

MARY'S SPECIAL CHRISTMAS CARD

Over 2 billion Christmas cards are sent in USA every year. But none would ever compare to the one Mary received. God sent it from heaven and Gabriel delivered it personally to Mary.

On the front of Mary's card might have been a big Christmas tree with blue ribbons on it; and underneath it might have been written in bold letters, CONGRATULATIONS!

When you opened it, on the left side of card might be written these words, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." Underneath that might be written, "Do not be afraid Mary; for you have found favor with God."

On the right side might be written, "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall name Him, Jesus."

On the back side of card might be written, "He will be great and will be called **the Son of the Most High**; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His Father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." (Luke 1:26-33)

**This lesson will study three aspects of Mary's Special Christmas card
hand delivered by Gabriel from God to Mary.**

1. God's salutation to Mary reveals a special relationship between God and Mary - "Greeting (chairo/ p.a.impv.2ps), favored one (charitoo/ perf.p.ptc.vsf)! The Lord is with you." (Luke 1:28-29)

The wording of this salutation, "Greeting, favored one," from God to Mary reveals God's attitude about Mary's relationship with Him.

Greeting, favored one (charitoo/ perf.p.ptc.vsf)

- Vocative (v) reveals a special bonding relationship.
- Perfect (perf) reveals a spiritual committed relationship.
- Passive (p) reveals a spiritually developed relationship.
- Participle (ptc) reveals a spiritual mature relationship.

Three times God has declared Mary to be **favored by God**:

- (Lk.1:28) Greeting
- (Lk.1:28) Favored one
- (Lk.1:30) Do not be afraid Mary; for you have found (heurisko/ a.a.ind,2ps) favor (charin) with God.

2. 'Favored one' are the words God used to declare His view of Mary and why He selected her to be the mother of the Son of God (Lk.1:28-30).

- **Favored one** was a status term given as a grace gift without her previous knowledge or merit being required to receive it.
 - Mary wasn't chosen because she was a virgin, but because she "**found favored with God.**"

- **Favored one** is a term declaring Mary's grace orientation to the plan of God.
 - You can see it her response to this salutation in (Lk.1:38)
 - **“Be it done to me according to Your world.”**

This response shows that Mary's intimate relationship with the Lord was in a place of priority in her life no matter what the circumstances.

She had reached a place in her spiritual growth where she walked by faith and not by sight no matter what the circumstances (2 Cor.5:7); where she lived consistently by the victorious faith life (1 John 5:4).

3. **Mary is an example of the importance of reaching spiritual maturity and maintaining it until dying grace.**

(1 Cor.15:10) **“But by the grace of God I am what I am**, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them - yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”

As a spiritually mature believer, she was tested in three areas:

- Teachable (Lk.1:29)
- Testable (Lk.1:34)
- Trustful (Lk.1:38).

Mary's spiritual maturity is what found favor with God.

In a spiritually mature believer, all relationships are secondary to the Lord.

Doing God's Will is not risky to Mary.

- She is God's first choice, because God is her first choice, in all her relationships.
 - This is a sign of spiritual maturity (Eph.3:14-15).
- “You shall love the Lord God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matt.22:37)

How do you know if your relationship with the Lord is PRIMARY or secondary?

What distracts you from it?

You must have a bond slave mentality to your relationship with The Lord over all others.

(Lk.1:38) **“Behold, the bond slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to Your word.”**

Paul calls it **“undistracted devotion to the Lord”** in (1 Cor.7:35b)