

Mary Praised God

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 1:26-56

MAIN POINT: God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother.

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 1:15

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes Jesus different? Jesus is fully God and fully man.

Leader BIBLE STUDY

God's people had not heard a clear message from God for hundreds of years. Then one day, Gabriel—an angel of the Lord—told a man that his wife, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby. The baby's name would be John. Then the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she would have a baby, and her baby would be God's Son.

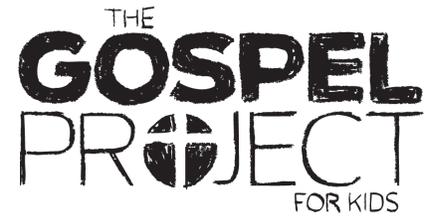
Mary and Elizabeth were relatives. Elizabeth was old and barren; she and her husband, Zechariah, had no children. Mary was a young girl—likely in her early teens. She was a virgin, engaged to be married to Joseph. The announcements of these pregnancies were miraculous for both women. Both babies had been foretold by the prophet Isaiah—John in Isaiah 40:3 and Jesus in Isaiah 7:14.

The angel Gabriel told Mary that Elizabeth was pregnant too, and Mary hurried to see her. The journey would not have been easy. Mary traveled nearly one hundred miles to see Elizabeth, and her arrival brought great joy to both Elizabeth and Elizabeth's unborn baby. In the presence of the unborn Messiah, John leaped in Elizabeth's womb. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she said, "Mary, you are blessed!"

The story of Mary's visit with Elizabeth gives us a remarkable picture of women living by faith. Being a young, unwed pregnant woman could have caused Mary to worry. Instead, her response is marked by her trust in God. Mary's song reflects her knowledge of God's Word and her understanding of who God is.

Mary worshiped God because the coming of the promised Savior was good news! As you teach, remind kids that people had been waiting hundreds of years for the Messiah.

March 8, 2020
Whole Group



Being the mother of Jesus would be no small task, but Mary trusted that God was in charge.

***Christ Connection:** Mary was willing to follow God's plan, even though being Jesus' mother would not be easy. Mary wanted to bring praise to God. Likewise, Jesus brought praise to His Father by willingly dying on the cross to save people from sin.*

March 8, 2020
Whole Group



Small Group OPENING *(before Large Group...)*

If there are any children who have not yet added a self-portrait to the Jesus Family Album (on the TV stand), give them a blank album page to draw a picture of themselves so we can add them to the album.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to help new kids connect to your group.

Invite kids to think about a job they've been given.

Invite them to share the biggest responsibility they have ever had. Did they do a good job? How did they feel about it?

SAY • Today we will learn about Mary, who was given a BIG responsibility. I want you to be thinking about how would you react if you were given such an important responsibility.

Session starter (10 minutes) — Hopscotch

There will be a masking tape hopscotch on the floor with crumpled balls of paper. One at a time, kids will toss their paper wads onto the hopscotch board and jump through it. Only one foot may land in each square at a time except within the square with a paper wad. Kids will pick up the paper wad on the way back to the start. For an added challenge, instruct kids to leave their paper wad in place so that each round has fewer available squares.

SAY • We don't usually think of jumping as something babies do, especially while still in their moms' bellies! Today we will learn about a time a baby jumped in his mom's belly. What do you think made a baby jump for joy?

March 8, 2020
Whole Group



Impossible or not?

As they arrive, give each kid an index card and a pencil. Instruct kids to write on their cards a special talent or ability they have (you will have to write for the youngest ones).

Kids should also write their names on the cards. Collect the cards and when everyone has arrived read them one at a time.

After you read a card, ask: "Possible or impossible?"

Allow kids to respond. Challenge them to guess which kid has that talent or ability. Call for the kid to stand. Consider allowing him to perform the talent if he wants to. Continue until you read all the cards.

SAY • These were some special talents. Some of them even seemed impossible! In today's Bible story, an angel told Mary that something amazing was going to happen. The angel said, "Nothing will be impossible with God!" Let's find out what happened.

Transition to large group...

March 8, 2020
Whole Group



Small Group LEADER *(after Large Group...)*

Activity choice (10 minutes) – Rhythm shakers

SAY • Rhythm is an important part of music, and music is a common way to praise and worship God. **God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother.** She was startled by the news, but she reacted by praising God.

God deserves all our praise because He is good and holy and He loves us. God sent Jesus to rescue us from sin. Jesus died to take our punishment and rose again to defeat sin and death once and for all. We can praise God in song and in many other ways. As you use your shakers, think about the things you want to praise God for. Then sing or chant those praises to Him.

Give each kid a plastic egg. Help kids put a small handful of dry beans into their egg and close it. Use duct tape to seal the eggs shut.

Break the kids into 2 or 3 groups and have each group sit in a circle with their shaker. Kids will play a rhythm game. Select a kid to go first. She will shake a short pattern and say “I praise God for _____.”

The next kid will repeat her pattern and add a short pattern of his own before saying “I praise God for _____.” Each subsequent kid will attempt to shake the previous patterns before adding to it and sharing something they raise God for.

March 8, 2020
Whole Group



Prayer (5 minutes)

Ask the kids to share about something that gives them great joy and reminds them of God's goodness.

SAY • God is good. He shows us His goodness in many ways. From simple things like providing us with food to eat and water to drink, to amazing things like sending Jesus to die for our sin and rise again to defeat sin and death, God's goodness is obvious. This week, let's all try to look for reasons to praise God for His goodness and love. Pay special attention to the good things that happen to you and try to think about what good things God might be doing through any difficult circumstances.

Take prayer requests and pray, thanking God for His goodness to send Jesus. Ask Him to give the kids hearts that praise Him each day.