
DAY 8

Mary

A HEART YIELDED TO GOD

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel”

(ISAIAH 7:14, NKJV).

Imagine being 14 years old, engaged to be married, and living in a culture of strict religious law—when an angel comes into your room at night and tells you that God wants you to give birth to His Son. And not just for any reason, but in order to bring about the Redemption of all humanity through Him. That would offer many opportunities for emotions we work very hard to overcome—such as fear, pressure, stress and pride to name a few—to rise up.

You see, in those days, a Jewish marriage was a process we don't really see throughout much of the world today. Mary and Joseph would have been engaged and living apart for likely a year. During that time, Joseph would be studying the holy texts and preparing to become a husband.

During this time, his fiancée, Mary, went to visit her relatives for some time, and when she came back, she was visibly pregnant! Imagine how concerned Mary might have been to come back to Joseph in that condition. Also in those days, Joseph would have had every right to break off the relationship and even to have Mary stoned to death for becoming pregnant by another. Imagine that! But God.

Not only did God send an angel to talk to Mary and prepare her for what was about to happen, He also sent one to Joseph to give him reassurance. Thankfully, this covenant couple got on the same page—with God. But they were still surrounded by family and the religious community. Likely, everywhere they went, Mary would have been glared at, questioned or ridiculed, accused and chastised for becoming pregnant before her marriage. The worst would have been assumed about her, and then others might have aimed their ridicule and condemnation at her fiancé for his acceptance of all of it. Perhaps they would have mocked her claim that God had entrusted her with His Son, as a blasphemous excuse to cover up her immorality.

Not only was she going through her very first pregnancy (in which she was required to make a faraway trip that resulted in a foreign birth, had strangers coming to see for themselves, faced an ungodly king hunting her son's head as a newborn, and ultimately had to move to a completely different country), but she would have had to also endure extreme outside and

societal pressure. But God.

Through it all, God protected Mary. He protected her heart because she had turned toward Him. God knew what He was doing. He knew Mary would humbly accept His call, and He knew Joseph would boldly protect her and her baby. Mary's heart for God ultimately became the heart of God beating in Jesus' chest. God was once again fulfilling His Word about the Redemption of mankind...and no one could stop it!

Study

Find Your Identity In Christ and God's Purpose for Your Life

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6, NKJV).

LIVE THE WORD

What does your heart chase after? What garners your attention and your love? What directs your plans, and where do you find your purpose? God has good plans for you. You can trust Him and His purposes. And He is worthy of all your love, praise and honor. Declare today that He is the Lord of your life...again, anew, completely! (Jeremiah 29:11; Mark 12:30).

SPEAK THE WORD

God has plans for good and purpose for my life: to prosper me, to give me a hope and a future. I trust in and love the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my strength. He is a good God and a faithful Father. I choose to have a heart toward God that He can use mightily for His purpose!

SCRIPTURE STUDY:

Deuteronomy 28; Galatians 3:13; Isaiah 53:5; Ephesians 1:15-23

Apply

Mary was very likely called all sorts of things that were not true. People assumed things about her because they did not know the truth. At any moment, she could have let those words and opinions from others penetrate her soul and take away her God-given purpose. But she didn't. She saw herself the way God saw her. She knew the truth and she grabbed onto it and did not let go. She knew that she was carrying the Savior of the world, and she was not going to jeopardize that purpose. You are born with a God-given purpose as well. Each of us has a unique and important role to play in the time in which God places us. We cannot allow the darts of the enemy—even when they come through friends or family—to stop us or distract us from the purpose of God on our lives.

WALKING IT OUT TO VICTORY

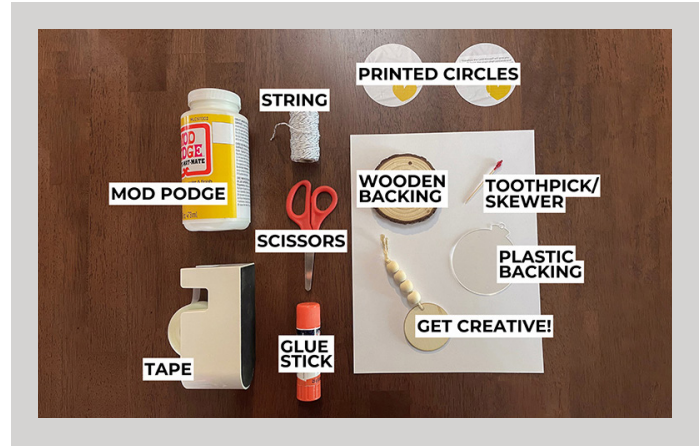
- Declare you are who God says you are and hold onto it, no matter what you hear, what you are called, or what people think about you.
- Choose to believe only one opinion: God's! His is the only one that matters.
- Remember that you are carrying Jesus to the world, and God has purposed and prepared you for such a time as this. Trust His plan for you today!

