

LESSON 8
July 26, 2026

Unit II: Faithful Witnesses Say “Yes” to Jesus Christ Living with What You Didn’t Ask For

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 12:1-6
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Luke 2:15-19; John 2:1-5; 19:25-27
PRINT PASSAGES: Luke 2:15-19; John 2:1-5; 19:25-27

KEY VERSE

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. (Luke 2:19, KJV)

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But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. (Luke 2:19, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- Examine Mary’s role as Jesus’ mother as an expression of faithful witness.
- Nurture “inner hospitality” as an expression of welcome to Jesus.
- Practice welcoming others as an expression of faithful witness to Christ.

*Key Terms

Were gone away (Luke 2:15)—Greek: *aperchomai* (ap-erkh’-om-ahee): went away; departed; left; “had left them and gone” (NIV).

Heart (Luke 2:19)—Greek: *kardia* (kar-dee’- ah): inner self; center.

Manger (Luke 2:16)—Greek: *phatné* (fat’-nay): a feeding-trough; stall.

Wondered (Luke 2:18)—Greek: *thaumazó* (thoumad’-zo): to marvel; “were amazed at” (NIV).

Pondered (Luke 2:19)—Greek: *sumballó* (soombal’-lo): to consider; to throw together minds or plans so that something new results.

Made known abroad (Luke 2:17)—Greek: *gnórizó* (gno-rid’-zo): declared; proclaimed; “spread the word” (NIV).

*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)

Introduction

Saying “yes” reveals important traits about a person’s character. For example, it often shows that a person is willing to submit to someone with higher authority and surrender their per-



The Biblical Context

Luke 2:15-19, John 2:1-5, and John 19:25-27, together, reveal profound theological truths about faith, obedience, and discipleship in Mary's journey as Jesus' mother. Luke chapter 2, written by Luke, a Gentile physician and Paul's traveling companion, continues his well-organized account of the births of Jesus Christ and John the Baptist. He briefly summarizes Jesus' birth and the arrival of shepherds guided by angels (and Mary's reflective response), His dedication in the temple, and concludes with the only account of Jesus' early youth. John 2:1-5, authored by the apostle John, records Jesus' first miracle at a wedding in Cana. It is one of seven he calls "signs" to demonstrate that Jesus is God incarnate and to affirm Mary's ongoing commitment to God's plan. However, she still did not fully understand it. The context for John 19:25-27 is Jesus' crucifixion, where He makes provisions for His mother, Mary, whose presence affirms her faithfulness to God's purpose for her life, despite the unexpected circumstances.

sonal preferences. An affirmative also demonstrates openness to trying new experiences and following through on one's word, highlighting integrity and responsibility. Spiritually, a "yes" to God indicates obedience and a willingness to yield to His guidance, even when full understanding of His purpose is unclear, and often involves living with what you did not ask for. Several biblical figures said "yes" to God and then faced unexpected challenges. Abraham's "yes" required leaving the security of his homeland, traveling to an unspecified location, and waiting decades for God's promise of a male heir. Although he was anointed king while still a young shepherd, David spent years fleeing Saul's jealous wrath and faced family betrayal and personal moral failure. Still, a powerful and spiritually instructive example of a "yes" that involved living with what was not asked for is Mary, Jesus' mother. She faced the unexpected potential of stigma and scandal aimed at unwed pregnant women and witnessed her son's horrific crucifixion and death on the cross. Yet, she demonstrated wholehearted surrender to God's will (Luke 1:38), worshipped Him amid her uncertainty (Luke 1:46-55), and remained faithful to the faith community by continuing to trust God's unfolding plan after her son's ascension (Acts 1:14).

ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

A Faithful Witness Embraces the Unexpected (Luke 2:15-19)

KJV

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

NIV

15 When 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.”

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,

18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

The first people to learn about Jesus’ birth were shepherds who followed the angels’ instructions on how to find Him, and they found Mary, Joseph, and the baby just as they were told (verses 15-16). After seeing the Christ child, they became the first human messengers of the angel’s message about His birth, quickly sharing all they had heard and seen (verse 17). Those who heard the shepherds’ message were “amazed” or astonished, but this might have been a brief moment of awe due to the shepherds’ status as ordinary, humble people (verse 18). Therefore, we should note that this message is not heard again from anyone else anywhere in the New Testament. However, the people’s reactions differ from Mary’s. While the shepherds spoke out and those who heard their message were outwardly amazed, Mary reflected on “all these things” inwardly (verse 19). The phrase, “treasured up all these things,” indicates that Mary carefully kept the events surrounding her son’s birth in her heart, considering them precious and worth holding onto. Additionally, Mary “pondered them in her heart,” which means she thought about, connected, and meditated on everything she had heard and seen, even amid uncertainty. Luke’s dual emphasis on Mary’s treasuring and pondering shows that she fully embraced her role as a faithful witness, even in the face of uncertainty ahead. Therefore, Mary’s actions of contemplation and reflection inspire believers to adopt these spiritual disciplines.

? WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How can Mary’s internal contemplation and reflection serve as a model for our “yes” to God’s purpose and will for our lives?

