



## Introduction

The following questions, prayers and comments are intended to assist you through a Bible study time this summer. Watch on Facebook Live or [commhope.freeonlinechurch.com/live](http://commhope.freeonlinechurch.com/live) at 9 am on Sundays. This study and Pastor John's sermons will cover 15 men & women of the Bible. Weekly studies like these will be available each week. If you have any questions, please e-mail [koko@commhope.org](mailto:koko@commhope.org).

## Week 10: Mary, the mother of Jesus, Family dynamics

**Prayer of Preparation:** I know you call me to be holy, to be set apart. Thank you for telling me the story of your mother and how she pursued staying in right relationship with you. Help me follow her examples. Amen.

### Comments & references:

Last week we discussed the change that Joseph made when he planned to divorce Mary quietly, after hearing that she was pregnant, not by him. As soon as Joseph heard from God, through an angel, in a dream, Joseph made an intentional 180° turn and is noted to have done whatever God called him to do, instantly, for the rest of Joseph's days. (Mt 1:24 & 2:14, Lk 2:4 & 22)

In our focus on Mary, this week, we see that Mary opens herself to God's leading almost immediately (see Lk 1:26). She turned to her cousin to share in the extraordinary revelations that she and Elizabeth had been told (see Lk 1:39). I was exploring monologues recorded in the Bible by women and I came across this comment by John Piper on the website Desiring God when regarding Mary's famous Magnificat in Luke 1:46-55 and Hannah's song of praise when she is blessed with the son she prayed for in 1 Sam 2.

*Did you hear the parallel expressions and ideas? For example:*

<b><i>Hannah (1 Samuel 2)</i></b>	<b><i>Mary (Luke 1)</i></b>
v. 1 <i>My heart exults in the Lord; I rejoice in thy salvation.</i>	v. 46f. <i>My soul magnifies the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.</i>
v. 2 <i>There is none holy like the Lord.</i>	v. 49 <i>Holy is his name.</i>
v. 4 <i>The bows of the mighty are broken but the feeble gird on strength.</i>	v. 52 <i>He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree.</i>
v. 5 <i>Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger.</i>	v. 53 <i>He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.</i>

*The parallels are not word for word; neither Mary nor Luke is quoting the Old Testament. Instead it seems to me that Mary is so steeped in Scripture that when she breaks out in praise, the words that come naturally to her lips are the words of Scripture. Being a young woman, she probably loved the stories of the Old Testament women of faith like Sarah, Deborah, Hannah, Ruth, and Abigail. What an admonition to us all, both women and men (young and old—Mary probably was not over 15): to steep our minds and hearts in the Scriptures day and night so that the words and thoughts of Scripture fill our mouths as naturally as they did Mary's.*

My early upbringing in the church led me to believe that Mary played out her role as the Holy Mother perfectly; and, of course, I was supposed to do the same. I am, also certain that God directed her at every turn in her attempts to parent Jesus. Outside the story of Christmas, the Wedding at Cana and the story that tells of Jesus, lost and found, in the Temple teaching the Temple leaders, I wasn't aware of the rest of Mary's life. Below are some verses that expand on what she did as part of Jesus' adulthood.

**Read: Mark 3:10-21.**

Were Mary and her sons embarrassed by Jesus or perhaps, worried about the animosity and exhaustion that was surrounding him? Or, perhaps, both? Did Mary's urge to mother Jesus exceed its boundaries? *Francis Moloney writes "Mark 3:20-35 – is one such text. Mark 3:20 tells us that Jesus **entered a house and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat.** We are not told the location of the house, but it is presumably in the vicinity of the home of Jesus' extended family, for they receive word of what is taking place. **When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."** It is possible that their concern was not merely for Jesus, but for family honor!"*

'The members of [Jesus'] blood family are unable to understand the urgency that drives Jesus in his task of proclaiming the kingdom, and the powerful attraction which this exercises upon those who are sick, and in need of the physician (see 2:17).

*Jesus is making a point about the effect of spiritual disunity within both familial households and the wider household of God. A household that is spiritually divided will struggle to stand in the face of temptation and attack."*

This is a life lesson for all of us and our families and churches. Given Mary's track record of accepting the directives from God, what do you think she did with this awkward lesson?

John 2:11-13 The culture, at this time, did not record much about the presence of women and families in the events that happened. I wonder how many travels Mary went on with Jesus that we do not know about.

In 19:25 & Luke 23:49 begin the dying time of Jesus. An inconceivable time to be Mary.

Redemption comes in the next Chapter of Luke, (24:10) again an inconceivable time to be Mary. In John 20:9 there is a note that says the disciples still did not understand on Easter morning that Jesus would rise from the dead!

If, as John Piper posits, Mary was steeped in scripture, and as we know she had a lifetime living with Jesus, what was she doing, saying, thinking on the afternoon of Easter? I imagine her replaying all the things He said and the times they had together. I wonder if she replayed what she knew from scripture, in light of her new understanding from that morning?

In that old song called Great is thy faithfulness is a line that we sing, saying “Morning by morning new mercies I see...” Jesus plays out His merciful redemptive plan for each of us every day. For me, the everyday-ness of life with Christ presents its own challenge. Jesus said it well when he commented in Luke 4:24, that no prophet is accepted in his hometown. How exciting when we are given “aha” moments, like Joseph and Mary. Moments when, what we have known about God comes into a new focus and greater understanding. I pray that you and I have many of those moments and that your study of scripture enables you to have lots of them. In Acts 2:16 the writer does a wonderful job to describe how God pours out His Spirit so that we can understand and live in Jesus like Mary. Accepting correction and direction from God is always right and good for us. Taking correction and direction from the children of God, for me, is often aggravating and intimidating.

**Prayer:** Jesus, help me be more like Mary. Help me accept your direction and sing songs from my heart in gratitude for your leading of my life. I love you Jesus. Amen.