

Mental



✔ Prepare in Advance

In advance of the session, prepare the following:

- Have a whiteboard or flip-chart and appropriate markers.
- Provide paper and pens/pencils for each group member. Look at the final activity – if you think time will allow, gather some materials for creative expressions – crayons, paints, music and speakers, etc.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the *Bible Background Video* ready to view.

✔ Explore

As you begin, have someone read Luke 1:39-55 out loud and show the *Bible Background Video*.

✔ Lifting Up the Humble

- Name some of the themes we see in Mary's song (v. 46-55) – i.e., promises fulfilled, lowly vs. powerful, etc. List these on the board/flipchart. By each theme, write some examples of how that theme is fulfilled in the Christmas story.
- Mary certainly held a position among the lowly in her world – she was a female, poor, and bore the stigma of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. In what ways do you and I share a place among the lowly? Because of this, what message does the Gospel hold for us?
- In what ways do you and I share a place among the rich and the powerful? Because of this, what message does the Gospel hold for us?
- Besides social and economic standings, what other statuses are upset by Jesus' coming and ministry?

✔ Lift Up Your Song

- Revisit the themes on the board. How is Mary's song her own heart's response to what God was doing for her and through her? What had God already done? What was God promising to do?
- In the common and commercialized celebration of Christmas, we often see that ALL of us are hopeful and thankful, but sometimes fail to recognize that God has given EACH of us things to be hopeful and thankful for!

- Looking back on your own life and faith journey, what themes would be in your own "song" you would sing to God? What has God already done? What has God promised to do? Write down these themes.
- How could you express these thanks and hopes during the coming Christmas celebration? A poem? A song? A painting or drawing? A written prayer?

✔ Closing

As the closing prayer, allow one or two group members to share their expressions with the group.

Urge members to share their "song" with others during the coming celebrations.

By Jon Parks

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