't have said that, but that's what I was thinking. And then number three, the Bible says that He had brothers and sisters, so they consummated their covenant and they had family. And so James and Jude are two of Jesus' brothers. They each write a book of the New Testament, bearing their name. If you read James and Jude, it's two pastors, who are Jesus' brothers, saying, "He never did sin, He did die, He did rise, and I'm willing for you to murder me if I tell you who He truly is. How many of you would not die for a lie to protect your brother? I have two brothers. Neither of them would live if me lying was the only way that their life could be preserved. Ultimately, if you were going to be killed for lying about a family member you would tell the truth rather than die, especially if you were devoutly religious. But here we have James, Jude, two brothers. Let me just say, for your brothers to worship you, it's gonna take some evidence. And His mother is worshiping him. What's additionally amazing is, in addition, outside of the Bible in church history, there's another brother, there's a fourth brother who is mentioned. I'll quote to you from a theologian. "James, the half-brother of Jesus, was executed." So they came to his brother, James, and they said, "You deny that your brother is God." He said, "You can kill me, but I can't tell the lie that you want me to tell. The truth is my brother is God." And he dies. He was thrown off the temple and still alive, was stoned to death. Dying, James echoed his big brother Jesus, saying, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." They came to his brother, said, we're gonna throw you off the temple and kill you unless you deny that your brother is God. They threw him off, he didn't quite die. They come up to him, they said, "Any famous last words?" "Yeah, my brother said, 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do,' and so that's what I'm praying for you as well." And what it says, then one archeologist and one archeological expert says, when James is murdered, now someone needs to replace James as a leader in early Christianity. It is Simon or Simeon, depending upon which historian you prefer, who takes over leadership of the movement. They killed Jesus. He rises, returns to heaven. Mary has now raised two sons who were ready to step in, write two books of the Bible, and continue the ministry of Jesus. One of those boys is murdered. And then the fourth brother steps in and says, "I got this, Mom." That's the most incredible ministry family in the history of the world. And it came from a poor, unmarried, rural, possibly illiterate teenage peasant girl in a small town. What happens sometimes, Christianity is kind of a few different groups. There's Protestant, and then there's Catholic and Orthodox. If you're like me and you were raised Catholic, or maybe you were raised Orthodox, sometimes too much is made of Mary. We're told that her mother was a virgin too, and she never sinned, like Jesus. That's not true. And she's venerated, and we're told to pray to her. And as a little boy, I was told to pray, hail Mary. In the Protestant tradition, there can tend to be an overreaction where we don't talk enough about Mary. Maybe we give her a nod at Christmas, but the truth is, isn't she an amazing example for young women?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Much better than whatever we would choose today, social media influencers, celebrities. We pick young women because they're beautiful or because they're rich or because they're sensual or because they do things that are provocative. We don't choose them because of character. There's a difference between being an influencer and a worshiper. An influencer need not have any character. A worshiper has character. Mary is a great example for all of you young women. And I've always told our daughters, "Look to Mary. She's an incredible example." True or false, she's an incredible example of motherhood? She worshiped God, she trusted God, she endured a difficult calling on her life, but she raised her kids, including her sons, to serve Jesus Christ as their God and Savior, no matter what. This is the most incredible ministry family in the history of the world. And Martin Luther, the great Protestant reformer, he said she should not be our object of faith, but she's a great example of faith. And I'll just close with this, and then I'll pray for our time together. And I wanna thank and honor the mothers. Mary didn't have any money, but she had God's anointing. Mary did not have a great education, but she had God's anointing. Mary did not have a great reputation, but she had God's anointing. Mary did not have a large organization, but she had God's anointing. The most important, the most powerful, the most precious thing that you can have in your life, on your marriage, and in your family is God's anointing. We spend so much time worrying about, how much do we make, and where do we live, and how many square feet do our children grow up with, and what kind of car do we drive them in, and what kind of technology can they avail themselves to, and what kind of school can we afford to put them in, and what kind of team can we find for them to be on, and what kind of coaching can we pay for them, and what kind of influences can we have for them? What I tell you is this. If you have the anointing, you may have nothing, but you have everything that you need. And I just want us as a people of God, and I would encourage those of you who are mothers, to say, I want to live under God's anointing. I want my marriage under God's anointing. I want our children and grandchildren under God's anointing. 'Cause I don't know what God has for you, but if you have God's anointing, you will be blessed as she was blessed, and God will use you to leave a legacy for generations as He used her. What this means is, pursuing the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. That's what Mary did. That's what Jesus did. Find married couples that you see the fruit of the Spirit in and not the works of the flesh in. And for your children, encourage them to pick friends that have the fruit of the Spirit and not the works of the flesh. And if you see the works of the flesh, love those people, pray for those people, but not follow those people, follow the Spirit, and follow those who are demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit. Father God, thank You for an opportunity to learn from the example of faith through Jesus' mother, Mary. And God, I just thank You that my mother had faith. My mom prayed for me way before I had any interest in Jesus. My mother took me to the library every week as a little boy and gave me an interest in learning and reading, so that when I got saved, I had a deep appetite for the Bible. And so I just wanna honor my mom today. God, I wanna thank You for the faith that lived in Grace's mom, and lives in Grace's mom. She was praying for her daughter before she was born. She was praying for me before I was born. Lord God, so many of us are here because of the legacy of

faithfulness that comes through anointed women. We wanna pause and bless them and honor them and thank them for being a bit like Mary in our lives. God, I wanna thank You for my wife, Grace, who I love with my whole heart. She's an incredible mother, what a blessing. And God, I thank You for the mothers who give us the honor of seeing them raise their children in our midst. And God, we pray for the spiritual mothers as well. Those who maybe have, in addition to their biological children, spiritual children, or some of those women who didn't give birth but they have seen many born again in Jesus Christ, and they've raised them up in faith and faithfulness. And Holy Spirit, we just ask for the anointing of Your Spirit to be on these women, on these marriages, on these families, on these children, and on these legacies. And God, I just wanna say thanks. We've added almost 2,000 children to the roster of The Trinity Church in the last year. And God, if children are a blessing, we're sure blessed. And we say thank You in Jesus' good name, amen. Love you, guys.

- Thank you, Dad.