



[study guide]

RELIGIOUS MYTHS: Week 7

5.12.13

[set up]

What part(s) of this last weekend's worship service challenged you or impacted you in your relationship with Jesus Christ?

As with any person we see in the pages of Scripture, we want to know that we have a biblical and accurate understanding of who they are, and How God used them. We don't want to disregard the people we see in the Bible that God used mightily, not do we want to serve into elevating them to a place of worship. Mary, the mother of Jesus, had one of the most special and unique roles in all of humanity – to give birth to “the invisible expression of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). If we aren't careful in our study of the Bible, we could end up hyper-exalting Mary, even worshipping her. So let's take some time to do a little bit of “Mariology” (theological study of Mary). What are some of the spiritual views of Mary that you have heard?

[digging deeper]

Do we find any verses in the Bible that have people worshipping Mary, praying to her, or giving us instructions to do so?

Although we know that Jesus had a special love for Mary, do we see Him exalt her in their interactions? (Luke 2:41-52; 11:27-28; Matt. 12:47-49; John 2:1-5)

God glorified Himself by allowing a virgin woman to bear the Son of God. There is a teaching that says Mary remained a virgin even after the birth of Christ. How do the following verses shed some light on this issue? (Matt. 1:25; Matt. 12:46-50; Matt. 13:55-56; Mark 3:20-35; Mark 6:3-4; Luke 8:19-21; John 7:2-10; Psalm. 69:8)

Other than Jesus, does the Bible say that anyone else has been without sin? (Rom 3. 23; 2 Cor. 5:21, 1Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5)

How does man get to God? Who is his only mediator? (1 Tim. 2:5)

Did anyone co-redeem mankind along with Jesus? (Acts 4:12; Col. 1:13-14)

In whose name are we to offer up our prayers in? (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24; 1 Cor. 1:2)



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In evaluating some claims to exalt Mary, how is it helpful to notice that the Apostle Paul refers to Mary but not by name? (Rom. 1:3 & Gal 4:4) What are some of the possible implications of that observation?

In Luke 1:46-55 we see something called “the Magnificat” (Latin- to magnify) Mary is singing a song, to Magnify God. Have someone in the LifeGroup read it out loud as everyone else closes their eyes and listens. (Imagine and envision Mary in that moment lifting up this Psalm of praise.) What are some meaningful or powerful expressions or phrases that you picked up on as the reader shared? Why is Luke 1:47 especially significant in the study of Mary?

[living it out]

How have the above questions helped bring clarity for you to some of the theological views related to Mary and her role in life and eternity?

How can we deal with those who may have drifted into Mary worship with an attitude of grace, respect and care, rather than be argumentative, antagonistic or offensive? (1 Peter 3:15)

The big idea from this last weekend’s services was to imitate Mary not to idolize her. We are to esteem her but not exalt her. Honor her but not worship her. When you reflect on Mary’s life, what are some of her characteristics that we should imitate as we try to live for the Lord?

After making your list of characteristics, write down the opposite characteristic next to each one as an exercise to clarify what we want to avoid as we live for Christ. (it may be helpful to re-visit Luke 1:26-38)

From your list, which characteristics do you feel strong in and which ones are areas of growth for you?

Close this time in prayer. Start by thanking God for Mary and people like Mary. Ask God to help you be more like Mary, and the great characteristics that you identified. During this prayer, you can pray and ask God to help you grow in each one of the characteristics (pray for each one, one at a time)