

“Christmas Focus”

By Mrs. Sojourner

Particularly in our culture here in the United States, Christmastime seems to be a time when people either run, or are pulled, in many directions at the same time. Effort is necessary to conquer the challenge of keeping the appropriate focus during this joyous and important season. Both Joseph and Mary were focused on honoring God with their lives. This focus caused them to be concerned when Mary’s miraculous pregnancy was revealed. Although concerned because of the shame she and her family would endure, Mary’s focus of obeying God kept her on the path of quiet obedience. ^{Luke 1:38}



Notes:
[a]

for the journey, taking the journey, and searching out the location of Jesus once in Israel took considerable effort, time, and focus.

King Herod was also focused, but his focus was to kill Jesus, unfortunately, but did fulfill one of the many prophecies concerning Christ’s birth. ^{Matt. 2:1-18}

Let us, during this joyful blessed holiday, make extra effort to keep our focus on the whole reason for the season: Jesus our Lord and Savior. We give gifts, because he was a gift and because the Wise Men gave him gifts. We sing carols honoring our Lord as angels did in that shepherd’s field long ago. We hold our loved ones close as Mary and Joseph did in the stable. Like Mary, remember the blessings God has given us and let us ponder these things in our hearts. ^{Luke 2:19}

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Joseph’s trust in God despite how things looked was tested when he heard the news, but because he kept his focus on honoring God he was thereby honored to be the earthly father of the Christ-child. ^{Matt. 1:18-24}

The Wise Men also kept sustained focus on their task. Studying the star, preparing



Sojourning

Vol. 7 No. 45 December 21, 2008

...with The Sojourner

“Like Mary?”

(Teaching Sketch)

Luke 2: 8-20 (NIV)



The idea may seem very strange to have someone say you they are like Mary. Let’s look at Mary and see if this could be true.



Notes:
[a]

No Male Or Female
When I say we could be like Mary, I certainly mean no disrespect to Mary, the Mother of our Lord.

Let me explain. The Apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, **male nor female**, for we are all one in Christ Jesus.” It was made so clear to me by Holy Spirit it is important to look at the function served by Mary when she bore Jesus the Christ in that stable in Bethlehem. When the angel Gabriel appeared to her and told her she would be the Mother of the Christ she immediately questioned how that could be since she was a virgin.

We, also, might ask a question since we are not perfect and have missed the mark set

by God. Well, we can bring Christ to a lost and dying world no matter if we are male or female or, for that matter, even though we are not virgins to sin, falling short, missing the mark. Why? We are the righteous-

²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph [**increase**] son of David [**well beloved**], do not be afraid to take Mary [**rebellion**] home as your wife, because what is conceived in her [**rebellion**] is from the Holy Spirit.

ness of God in Christ Jesus¹² ^{Cor. 5:21} if we are the redeemed in Christ.

Pregnant With Christ
Believers are actually pregnant with the Gospel of Christ just as Mary was pregnant with the baby Jesus. Every time you, as a Believer, tell or show the story of what Christ has done for you, you are birthing the “Good News” of Jesus’ accomplishment in his

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Please note: This is a teaching sketch only and not the complete teaching.

“Like Mary?”

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Luke 2: 8-20 (NIV)

Scripture:

Luke 2: 8-20^(NIV)

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ [The Anointed One] the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶So they hurried off and

Notes:

found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.



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birth, life, death, and resurrection to save, heal, and deliver all mankind. When this is done the Believer is doing as the angels did in the field where the shepherds were watching their flocks by night. What was that? They were giving, “Glory to God in the highest,” and announcing, “On earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

Seeking God’s Move

When the angels left them the

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shepherds purposed in their hearts to go and see what God was doing. They said, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” They had truly gotten the message because we are told, “So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.”

Spread The Word

The shepherds then, once encountering the Christ Child, spread the word about what they had both experienced and seen.

Labor

Sometimes labor is difficult when bearing a child. This is sometimes true for believers in spreading the Gospel, but when it is spread you will find the angels’ response to Mary will be true for you as well. Gabriel said, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.” You, my believing friend, have the same assurance because the Holy Spirit is in you to carry out God’s will. You the believer are truly blessed!

Just so you’ll know:

Our service is informal. We look to the Holy Spirit of God to guide us corporately and individually.

Our service usually follows this general pattern:

- **Informal fellowship & sharing** of what we have seen the Lord do in, through, and around us since we last met.
 - Testimonies are a part of the conversation.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Praise, Worship, & Offerings:** (*Offerings to be placed in basket during Praise & Worship*)

Words of Prophecy or Knowledge if they have been given during “Praise & Worship.” (other times as the Spirit moves)
- **The Pastoral Message**
- **Prayer Requests**
 - Ministry to those present & intercession.
- **The Blessing**

“The Sojourner Live”
Sunday, January 4th
10:00 PM (CST)

Broadcasting a message of The Kingdom Of Blessing.

