

- In the 4th century, a dispute among church leaders concerning Mary was debated. The term “theotokos” meaning “God bearer,” or “Mother of God,” was debated. There was a concern that people would eventually worship Mary. At the time, another term for Mary was created, “Christotokos,” which meant, “bearer of Christ.” This declared Mary as the one who bore the Messiah which unified the doctrines of the Messiah being man and God in one person.
- **GBCOB’s doctrinal statement reads and supports from Scripture the person of Jesus:**
- We teach that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and also became the God-man ([Phil. 2:5-8](#); [Col. 2:9](#)).
- We teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness ([Mic. 5:2](#); [John 5:23](#); [14:9](#), [10](#); [Col. 2:9](#)). We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born ([Is. 7:14](#); [Matt. 1:23](#), [25](#); [Luke 1:26-35](#)); that He was God incarnate ([John 1:1](#), [14](#)); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over Gods kingdom ([Ps. 2:7-9](#); [Is. 9:6](#); [John 1:29](#); [Phil. 2:9-11](#); [Heb. 7:25,26](#); [1 Pet. 1:18,19](#)).
- We teach that, in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes ([Phil. 2:5-8](#)).
- **6 Major Errors with the Teachings of Mary by the Roman Catholic Church:** 1) Immaculate conception of Mary: “full of grace,” or “favored one,” from Luke 1:28, that she possessed sinlessness at birth. 2) The Sinlessness of Mary: says she never sinned and was perfect. 3) Worship of Mary: utilizing her as an intercessor is a form of worship. 4) Mary as Mediator: she mediates between God and man. 5) Perpetual Virginity of Mary: she was never stained by sin. 6) Assumptions of Mary: because she never sinned, she never died, and was raptured.
- Jesus is our Mediator, 1 Tim. 2:5. The Holy Spirit also helps and intercedes for believers, Rom. 8:27.
- An edict by Pope Pious in 1854 declared of Mary that her being, “full of grace” stated that she was sinless. This is not a position of Jesus or His Apostles. This edict doesn’t make it true. Scripture is the sole authority, not papal edict. Rom. 5:12 states that sin entered through Adam and spread to all men. Rom. 3:23 states that all have sinned. Mary is not mentioned as exempt. Was Mary fallible?
 - a. Jesus corrected Mary when He was found in “His Father’s house,” when they went to Jerusalem, Luke 2:41-52.
 - b. Jesus corrected Mary when asked to provide wine for the wedding feast in Cana, John 2.
 - c. Worship of God is only unto Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit. Men aren’t permitted to receive worship, Acts 14:14-15. Mary was not worshipped by any of the apostles or saints.
- **3 Reasons Mary Needed a Savior:**
 1. **Virgin Birth of Christ Did Not Prove Her Sinlessness**: The Holy Spirit guaranteed the perfection of Christ’s conception and birth. God was at work to accomplish His promise in Gen. 3:15. He saved us through His own will, John 1:13, 3:7-10.
 2. **Mary Deflected Glory from Herself**: “My soul magnifies the Lord,” is Mary making God large in her view and His work of salvation. Hannah’s prayer of 1 Samuel 2 would have been a prayer she would have known of, and the praise and exaltation of Yahweh given by Hannah (V1-2).
 3. **Mary Rejoiced that She has a Savior**: V47, “my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.” Habakkuk 1 declares that God will judge Israel by sending the Chaldeans (Babylon) to destroy and desolate the land of Israel. In chapter 2, God declares that the righteous will live by their faith, in the midst of this terrible time. In chapter 3 Habakkuk trembles at the Lord’s plans to trample the nations who trample Israel. Habakkuk declares that although the land of Israel will be desolate, “I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.” Whatever God determines, He still deserves praise.

Further Discussion and Application

Mary clearly was blessed by God to be the mother of Jesus. She knew that she was chosen by God and highly favored. What brings us confidence in our salvation? What does our belief in the Scriptures reveal to us? What does a love for the word of God and the preaching of God's word do for our souls? What does a love to serve and pray for the body of Christ reveal about our heart towards God?

Mary continues in her song of God's greatness (V49), His mercy (V50), His justice (V51), His judgement (V52), His faithfulness (V53), His promise (V54), and His covenant (V55). We wonder if our prayers reach the God of the universe. What is the absolute answer to that question? What does God hear? Will God answer every prayer? How can we be sure of His listening ear and outstretched arm to save?

There have been times in our Christian walk when we experience answered prayer or have had the favor of God bestowed upon us. What are some of the times that you remember in your life? What did you see in the lives of other believers that brought great comfort and joy when others received blessing from God?

God's decrees are holy and righteous. There are things of God that will take eternity to grasp. God will reveal all that we need to know. Mary gives proof of God's character in her song: God's greatness (V49), His mercy (V50), His justice (V51), His judgement (V52), His faithfulness (V53), His promise (V54), and His covenant (V55). What have you learned from God's word about each of these attributes? How have you experienced the goodness of God in the revelation of His word and His grace towards you?