

SERMON BASED CURRICULUM

**Date & Sermon Series:**

December 12/13, 2015; Holiday

Speaker:

Pastor Mark Batterson

Scripture Focus: Luke 1:26-38

Note To Leaders:

This weekend we discussed blessings in disguise. These questions provide a framework to prompt or foster discussion in your small group. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.

Icebreaker Suggestions: What does the word "blessed" mean to you?

Sermon Series Questions:

1. What thoughts are still resonating with you from the sermon?
2. What was most encouraging or challenging about this weekend's message?
3. In what ways did the story of Mary speak to you?

Specific Questions:

1. Pastor Mark talked about having an eternal perspective because in the grand scheme of things, God doesn't promise us happily ever after. He promises so much more than that, a happily forever after. What does it mean to you to live happily forever after? Is it easy or difficult for you to have an eternal perspective of things?
2. When has there been a time where you've received blessings in your life but they have been blessings in disguise? How did you realize it was a blessing in disguise? What was your initial reaction? Did your reaction change over time with reflection and realization?
3. Pastor Mark said, God has blessings in store for you that you don't know exist because God has prepared good works and good things that are immeasurably more than you can imagine (Ephesians 3:20). What is your response to this? Have you ever thought that God wants to bless you more than you can imagine?
4. In Luke 1:38, we see that there is an account of Mary saying unto the Lord, "Be it unto me

as you have said.” What areas in your life do you need to declare, “Be it unto me as you have said”? What areas do you need to surrender to the Lord because it may be a blessing in disguise or just a step away from a miracle?

5. Corrie Ten Boom says, “If the Devil can’t make you bad- he will make you busy.” Last week we talked about how just because it is right, doesn’t mean we are being obedient to what God is asking. What are some examples of busyness this season that are actually pulling our time and focus away from the blessing God has for us?

6. Luke 2:19 states that, “Mary pondered these things in her heart.” Pastor Mark gave a statistic saying that, “83% of Americans spend zero time relaxing or thinking.” How are you taking the time to think deeply? What are some of the things you are pondering in your heart this Christmas?

7. Pastor Mark referenced, “confirmation bias,” where we determine and explain things as we conceive it. In other words, we see what we are looking for. How does your confirmation bias cause you to miss what God is doing in your life? What are some of the ways you can change your perspective to see what God wants you to see?

Challenge:

Find a thinking chair, a prayer closet, or a gratitude journal this upcoming Christmas season. Find something or somewhere that will help you relax and ponder the things in your heart, just like Mary did. Then, prepare your heart to be in a posture of hearing from the Lord on a daily basis.

Read, Pray, Act:

Memorize the words of Mary this week found in Luke 1:38. Practice saying them at moments it is the hardest to say them this Christmas season. Offer them as a prayer unto the Lord and pray for the Spirit to illuminate your eyes so that you can see what God wants you to see.