



Masterpiece series: Mary's Journey

Date: Sunday 9th December 2018

Speakers: Rosie & Andrew McNeil

Key Verses: Luke 1: 26 - 56

Talk Summary

We are in the season called Advent where we pause and anticipate the coming of Christ into our world and into our lives.

A “masterpiece” describes the outstanding and exceptional handiwork of a creative mind. Masterpiece is both a work of art and the heart of the Christmas story.

Focus on the painting “The Star of Bethlehem” by Edward Burne Jones:
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_of_Bethlehem_\(painting\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_of_Bethlehem_(painting)))

Mary journeyed from anxiety to acceptance to adoration...

1) Mary's journey started in a place of anxiety born out of the fear of the unknown. Her plans for her life were disrupted by the angel's news. For us all, Mary is a picture of discipleship and an example of trust. By the time the angel had finished talking, she says, “I am the Lord's servant.”

2) Mary moved from *anxiety to acceptance*

i) She voiced her questions – asking good questions How and Who, rather than Why?

ii) She submitted to God - “May it be to me, Lord, according to your will.”

iii) She spotted the signs - Seeing God at work in someone else's life, celebrating someone else's breakthrough can sustain me while I wait for mine. We all need friends to walk alongside– close enough to know what's going on in our life and us to know about theirs.

iv) She stuck with good friends. Instead of heaping on questions or shame or guilt, Elizabeth spoke blessing over Mary. We all need people in our lives that can help us see the God story in our own story.

3) Mary moved from *acceptance to adoration*. Mary's song Luke 1 v 46-55

i) She remembers God's faithfulness in the past. And she recognizes His faithfulness in the moment.

ii) Sometimes it's tough as a Jesus follower waiting on God to reveal His plan or direction or solution to us. At times we wonder if He'll remember us. If we examine Mary's words it comes down to trust! Jesus says in John 14:1: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me."

Questions for discussion & Activities

1) Take time to look at the image of the masterpiece The Star of Bethlehem? What is Jesus saying to you through this painting? ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_of_Bethlehem_\(painting\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_of_Bethlehem_(painting)))

2) In what areas of your life do you need to surrender and say Mary's words "May it be to me according to your will."

3) Is God calling you to be an Elizabeth for someone this Christmas? (A safe encouraging friend that can champion the God story in the midst of a friend's trials.)

4) In what areas of your life are you waiting on God? What are you hoping He will remember for you?

5) Make a visit to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Take time to look at "The Star of Bethlehem" in Gallery 15.