OPTION 1: PRINTED CIRCLE ORNAMENT (PG 5-7)

Today's Ornament



Materials



Instructions

STEP 1

Print artwork for Option 1 and cut out both circles.

STEP 2

There are options for creating this easy ornament, depending on your supplies and desires...

PAPER & TAPE OPTION

Place tape on the back of one printed circle (fold tape over to create double-sided stick). You may want to make three circles of tape to help it stay together. Cut a piece of string and tie it into a loop for hanging. Place the string on the back of the taped circle over the tape, leaving enough loop coming out the top to hang the ornament. Line up the tops of the printed circle artwork and press the back of the 2nd circle into the tape over the string on the 1st circle.

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE OPTIONS →

PAPER & GLUE OPTION

Place glue on the back of one printed circle. You should cover the whole back to the edges, but do not over-soak if using liquid glue instead of a glue stick. Cut a piece of string and tie into a loop for hanging. Place the string on the back of the glued circle into the glue, leaving enough loop coming out the top to hang the ornament. Line up the tops of the circle artwork and press the back of the 2nd circle into the glue and over the string on the back of the 1st circle. Press evenly to secure to edges.



PAPER & PLASTIC BACKING OPTION

Place tape on the back of one printed circle (fold tape over to create double-sided stick). You may want to make three circles of tape to help it stay together. Cut a piece of string and tie it into a loop for hanging. Place the string on the back of the taped circle over the tape, leaving enough loop coming out the top to hang the ornament. Line up the tops of the printed circle artwork and press the back of the 2nd circle into the tape over the string on the 1st circle.

PAPER & WOODEN BACKING OPTION

Using a foam brush, paint the wooden backing with Mod Podge. Press the printed circle artwork onto the wet Mod Podge (be sure to line up the top with the hole for hanging at the top) and let it sit to dry. Using a toothpick or skewer, poke the hole on the wooden backing through the paper. Then paint over the top of the printed circle with the Mod Podge to seal the paper to the wooden backing. Repeat for the 2nd circle on the other side of the wooden backing. Cut a piece of string and pass it through the hole at the top of the wooden backing (you may need the toothpick or skewer to help push the string through the hole), and tie into a loop for hanging. [Find these on Amazon here.]

STEP 3

This will create a double-sided ornament ready for hanging.



Today's Ornament



Materials



Instructions

STEP 1

Salt dough instructions:

- Combine the flour and salt in a large mixing bowl.
- Gradually add water while stirring and mixing to form a dough with a Play-Doh-like consistency.
- Form the dough into a ball and knead for approximately 5-7 minutes, until the dough is smooth and firm. Additional water may be needed, depending upon humidity. Add a teaspoon of water at a time until the dough reaches the proper texture. On the other hand, if the dough is too sticky, add more flour by the teaspoon until it's the right consistency.
- Store the salt dough in a zip-close bag when it's not in use to prevent it from drying out.

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STEP 2

Pinch off a small amount of dough and roll into a ball, then smush the ball on the counter into a flat disk.



STEP 3

Press a thumb at the angle of a heart to one side and then the other, forming a thumbprint heart.

STEP 4

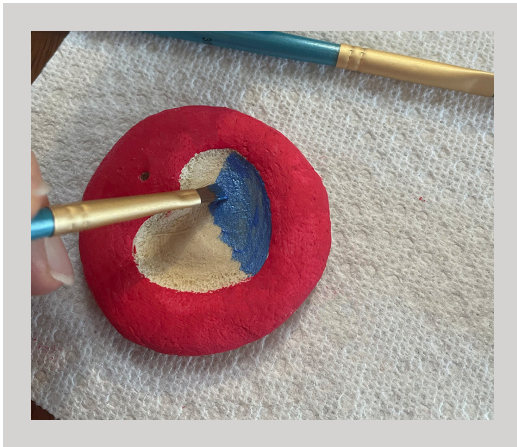
With a skewer, make a hole away from the edge of the ornament for hanging after baking.

STEP 5

To bake: Place them on a foil-covered baking sheet in a 250 degree F oven. Baking time will vary depending on the size and thickness of your crafts. For each 1/4" in thickness, allow approximately 1/2 hour of baking time, or bake until surface turns light golden brown. Turn each piece frequently so that they dry out evenly. If an area puffs up, poke a hole in it with a pin or toothpick to release the air.

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STEP 6

Once cooled, paint the ornament; paint the outside and heart in different colors. Allow to dry.

