

Mary and the Birth of Jesus

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 December 2023

Preacher: Sherry Stone

[0 : 00] Am I working? You're working. Let us pray. Dear God, we thank you so much for loving us. We pray, God, that we will receive your message as we look at a familiar story, but with new meaning.

We love you, God. Amen. Amen. Okay, I first would like to tell you my story as we look at the feelings that Mary may have felt.

She was a young girl, very young. So when she got pregnant, it was a change in her body.

Some of the feelings I felt when I first got pregnant was surprise, anticipation, anxiety.

And then, when I still cry, I had a miscarriage. So when I got pregnant another time, I was stressed, anxious.

[1 : 08] The joy was not there. There was sadness. And then, when I got pregnant, my baby, this was the second time I got pregnant, I'm sorry.

My baby came early, only lived four days. And there was grief, sadness. It was anticipation.

And then, when I got pregnant with baby Jason, my doctor said he wished he could wrap me up in cotton. So, it was a stressful, stressful time.

And then, we had Jason. And we're so excited. So, ladies in the church, I want you to share some of your feelings when you got pregnant.

What were some of your emotions, some of your feelings? Scared. Scared, okay.

[2 : 24] And you know I'm hard to hear, so you've got to talk loud. Pat? I was very excited because the doctors have told us there might not be a possibility for us to have a child.

And I only carried him for about seven months. He was born early. So, we have a lot of anticipation, a lot of excitement, a lot of anxiety, and a lot of prayer.

Okay. He was a three-pound baby. Yes. I was just very happy.

I was very happy. Okay. I was worried about the big change because we waited a long time as well. And I knew it wouldn't just be the two of us anymore.

Yes. I was anxious. Anxious. Okay, good. Hopeful. Hopeful, okay. I was a little surprised because I was told it was probably going to be hard for me to get pregnant, and I got pregnant right away.

[3 : 29] Okay. They were wrong. We had been told that we would not have children, and it was eight years after we were married. Okay.

We were excited. We all know that women are emotional creatures. Amen. Amen. God made us that way.

But men are right in there, too, John. Emotions are conscious, mental reactions, such as anger or fear. Subjectively, experience has strong feelings, usually directed toward a specific object, and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body.

And women, we know that once we become pregnant, the body does change. There are all those hormones and everything. Women of the church, I'm sorry, I got ahead of myself.

We want to look at the birth of Jesus from Mary's point of view, and what were some of the feelings that Mary experienced. Because, as I've said, and we know that Mary was a young woman, maybe 14, maybe even 13.

[4 : 52] And as we read the scripture, look and listen for her emotions. The prophecy.

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin will conceive, and your birth is a sign, and we call him Emmanuel. Isaiah prophesied this 700 years before the birth of Jesus.

Young women heard this prophecy. And they wondered if they might be the chosen one. The Israelite Jews, from the time of Isaiah, they were expecting the Messiah to come.

Now, God came to Mary, an ordinary girl. She did not have a title. She didn't have a position. She was ordinary. But she was willing to do what God wanted her to do.

[5 : 59] Now, most of us in this congregation are ordinary people. But, if we're willing to let God lead us, and I'm saying this to my grandson, Frayden, God can do extraordinary things through us.

Amen. Amen. The angel went to a virgin promised in marriage to a descendant of David named Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary.

When the angel entered her home, he greeted her and said, You are favored by the Lord. The Lord is with you. She was startled by what the angel said, and tried to figure out what this greeting meant.

The angel told her, Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God. You will become pregnant. Give birth to a son, and name him Jesus.

Your son will be king of Jacob's people forever, and his kingdom will never end. Mary answered, there was no question there.

[7 : 12] Mary answered, I am the Lord's servant. Let everything you said happen to me. Then the angel left her. Luke 1, 26-28. And Mary said, At that time, I don't know how God's going to do it, but I know he's going to do it.

Mary's emotions were startled, afraid. Why am I this chosen one? She was scared. She was blessed, exalted, and overjoyed.

Now, Mary and Joseph, as the culture was, their marriage was arranged. Mary was married. But now, Mary, only she and Joseph knew about it.

Her family considered her an unwritten mother. So she was a disgrace to her family. And as I said, she probably went to Joseph.

Candy, when you first found out that you were pregnant with Paisley, who was the first person you told? Zach. Zach. And then who did you tell?

[8 : 28] Probably my mom. Yes. So, Mary probably went to Joseph to let him know the good news. And then, she probably went to her mom and dad.

Jesus' grandparents. So, the angel shares the news with Joseph. Joseph had two decisions. He could divorce Mary. Now, even though they were betrothed, that's sort of like our engagement, it was more binding than our engagement. But if he divorced her, he had to tell why.

And it would mean that she was pregnant. And therefore, she would be stoned. Or he could marry her privately. Mary was worried about Joseph's decision.

Because they really didn't know each other that well. So, Joseph could have chosen to divorce her. Mary's visit with Elizabeth. At that time, Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.

[9 : 40] When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice, she exclaimed, Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear.

But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord will fulfill his promises to her.

Luke 1.39 Alright, as we look at the visions of the two women, Elizabeth was amazed. Now, Elizabeth had a miraculous birth, too, because she was about like nine.

