

**Week Three: *Learn to Love the Now***  
***Luke 1:39-56***

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day One**

1. Using only one word, how would you describe your season of life right now?
2. Are you able to be objective about your struggles or do you find yourself overwhelmed by the emotion of the moment?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. What does Paul suggest is the best way to get past a momentary rough patch in life?
4. What does Paul mean when he urges us to focus on what is not seen?
5. The Greek word for anxiety is the same as our English word “morose.” How would you define morose?
6. The word morose in Greek means “to separate.” When we focus too much on one aspect of life and ignore the other parts of our life, we become depressed. Why do negative things have more power than positive experiences?
7. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray that your eyes would be opened to see the blessings of your life as clearly as you see your struggles.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two**

8. Read Luke 1:39-56. Have you ever known anyone who had to manage an “unexpected” pregnancy? How did they handle it?
9. Gabriel gave Mary few details about her pregnancy and what to expect of her child. What questions would you have wanted to ask?
10. Gabriel mentioned that Mary’s elderly relative Elizabeth was pregnant (Luke 1:36). Why do you think Mary decided to go immediately to visit Elizabeth?
11. How would you describe the first meeting of Mary and Elizabeth?
12. What did the two women have in common? What was unique to their situation?

13. What term does Elizabeth use to describe Mary in Luke 1:43? What insight does that description give into God's understanding of pregnancy?
14. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray that all women who find themselves pregnant, whether expected or unexpected, would view their pregnancy as a gift from God.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three**

15. Look again at Luke 1:39-45. How do you explain the reaction of Elizabeth's unborn child when Mary entered Elizabeth's home?
16. Elizabeth might have been more excited about Mary's pregnancy than her own. How did she describe Mary's situation in verse 42?
17. Do you suppose there was anything special about Mary and Elizabeth that God chose them for their incredible mission? Read Luke 1:48-53. What explanation did Mary offer?
18. Read Luke 1:45. What is required of a child of God to experience the Lord's miraculous blessing?
19. Mary and Joseph had to make a difficult journey in the ninth month of her pregnancy, and when they arrived in Bethlehem, they were not well received. Because of Herod's threats, they also had to flee to Egypt. Wouldn't you expect God to better provide for them? Why do you suppose the Lord didn't eliminate their struggle(s)?
20. Why does God still allow those He loves to struggle? Read 1 Peter 5:6-7 for insight.
21. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to face your struggles and hardships with the same degree of faith and trust that Mary and Joseph displayed in the stories surrounding the birth of Jesus.

**Spend FIFTEEN- Day Four**

22. Read Mary's words in Luke 1:46-47. Despite the difficulties awaiting her and the unanswered questions about her future and how Joseph would react to her pregnancy, what was Mary's response? How is it possible to rejoice in the face of uncertainty?
23. Read Philippians 4:4-9. What advice does Paul offer when facing adversity?
24. Paul combines prayer and thanksgiving. What do you have to be thankful for at this moment?

25. What situation is out of your control and has you unsure of how it will turn out?
26. In his closing comments in Philippians 4:8-9, what does Paul suggest is essential to maintaining a positive spirit in the face of uncertainty?
27. Read James 4:13-17. What is the caveat in verse 15? Why should you always approach the present and the future with the same attitude?
28. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to commit to heart and practice the lessons you have learned in today's study.

**Spend FIFTEEN- Day Five**

29. There may be a tendency on the part of Christians today to place people of the Bible on a higher standing than ourselves, as though their lives are different from ours. What term does Mary use to define God in Luke 1:47? Why did Mary also need a Savior?
30. Read James 5:10-17. What do we learn from those verses? Why was it important for God to tell us the struggles, weaknesses, and hardships that the great people of the Bible faced?
31. How would you describe your present life situation: excellent, anxious, upsetting, challenging, under control? What role does faith play in your day-to-day activity? Is it a daily part of your thinking, or is it not a conscious part of your daily life? Is that how you want it to be?
32. When you face difficulties and uncertainty, does it make you fearful or "fire you up"?
33. Would you like to know how your life will turn out or do you prefer not knowing?
34. How do you think Mary would answer that question? Read Luke 2:19. What do you think that means? What does it tell us about the character of Mary?
35. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to be intentional in life and not consider the events of your life mere coincidence. Pray to be able to use your life circumstance to glorify God and exercise faith.