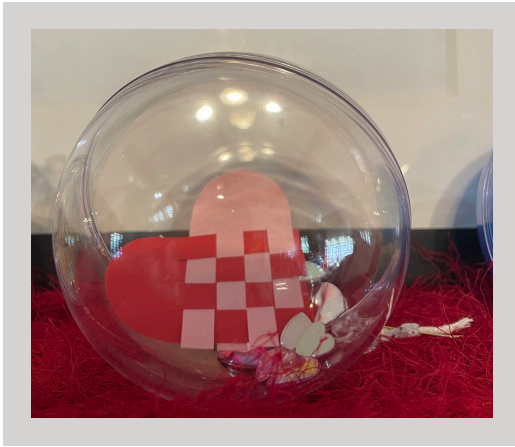
STEP 7

Cut a piece of string, push through the hole in the ornament, and tie into a loop to hang.

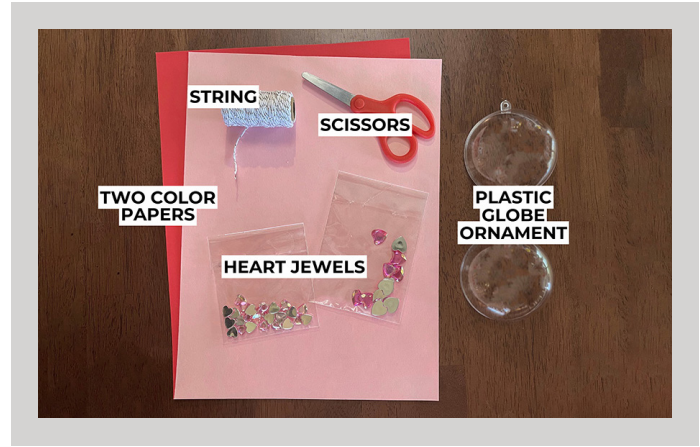


OPTION 3: GLOBE ORNAMENT (PG 11-13)

Today's Ornament



Materials



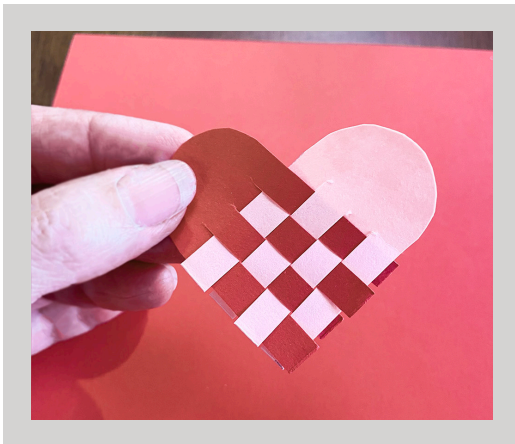
Instructions

STEP 1

Print and cut the quilted heart template for Option 3.

STEP 2

Place the template over the colored construction paper and trace around the outside. Cut out.



STEP 3

Place the template back onto the paper and cut slits along the inside lines on the template. Repeat for both sides.

STEP 4

Carefully and patiently "quilt" the two sides of the heart together to form one heart. Use the over-and-under, inside-to-outside method to gently overlap the paper slits and create the heart (see photo).

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STEP 5

Add the quilted heart to half of the plastic globe, and then add your sequins and jewels.

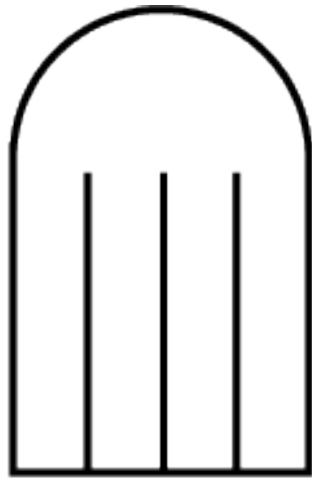


STEP 6

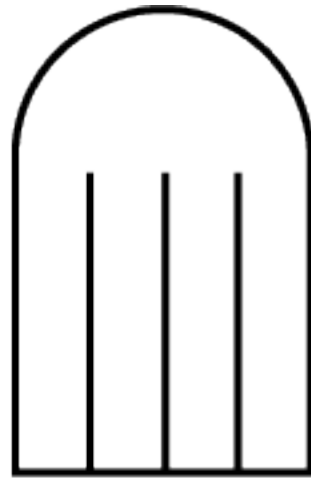
Attach the other half of the globe, lining up the holes for hanging at the top, and press to secure.

STEP 7

Cut a piece of string and put one end through the hanging holes on the globe ornament. Tie into a loop for hanging.



Place edge of paper here.
Trace outside and cut.
Then place template over
cut-out and **cut lines** into
paper.



Place edge of paper here.
Trace outside and cut.
Then place template over
cut-out and **cut lines** into
paper.