

MARY FOUND FAVOUR WITH GOD

TEXT: LUKE 1:26-56

INTRODUCTION:

1. A while back there were many stories in the newspapers and other media about the RCC "elevating Mary" to the level of God.
2. This is all contrary to Scripture, but unfortunately most Roman Catholics do not read the Bible. Therefore, they are very confused theologically.
3. Last Sunday evening, brother Reno spoke about the priest who admitted he never read I or II Peter, though he adamantly insisted that Peter was the first Roman Catholic pope, etc.
4. In the Roman Catholic religion, there is a tremendous amount of emphasis on Mary, the mother of our Lord. They refer to her as "the Mother of God," the "Co-redemptrix," the "Queen of heaven," and many other strange and unscriptural titles.
5. Actually, the title "Queen of heaven" is Scriptural, but not in a way that is honoring to the real Mary, the mother of our Lord (cf. Jer. 44:17-19).
6. This pagan Queen of heaven is the same heathen goddess referred to in the book of Acts as Diana (Acts 19:23-41). In other lands she was worshipped as Isis or Aphrodite or Venus.
7. Roman Catholics pray to Mary, worship statues of Mary, and exalt her in a way that is offensive to Bible-believing Christians. She supposedly appears all over the world – in Lourdes, France; in Fatima, Portugal; in Medjugorje, Yugoslavia; even in Flushing Meadow Park! I met some of these Flushing Meadow Park Mary-worshippers in a diner in Flushing one Sunday afternoon. What a confused bunch!
8. Tonight, as we draw near to Christmas, I would like to preach about the real Mary. Not the Roman Catholic Mary.
9. Tonight, I would like to preach about the real Mary, but more importantly, I would like to preach about her Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners. It is the Lord Jesus Christ that we wish to magnify, and exalt, and worship.
10. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who is worthy of all praise. Let us exalt His name together this Christmas and always.

I. MARY WAS "BLESSED AMONG WOMEN" (LUKE 1:28).

1. Notice that the angel Gabriel did not say, "Blessed art thou *above* women," but, "Blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28, cf. 1:42, 48).
2. The RCC interprets "highly favoured" (1:28) to mean "full of grace," but that is misleading. "Highly favoured" means God had been gracious to Mary.
3. The RCC uses this "full of grace" mistranslation to bolster their "Immaculate Conception" doctrine, i.e., Mary was conceived without original sin.
4. The angel Gabriel did not say, "Blessed art thou *above* women," but, "Blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28; cf. 1:42).
5. Interestingly, there is a woman in the Bible who is called "blessed above women" and that is Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite (Judges 5:24). She is honored because she drove a nail through Sisera's head (Judges 4:17-24; 5:24-31).
6. In the Bible, Mary always took a subordinate role (cf. John 2:1-5).
7. When a certain woman praised Mary, our Lord corrected her. I believe this passage was deliberately put in the Bible to refute Mariolatry (cf. Luke 11:27, 28).
8. After our Lord's resurrection, as far as we know, our Lord never appeared to Mary during those forty days before His ascension into heaven.
9. The only time Mary is mentioned after our Lord's ascension is during the prayer meeting in the upper room. She and her children are mentioned last, after the eleven apostles, and other women. There they prayed with her, not to her (Acts 1:13, 14).
10. By the way the Roman Catholic doctrine that Mary ascended into heaven ("the Assumption of Mary") is unscriptural.
11. The last time Mary is mentioned in the Bible is Acts 1:14. She is not mentioned at all in any of the epistles or in the book of Revelation. Mary is not the woman described in Revelation 12.

II. MARY WAS A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE (LUKE 1:46, 47)

1. Mary was a godly woman, chosen by God to be the mother of our Lord, but nevertheless she was a sinner saved by grace just like every other Christian is a sinner saved by grace.
2. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

3. Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:46, 47). Only sinners need a Saviour.
4. Only sinners brought a sin offering to the temple (Luke 2:22-24; cf. Lev. 12:6-8).
5. Do you recognize that you are a sinner? Have you been saved by God's grace? If not, repent of your sin and ask the Lord to save you.
6. A Christian was out soulwinning one day and he went by the racetrack and started witnessing to the jockeys. He walked into one of the stables and started talking to a jockey about salvation. The jockey said: "Stop it right there – this is no place to talk about religion!" The Christian said, "On, no sir. Christianity began in a stable. Jesus Christ was born in a stable. And you can be born again in a stable!"
7. Mary was submissive to the will of God. She said in Luke 1:38, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."
8. Mary clearly knew the Word of God. Her "Magnificat" (1:46-55) alludes to several Old Testament Scriptures, including Exodus, I Samuel, Psalms, Isaiah, and Micah.
9. Mary "magnified the Lord" (1:46), and so should we!
10. Mary said in Luke 1:48, "For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." She would not be the one who conferred blessings, but rather, she is the one who would be "called blessed."
11. We sometimes sing the Doxology -- "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" All blessings flow from God, not from Mary.

III. MARY WAS A VIRGIN BUT NOT A "PERPETUAL VIRGIN"

1. The Bible clearly teaches the virgin birth of our Lord (Luke 1:31-35; Matt. 1:18-23; cf. Isa. 7:14).
2. The virgin birth of Christ is a fundamental Bible doctrine.
3. However, the Bible also clearly states that Joseph "knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son..." (Matt. 1:25).
4. The author of the epistle of James is the Lord's half-brother (cf. Gal. 1:19). Jude, the author of the little book of Jude was another half-brother of our Lord.
5. Mary had other sons and daughters as well (cf. Matt. 13:54-56). There is no Scriptural basis for the RC doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. In fact, the RCC did not declare it an official doctrine until 451 AD at the Council of Chalcedon.

CONCLUSION:

1. In Bro. Mercado's recent prayer letter, he spoke about the joy of being out in the Arizona desert and looking up at the beautiful stars. Then he went on to say, "But at Christmastime we remind ourselves that none of the loveliest of heavenly luminaries can begin to rival for beauty and significance the star of Bethlehem, as with a finger of light it pointed the way to our dear Saviour and Lord."
2. During WWII, a father and his little boy were out walking one night in London, England. It was the custom back then for a family to put a star up in the window when they lost a son in the war.
3. The little boy was curious and asked his dad about this. His dad explained to him that whenever a family gave a son in the war, they put a star in the window.
4. The little fellow thought this over for awhile, and then later on he saw a big bright star up in the sky and said: "Look, Dad! God must have given His Son!"