

# *Loyal Heart* MINISTRIES

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## **Walking in the Light of the Son**

A Study for Women by *Stephanie Little*

*Key Verse: "For with God nothing will be impossible." Luke 1:37*

*As we study the life of Mary of Nazareth this week, think not only of the purpose of God in Mary's life, but also the purpose of God in His plan for His creation. Fallen man restored to holy fellowship with God is impossible if left to our own efforts. Yet, as we'll see demonstrated in the following passages, "with God nothing will be impossible." His plan of redemption and restoration is underway as He includes the life of an unknown village girl to be the mode of transportation through which to present His Son to the world in a body of infant flesh.*

*The process of marriage in Mary's day was completed in three stages. First, the families would agree to the marriage. Second, the engagement would be made public. The engagement (betrothal) was binding and dissolved only by death or divorce. Third, the man and woman were married and came together to live and begin a family. Mary was betrothed, or espoused, to Joseph at the time of the angel's visit.*

1. **Read Deuteronomy 22:23-24 and Matthew 1:19.** Imagine the struggle within the young mind of Mary as she grappled with the conflicting emotions of joy and concern. As the angel Gabriel spoke glorious words of love and approval, Mary must have wondered about the words she would hear and the disbelief she might face when Joseph, her family and her friends learned of her pregnancy. What could have happened to Mary's upcoming marriage, her reputation, and even her life, once people discovered her pregnancy?
2. Which words spoken by Gabriel would have brought comfort to Mary as she thought of people's reactions?
3. As Mary listened to the message of the angel and as she realized her calling from God, what was her immediate reaction in **verse 38 of Luke 1**?
4. **Read Luke 1:39-45.** Why do you think that Mary left Nazareth quickly to be with her cousin Elisabeth?
5. Upon arriving at the home of her cousin, how were Mary's natural fears and possible doubts about the reality of her Holy pregnancy dispelled?

6. **Read Luke 1:46-55.** How did Mary express her joy to her cousin and her thankfulness to God?
7. **Read I Samuel 2:1-11.** How is the song of Mary similar to that of Hannah who also rejoiced in the promise of a son who would serve God with his life?
8. In recounting the story of Hannah and the returning of her long-awaited son as a gift to the Lord, what similar strength of character did both she and Mary possess?
9. **Read Matthew 1:18-24.** Joseph had been thinking and struggling to find a way to deal with his situation. As far as he knew, his only options were to divorce Mary quietly or to leave her fate in the hands of the Jewish authorities; in which case she would be stoned to death. As Mary left her cousin's home, what type of responses do you imagine that she received upon returning to Nazareth? From her family? Her friends? The townspeople? Joseph? What was Joseph's response?
10. **Read Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 2:13-23.** How did Mary demonstrate obedience to God even through the difficulties she faced recorded in these two passages?
11. What evidence are we given of Mary's obedience in raising Jesus in the ways of the Father? (**Luke 2:21-24; 40**)
12. How did God bless Mary for her obedience and faithfulness to Him through the childhood years of Jesus?

*As Jesus grew and prepared for His earthly ministry, we are not told of His teenage or early adult years. We can only imagine that He learned and practiced the carpentry trade of Joseph, provided for His mother after Joseph's death and lived and worked among his siblings and the people of Nazareth before calling His disciples and beginning His journey to the cross.*

***A look inside:*** Has God ever asked you to do something really "big" for Him? If so, how did you respond?

God asks us to do things that in our eyes may seem really "small." He asks us to be faithful and diligent in the service of our everyday lives. How will you respond to His calling in *this* season of your life?