



Sunday 18th February 2018

6. MARY [Don't try to cover all the questions!]

Mary the mother of Jesus is a remarkable risk taker.

LENT is 40 days (not including Sundays) leading up to the celebration of Easter. It is an opportunity to seek God for his renewing presence and power in our lives.

- Share together your own thoughts and perhaps experiences regarding Lent.

Take the opportunity to commit yourself to doing something specific through Lent that deepens your discipleship and draws you closer to God.

- Instead of giving up something for Lent, how about doing something you've been meaning to do instead!

As Protestants we have a tendency to be very low key in our approach to Mary – we have no special day that celebrates her life outside of the Advent period!

1. RISK TAKING AND SUBMISSION – Luke 1.26-38

In Luke 1 we have the familiar Christmas narrative of Angel Gabriel's visit and revelation to this young teenage girl Mary.

Luke 1.30-31 *But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.*

The submission is expressed in v38 *I am the Lord's servant...may it be to me as you have said.*

- What aspects of risk taking do you observe in Mary's humility and willingness to enter into God's salvation plan?

Mary knew the great promises of the prophets but, it now becomes very personal as she takes hold of God's promises and submits to the implications it would hold for her.

2. RISK TAKING AND SORROW Luke 2.25-35

There is a further revelation that comes through Simeon, an old man in the temple. The prophetic message has the emphasis on sorrow that would devastate the heart of Mary. After declaring the scope of the Christ-child's ministry and how he would be a sign *that would be spoken against*, there was the indication of how *a sword will pierce your own soul too.*

- What might Joseph and Mary have felt in this surprising encounter?

There would be sorrow through the attitude and actions of many towards Christ throughout his ministry but nothing could have prepared Mary for the sufferings of Jesus on the Cross.

John 19.25-27 indicates how Mary was there at Golgotha – it must have been a harrowing experience that flooded sorrow into her heart that day.

- How do you think Mary coped with Jesus being the 'suffering servant?'

3. RISK TAKING AND SURPRISE Luke 2.41-52

There is this fascinating episode when Jesus was twelve years of age in the Temple in Jerusalem.

- Try to picture the different scenes in this episode for two caring parents.
- What are the elements of surprise that Mary has to process in this event?
- As Jesus was growing up in the home, what puzzling issues do you think Mary had to face?

4. RISK TAKING AND STRUGGLES John 2.1-11

There were some very real struggles for Mary.

The wedding at Cana in Galilee brought further revelation and a deeper personal surrender of Mary to Jesus.

In Mark 3.31-35 Jesus' family struggled with what they saw and heard from Jesus. Mk 3.21 indicates that some thought he was '*out of his mind.*'

- Did Mary share in this thinking of others in her own family?

Jesus makes it quite clear that he had only one family. How do you think Mary received this statement?

In Jesus' mind, His being part of her body was of lesser importance than her being part of His body.

FOR YOUR OWN NOTES: