

Mary, Mother of Jesus

By John R. Gibson

After learning that she was to be the mother of the Son of God, Mary went to visit Elizabeth, a relative who was at that time the expectant mother of John the Baptist. While in the house of Elizabeth, Mary offered a beautiful poem or song of praise to God (Luke 1:46-55). Though the emphasis was on magnifying the Lord (Luke 1:46), she also said of herself, “henceforth all generations will call me blessed.” No one who accepts the Bible as the inspired word of God should doubt that Mary was a special woman and selected to bear the Messiah because she had found favor with the Lord. Even 2,000 years later we should appreciate and give the proper honor to the young woman willing to accept the shame that came with being thought of as having conceived a child before marriage. We should have the deepest appreciation for this one who was there at the cross for her Son, but did not interfere.

Mary is worthy of honor! This time of year many are giving special thought to her role in human history and the redemption of mankind, but what should her role be in the church today? Should we honor her with special days? Offer up to her special prayers? This article is sent forth with the hope that all will benefit from it, but especially that it might help adherents to the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican faiths get a better perspective on the role of Mary today. Please consider carefully the following facts from the Scriptures.

The last specific mention of Mary in the New Testament comes in Acts 1:14. Not once as the apostles carried out the Great Commission does the book of Acts record a mention of her in their sermons. As Paul, Peter, and the other writers wrote to Christians in various parts of the Roman Empire they never saw fit to even mention Mary.

Since she is not mentioned in any of the epistles and is in fact never mentioned again after the beginning of the Lord’s church on the Pentecost of Acts 2 it is easy to see that the New Testament does not contain a single reference to Christians offering prayers to Mary or requests for her intercession. While the Rosary, in its most common form, requires the recitation of the Hail Mary (*Ave Maria*) fifty-three times, the New Testament does not contain even one Hail Mary. While some of the phrases found in the Hail Mary may be found in Luke 1, all of its words are not there and never once are the phrases of Luke 1 used as an address to Mary by first-century Christians.

If first-century Christians, under the leadership and guidance of the apostles, saw Mary as the “portal to Life Immortal” (as she is called in the *People’s Mass Book*), absolutely no evidence of such has been preserved in the Scriptures, the same Scriptures which are said to complete and thoroughly equip the man of God for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Instead of seeing Mary as the “portal to Life Immortal,” they believed Jesus was “the way, the truth, and the life,” and the only way one could approach the Father (John 14:6).

While Mary is sometimes referred to today as the Queen of heaven, Queen of the universe, Mother of Mercy, Ever Virgin, patron, and advocate, not one of these titles of honor is given her in the New Testament. Not one! While the Bible does refer to her as a virgin until the time of Jesus’ birth

(Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38), it says nothing about her remaining Ever Virgin. In fact, all available evidence indicates that she and Joseph enjoyed a normal marital relationship after the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:24, 25; 12:46, 47; 13:54-56; Hebrews 13:4). As for Queen, patron, etc., there is simply no Biblical foundation for them.

Mary was a great lady and it is proper that we call her blessed, but we must also keep things in perspective. It is her Son who is our Savior and the One we should worship, adore, and be devoted to. Never forget what Jesus Himself said when one offered words of praise to Mary.

“And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, ‘Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!’ But He said, ‘More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!’ ” Luke 11:27, 28

May God help us to be those who hear and keep His word.

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