So, her birth was miracle, too, and her baby had a purpose, too. She was honored. She was favored. She was joyful.

She had anticipation. And she wondered what this baby of hers would be like. Now, Mary went to Lisbon.

[10 : 49] She was excited about sharing the news of her pregnancy. When we get pregnant, we want to share that. We want to tell people because it's an exciting time for us.

But Mary was also surprised at Liz's response. And she wondered at the reaction of Liz's baby. Now, in those days, the decree went out from Caesar Augustus to register all the empire for taxes. This was the first registration taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone went to his own town to be registered. Now, the purpose of the enrollment, when we talk about the census, for the Jews, it was for taxes.

For the Gentiles, it was for taxes. And for the military draft, Romans could tax the Jews, but they could not make them fight.

[11 : 55] All right, the census. Mary was anxiety about the journey. She'd never been around a man before.

And although she and Joseph knew each other, they did not have a deep relationship. She probably wondered, would Joseph be nice to her?

Joseph's feelings? Do we have enough money for taxes? He's still not sure about the baby? And perhaps, could he afford a family?

So Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth of Galilee to Judea to the city of David called Bethlehem because he was of the house and family line of David.

He went to be registered with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him and who was expecting a child. Now, the trip to Nazareth was about 87 miles.

[12:58] We sometimes think that it was like a two-day journey, but it was 87 miles. It was four days. And you see them out there.

Most women's emotions were probably thinking about it. Just what were you thinking? Taking your nine-month pregnant wife on a four-day journey on a donkey.

Now, the trip to Bethlehem, we used to think of Christmas in December when it's cold, but it was probably in the spring because we talked about the shepherds were out on the field.

And these shepherds, because of their location, they were taking care of very special sheep these were the unblemished sheep that were going to be used for orphan sacrifices.

And this ends when I talked about the unblemished sheep a while back. We decided we wanted to be a blemished sheep. So we did. As I said, the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was 87 miles.

[14:13] the accommodations were very primitive. They did not have hotels along the way. And it was during Passover time.

The city was very crowded. Now, when Jesus entered, when the baby, unborn baby Jesus entered Bethlehem, it was crowded.

It was during Passover. Passover. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on his last week of life, it was during Passover.

Very crowded. And the innkeeper, they had no room. But he gave Jesus the stable. And sometimes I think the innkeeper gets a bad rap because the rooms were full.

He couldn't take anybody out. But he did have compassion on Mary. So he gave them the stable. And in this time of culture, this time, most young women died during childbirth.

[15:22] while they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in manger because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2, 1-7. Listen carefully, for I proclaim to you good news that brings great joy to all the people. today your Savior is born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

The shepherds were people of mean estate, low estate.

But they were the first to honor the Christ child. in the history of America there was another group who were of lowest state. The slaves in early U.S. history.

[16:40] And they would work in the fields and they would sing. They would sing spiritual, swing low, sweet chariot. The one that they wrote is the one I want to sing today.

And I'm going to sing it in that language of the slaves tinged with the Gullah dialect full of pain and papas.

All about sweet little Jesus boy. Sweet little holy Jesus boy.

They made you be born in a manger. Sweet little holy child. Didn't know who you was.

Didn't know you'd come to save us Lord. To take our sins away. Our eyes was blind we couldn't see.

[17:49] We didn't know who you was. Long time ago you was born born in a manger goal.

Sweet little Jesus boy. the world treat you mean Lord. Treat me mean too.

But that's how things is down here. We don't know who you is.

You done told us how when we is a try and you done showed us how even when you dying.

Just seem like we can't do right. Look how we treated you. But please stop forgive us Lord.

[19:12] We didn't know who was you. Sweet little Jesus born born long time ago we little holy child and we didn't know who you are.

Suddenly a vast heavenly army appeared with the angel praising God saying glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among people with whom he is pleased.

When the angels left them and went back to heaven the shepherds said to one another let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place that the Lord has made known to us. It was a custom back then that when a baby boy was born singers would sing outside the Jesus had angels to sing in his birth.

Now the shepherds probably were terrified when the angels appeared to them. They were hesitant to leave their sheep because they were responsible and we've had many studies about sheep are not very smart animals and they were responsible for these sheep.

[20 : 51] They were impressed with the choir and they were in a hurry to see the new kid in town. So they hurried off and located Mary and Joseph and found the baby lying in a manger.

When they saw him they related what they had been told about this child and all who heard it were astonished at what the shepherds said. And so the shepherds visit the manger.

But Mary treasured up all these words pondering in their heart what they might mean. So the shepherds returned glorifying the praise of God for all they had heard and seen everything was just as they had been told.

So some of the emotions that shepherds may have felt they were surprised to see a stable as we know that the shepherds were the low man on the totem pole.

They were honored to be invited by the angels and they were anxious to tell someone about this good news. Mary's heart was full of wonder.

[21 : 57] She was wanting to remember everything. What are your emotions as you hear this good news again? The shepherds went and they told everybody as they went to share the good news.

The shepherds were as I said the low man on the totem pole. They chose them to but God chose them to give the message to. What did they do with the good news?

They went out and told everyone. What are we going to do with this good news? Your time.

Pat it on. Stephen? I'm sorry. Usually Stephen and the music knows that I'm through.

It's because we pray and I didn't pray. Thank you.