

### **December 3, 2023 - Songs of Christmas: Mary's Song**

Feel free to pick and choose some of the questions below to engage with as a group. Before you leave, be sure to spend some time going over the **Top 3** things your group members need to know.

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#### **Connect:**

As we jump into this Christmas season and this series "Songs of Christmas," what is your favorite Christmas song and why?

#### **Engage:**

##### **Read Luke 1:46-55**

The hashtag #blessed has gained popularity. People post on Facebook or tweet and upload pictures of themselves having great meals or traveling to far-off places. Being "blessed" equates with living a life of comfort and privilege. Mary's celebration of blessings is in sharp contrast to the mindset of our society. She doesn't appear to be particularly blessed by our measures. What does it imply for her practically that God has selected her to be the mother of the Messiah? How does Mary's song show her deep faith? How might your reaction to news like this be different or similar?

Mary's song is full of Scripture. Her words allude to passages found in Psalm 22, 44, 103 and many others. She also alludes to Hannah's song found in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Is there a time when you have utilized Biblical language to frame your prayers and/or praise to God. If so, how has that blessed your prayer life? If not, what are some ways that you can begin meditating on Scripture, hiding it in your heart and using it to guide your prayer life?

Chris pointed out that Mary was unremarkable...and so are we. What do you find normal or unremarkable about Mary? What do you find unique about her? How are you like Mary in your "unremarkableness" and/or your "uniqueness?"

**Read 2 Timothy 2:21** Mary's personal choices prepared her for this "surprise." Her purity places her in a position to be used and blessed by God. In what ways have you seen purity and righteousness to the Lord yield miracles and blessings in our world today?

**Apply:** Chris led us to three groups that Mary "sings" about that will be impacted by her soon to be born son: the helpless (vs. 51), the humble (vs. 52), and the hungry (vs. 53). How have you seen the Lord help the helpless, exalt the humble, or feed the hungry? How has this changed the way you think about the way the Lord works? In what ways this week can you be a part of the Lord's work in ministering to these three groups.

#### **Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, we exalt and magnify your name. We thank you that you use the "unremarkable" to do exceedingly great things. Lord, like Mary, we wait for what has been promised. We wait for a new Heaven and Earth. We pray that God would use us to make His presence real to those who are outcasts or suffering. We pray for open hearts and ears to hear the voices of the oppressed and impoverished and to act in love and faith toward them. We thank you for the example of Mary, the MAGNIFICENT gift of your Son, and the love and grace that covers a multitude of generations.

### **Top 3:**

#### **Foster Care Wrapped - December 13 | 5:30-7pm**

Join us from 5:30-7pm on Wednesday, December 13 in the Community Center as we set up for the Hinds County Foster Care Christmas Party happening Thursday, December 14. This is a kid-friendly event, so if applicable, feel free to bring your whole family to serve with you.

#### **Foster Care Christmas Party - December 14 | 5:30-7pm**

We're excited to throw the Hinds County Foster Care Christmas Party for the eighth year in a row. This is a great night of fun that serves families in the Foster system and Child Protective Services workers. In the past, Deacons have been instrumental in the execution of this event. In large part, we'd still love your help engaging in this event. There are three primary ways you can help with the Christmas party.

1. Serve at the event on December 14. The event itself will run from 5:30-7pm with opportunities to serve in a variety of roles ranging from serving in parking to serving as a personal shopper to help kids find their shoes. There are opportunities to serve earlier in the day to help with any day-of and remaining set-up before the event.

2. Contribute towards the cost of the event. We're so thankful that the cost for a pair of shoes for every single foster child in Hinds County has already been taken care of by your generosity!

We are still accepting contributions to help us cover the cost of the event and make it even better than previously planned.

#### **Christmas Eve Services- December 24 | 2:30 & 4:00pm**

Although Christmas Eve is on a Sunday, we won't have Morning services.

Join us for a special candlelight service to celebrate the birth of our Savior at 2:30pm or 4:00pm. Childcare available for children 3 and under.

You can get more information about these events by visiting [fondrenchurch.com/events](http://fondrenchurch.com/events).