A Faithful Witness Trusts God’s Timing (*John 2:1-5*)

KJV

AND THE third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

**3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.
4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.
5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.**

NIV

**ON THE third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there,
2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.
3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."
4 "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."
5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."**

In chapter 2 of his gospel, John records the first of seven "signs" or miracles he uses to show that Jesus is God and that believing in Him leads to eternal life. This "sign" happens at a wedding in Cana, eight miles north of Nazareth, where Jesus grew up, and seventeen miles southwest of Capernaum, His mission headquarters. Jesus' mother, Mary, was there, and He and His disciples were invited, likely because the bridegroom knew His family (verses 1-2). Some scholars agree that "the third day" refers to the three days after Jesus' encounter with Nathanael, when he became a disciple. During the wedding feast, which usually lasted a whole week, the wine runs out (verse 3). This was an embarrassing social problem for the bridegroom, who could not provide wine for the remaining guests. Still, Mary approaches Jesus and reports the situation to Him. Jesus responds to her politely but not intimately, calling her "woman," meaning "ma'am," and asks what this has to do with them in verse 4, signaling that their mother-son relationship had changed from what it was while He was growing up in Nazareth. Jesus adds that His hour has not yet come, meaning the time to reveal His messianic glory had not arrived. Mary does not respond to Jesus but confidently tells the servants to do whatever He tells them to do (verse 5). Her response shows her submission to Jesus, her anticipation and trust in Him to respond, and her faithful commitment to her "yes" to God, even though she still does not fully understand His mission.

Q WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What does Mary's confidence in Jesus imply about her understanding of His divine purpose?

A Faithful Witness Endures the Unthinkable

(John 19:25-27)

KJV

**25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.
26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!**

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

NIV

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son,"

27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Mary's journey as Jesus' mother ends at the cross. Her dedication to this role, which she never sought, began after the shepherd's divinely planned visit following His birth. It was marked by contemplative faith, as she treasured all she saw and experienced, even if she did not fully understand it. Mary's faithful devotion continued at the wedding in Cana, where she showed faith in and submission to His divine authority. Now, standing at the cross where He endured the brutal pain of crucifixion, with her sister and Mary Magdalene, Mary remains committed to Him and God's plan, even amid great pain and suffering (verse 25). The presence of Mary and the other women highlight their loyalty and bravery, contrasting with His disciples. When Jesus sees His mother and "the disciple whom He loved," traditionally understood to be John, He ensures her care by entrusting her to him (verses 26-27). Mary's presence at the cross shows that a "yes" to God is not a one-time act, seasonal, emotional, or circumstantial, but a lifelong commitment of trust and obedience. Her life demonstrates that being a faithful witness is a series of obedient steps that involve trusting His plan and purpose even during life's most painful moments.

🔍 WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What can Mary's presence at the cross teach us about remaining faithful during pain and loss?

A Closing Thought

Mary's journey as Jesus' mother, her unexpected and unasked divine calling, offers several spiritual disciplines that help believers remain committed to God's purposes as faithful witnesses. First, Mary's response to everything she heard and saw after Jesus' birth shows that being a faithful witness requires a meditative and reflective attitude, open to receiving divine revelation (Luke 2:19). At the wedding in Cana, Mary's words and actions demonstrate that faithful witnesses dedicated to fulfilling God's purpose show awareness of others' needs, submission to His authority, and faith in His unfolding plans, even without fully understanding them (John 2:1-5). Finally, Mary's presence at the cross demonstrates the spiritual disciplines of endurance, faithful devotion, unwavering love and obedience to God's will, and sacrificial surrender when facing painful circumstances (John 19:25-27).

Your Life

Every believer is called to commit to being a faithful witness who accepts God's plans for their lives and His mission in the world. However, remaining committed like Mary—despite uncertainty, personal cost, and even sorrow—requires consistently developing and practicing the spiritual disciplines she exemplified, which lead to a life surrendered to God's will and purpose. Therefore, consider evaluating your walk with the Lord to see if you are cultivating these disciplines, and renew your commitment to His purpose for your life.

Your World!

One of Mary's responses to her role as a faithful witness was through caring for others, as seen at the wedding at Cana. She did not stay silent when she saw that the wine had run out, which could have been socially embarrassing for the groom and his family. She took this need to Jesus, trusting that He would do something about it. Her actions remind us that a genuine commitment to God's will often reveals itself through practical concern and advocacy for others, accompanied by unwavering trust in how and when He chooses to respond.

Closing Prayer

Gracious God, we seek to be faithful witnesses who trust Your plans even when faced with the unexpected in our relationship with You. Therefore, like Mary, we commit to practicing reflective meditation, submitting to Your divine authority, and patiently enduring as we continue saying yes to Your will. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Conclusion

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

Even dedicated followers of Christ can face doubt on their journey with Him. Next week's lesson examines this challenge through Thomas's experience after Jesus' resurrection and how his doubts were eased and his faith was renewed (John 11:14-16; 14:5-8; 20:24-29; 21:1-2).

Home Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY, July 27	"Seek the Lord; Call on God"	(Isaiah 55:6-11)
TUESDAY, July 28	"Have Mercy on Those Who Doubt"	(Jude 20-25)
WEDNESDAY, July 29	"How Can We Know the Way?"	(John 14:1-7)
THURSDAY, July 30	"Call on the Lord"	(Psalm 50:7-15)
FRIDAY, July 31	"Seek God with Heart and Soul"	(Deuteronomy 4:27-31)
SATURDAY, August 1	"So I Send You"	(John 20:19-23)
SUNDAY, August 2	"My Lord and My God!"	(John 20:24-29)