








Small Group/ Reflection Notes

	12.12.21	Radical Mary	
 Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ How many Christmas carols can you think of which refer to Mary? 		
 Discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Have you seen any depictions of Mary yet this Christmas season? What have these images conveyed about the person she was? □ What do you think are the most widely held impressions of Mary for people these days? 		
 Read	Luke 1:26-56	 Listen again	ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Watch ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Talks
 Explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ How do you interpret Gabriel's greeting to Mary, that she was 'favoured'? □ Why do you think she was perplexed by this greeting? What do we know about her? □ The teenage Mary's response to Gabriel is "I am the Lord's servant...May your word to me be fulfilled". How is her reaction to being chosen to carry God's child surprising? Consider the Jewish law in place about extra-marital sex in Deuteronomy 22:13-21. □ What does her response show about her and her faith in God? How does this challenge us? □ How is Mary's belief and faith in God's goodness evident in the magnificat? How is this a sign of her strength rather than passivity? □ Mary does not appear to see her illegal pregnancy as a burden but rather a privilege, a history making moment. What other personal feelings and ideas are expressed? □ How could the magnificat be seen as making a political statement about how God is on the side of the poor and lowly? Where else is this aspect of God's character evident in the Christmas story? □ Mary is most commonly depicted wearing blue, but this is a colour of wealth as the dye was expensive: it's unlikely she wore it. What reasons can you think of for artists choosing this to show what they thought about her? □ In what ways is Mary a figure of empowerment for women rather than quiet submission? □ What lessons can we learn from Mary's example of bold obedience and courageous faith? 		

 Go further	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read through the Magnificat again, bearing in mind that this was spoken by a teenage girl, facing a dangerous future. <input type="checkbox"/> What do you learn about her? How is this different to traditional depictions and ideas? How do her words reveal her own relationship with God? How does she see Him?
 Reflect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Which one verse stands out to you? Why do you think it grabs your attention? <input type="checkbox"/> Which verse(s) will you need to think more about? Why? <input type="checkbox"/> What is God putting on <i>your</i> heart?
 Do	<p>Look out for images of Mary over the coming week. Each time you see one, consider what the artist is trying to communicate.</p> <p>What would you say in response? Use each depiction as a trigger to worship God for His choice. Ask Him what part He would have you play.</p>
 Pray	<p>Father God, thank you for choosing Mary for this special role in your plan for the world and for salvation. We're inspired by her example of faith and obedience. Please guide me to follow in her footsteps by choosing to be open, to listen and to obey. Amen.</p>
 My questions:	

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Can't see a group to suit your availability/interest? Start one! SmallGroups@ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk