

GOD'S GIFT OF GIVING MOTHERS

The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered, "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. *Luke 1:28-38*

I. A Giving Mother is Submissive to God

- ***God can disrupt women's lives and plans with _____*** – Once children come, mothers live their lives primarily for the needs and benefit of their children. Mothers' lives end as they know it. For Mary, motherhood came too soon, in less than ideal circumstances, and with a very special child – Jesus.
- ***God gives children as a blessing, not a curse or _____*** – Mary could have seen this "blessing" as a curse and inconvenience. She was so young. She wasn't married yet. She may have had plans before children came. God reminded her that this was a blessing – "you who are highly favored!" When children seem a burden, remember that God sees them as a blessing, despite the problems and sacrifices. Ask God for His perspective.
- ***No matter what the challenges and problems with children, nothing is _____ with God*** – With some children, the challenges of child-rearing may seem impossible. This is especially true with special needs and those with behavioral challenges. Giving mothers never give up! Why? Because nothing is impossible with God. Mothers need to depend on God's personal intervention, and guidance in impossible situations.
- ***Giving mothers choose to _____ to God's Will*** – Mary's response: "I am the Lord's servant." She gave up her rights to her life to serve God. Today's giving mothers do the same.

II. A Giving Mother is Full of Love and Praise

- ***Giving mothers love _____*** – Mary showed her love for God by accepting God's Will for her life, acting on His Will, and realizing that this event was a blessing. Our love for God is demonstrated by our actions, not words.
- ***Giving mothers love their _____*** – This love is shown by personal sacrifice and prioritizing spiritual development over all else. Love is shown when guiding and disciplining children God's way, even when children resist and want to go their own way.

III. Giving Mothers are Faithful

- ***Giving mothers are faithful to _____*** – They are committed to God, first and foremost with their whole lives, including their mother ministry. Mary stayed faithful to God with her unique responsibilities with Jesus. Though mothering can be fulfilling, it can also be overwhelming and disappointing. Faithfulness transcends personal desires and career.
- ***Giving mothers are faithful to _____ n*** – Being a mother doesn't end when children are grown, through the role changes. Mary stayed faithful to Jesus through His ministry and journey to the cross. Mary was there at the cross with all a mother's anguish of watching her son die. It is doubtful that Mary envisioned the cross as the endpoint of the journey that began with Gabriel's announcement of being with child. Often, our dreams and hopes for our children don't turn into reality. Giving mothers are faithful in the circumstances they face, despite disappointment and heartache. This faithfulness will be imperfect. Mothers are human. They will falter and fail. Faithfulness is keeping on, despite mistakes. Being a mother is not a solo act. Fathers, family, friends, and the Church need to be there to encourage and help.

Answers: I. Children; inconvenience; impossible; submit. II. God; families. III. God; family.