

We live in a country supercharged with tensions, contradictions, and divisions.

Culture: Where do you stand?
Mary: How do you stand?

Luke's Christmas Story

- **1:26-38 – The Announcement to Mary**
- **1:39-56 – Mary's Song, Magnificat**
- **2:1-7 – The Birth of Jesus**
- **2:8-20 – The Shepherds**
- **2:21-35 – The Temple**

Luke 2:21

**After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the Child;
and He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel
before He was conceived in the womb.**

Luke 2:22-24

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Luke 2:25-28

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the **Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the **Holy Spirit** that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the **Spirit**, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him what was customary under the law, Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God, singing,...**

Luke 2:29-33 - The Song of the Savior

“Master, now You are dismissing Your servant in **peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your **salvation**, which You have prepared in the presence of **all peoples**, a **light** for revelation to the Gentiles and for **glory** to Your people Israel.” And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about Him.**

Luke 2:34-35 - The Promise of the Sword

Then Simeon blessed them and said to His mother Mary, “This child is destined for **the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be **opposed** so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a **sword will pierce your own soul too.**”**

Simeon Speaks:
The Song of the Savior
AND
The Promise of the Sword

Holy Tension

- Favor & Fear**
- Skepticism & Resolve**
- Pondering & Treasuring**
- Peace & Revolution**
- Manger & Messiah**
- Desperately Poor but Rich in Purpose**
- Salvation & Sword**

Culture: Where do you stand?
Mary: How do you stand?

1. We are unsurprised by the Sword.

**If we bring Jesus into the world,
the Promise of the Sword is inevitable.**

- 1. We are unsurprised by the Sword.**
- 2. We are unashamed of the Song.**

2 Timothy 2:1-3

[SONG] Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

[WORD] Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:4

**Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life,
for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.**

Colossians 3:1-4

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all His glory.

- **We surrender everything every day. (Rom 12:12)**
- **We crucify our lives. (Mt 16:24)**
- **We live like foreigners, this is not our home (Phil 3:20)**
- **We seek first the Kingdom of God,
not America or any other kingdom (Mt 6:33)**
- **We are in but not of the world (1Pt 2:11-17)**
- **We are salt and light (Mt 5:13-16)**
- **We live, love, and share with urgency and haste (Mt 25:13)**
- **We are always prepared to graciously defend our hope (1Pt 3:15)**
- **We are always willing to selflessly show our love (Gal 5:6)**
- **We see ordinary life as an interruption (Acts 2:42-47)**
- **We hunger and thirst for righteousness (Mt 5:6)**
- **Our love for God makes our other loves look like hate (Lk 14:26)**
- **We gladly come in last for the sake of another (Mt 20:16)**

- We gladly play the servant for the sake of another (Mt 23:11)
- We gladly wash feet (Jn 13:14-15)
- We always rejoice (1Thess 5:16)
- We give thanks in all circumstances (1Thess 5:18)
- We pray without ceasing (1Thess 5:17)
- We don't hoard up for ourselves (Lk 12:13)
- We give everything away (Mk 10:21)
- We do not retire (Phil 1:21-26)
- We all have gift (1Cor 12:7)
- We are all in the ministry, the priesthood of all believers (1Pt 2:9)
- We do not worry (Lk 12:22)
- We are not afraid (2Tim 1:7)
- We always hope (Phil 1:6)
- We unleash the love (Mt 22:37-40)

- **Christ's love compels us (2Cor 5:14)**
- **And so we are able to accomplish abundantly more than all we can ask or imagine (Eph 3:20)**
- **We eat with others a lot (Mt 11:19)**
- **We throw parties for the people the world forgets (Luke 14:12-14)**
- **We care for hungry people, thirsty people, homeless people, dying people, addicted people, oppressed people, foreign people, refugee people (Mt 25:31-46)**
- **We care for people not like us (Lk 10:25-37)**
- **We care for people just like us (Gal 6:2)**
- **We love everyone always especially the hurting but even the haters (Mt 5:43-48)**
- **We tear down racial and ethnic barriers (Eph 2:14)**
- **We believe in miracles (Mt 4:23-25)**

- **We do the miracles (Jn 14:12)**
- **And we are the miracles (Eph 2:1-10)**
- **We have died to our old selves (Col 2:20)**
- **We have put on new clothes (Eph 4:24)**
- **We have new life, new motivation, new outlook, spiritual DNA (Rom 6:4)**
- **We have risen from the dead (2 Cor 5:17)**
- **We have a Spirit inside of us more powerful than death itself (Rom 8:11)**
- **Our lives are not our own (Acts 20:24)**
- **Nothing separate us from God's love (Rom 8:39)**
- **And so nothing can separate us from each other (Col 3:11)**
- **That which unites us is far greater than anything that can divide us (Jn 17:23)**
- **Why? Jesus is why. (Gal 2:19-20)**