

the process

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Webster defines processing as...

A natural phenomenon marked by gradual changes that leads to a particular result.

My tweaked definition...

A supernatural phenomenon marked by gradual a change, plodding, that leads into a "God-Ordained Suddenly"

If you allow the "processing" a "suddenly" is in your future. A suddenly is defined as a moment where God makes everything right. God is a God of justice. Part of His nature, part of His character is His desire to see justice fulfilled. Where God differs from us is that He has an inexhaustible supply of power to guarantee ultimate justice whether on Judgement Day or before.

Meanwhile we must be processed daily. Processing is uncomfortable at best and painful at worst. However, processing is necessary.

Remember the definition's key phrases...

Gradual: means slow

Change: can be slow

Leads: moving from one place to another

In Ephesians 5:27 Paul speaks concerning the church...

That He might present to Himself the church in all her glory having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing: but that she should be holy and blameless

Expanding the verse....

That He might present Himself the bride, positioned instrumentally for honor having no stain or shriveled wrinkle or any such thing but that she should be sacred and above reproach

The verse speaks of moving the church from whatever point it is at to the point God intends it to be. God is processing the church. God is manifesting His Kingdom in and through the

church. The church is comprised of individuals. God is manifesting His Kingdom in and through us. God is processing His Kingdom into us so that it can flow out of us.

### The processing of Mary

Imagine the “stretching seasons” that Mary encountered. Mary had no one in which to confide. No one could really empathize with her. Who knew what was it like to be a mother to the Messiah other than Mary. We find Mary throughout the scriptures being “processed.”

#### Matthew 1:16

Mary married into the lineage of David and then discovered herself to be in the direct lineage of the Messiah.

#### Luke 1:26-38

Angelic Visitation. The greatest blessing can be the greatest curse. An angelic encounter answers all your questions but its something that may cause others to label you as crazy. However, for Mary, God also sent an angel to Joseph. This encounter may have helped her through many days.

#### Luke 1:41

The baby in me jumps. Essentially Elizabeth was saying that which God has deposited in me jumps in anticipation of the deposit that God has placed in you. The same can be true of us. Maybe, this served as a reminder for Mary later.

#### Luke 2:8-20

Imagine Mary when she heard the story of the shepherds. Imagine Mary remembering the story as she stared at a bloody cross.

#### Luke 2:22-33 \*33

Two people who love God instantly recognizing your child as being the one that that the angels had described. Wow!

#### Matthew 2:1-11

First the shepherds and now the wise men. Company comes from near and far. Everyone seems to know what you have already been told.

#### Luke 2:41-50

Jesus visits the temple as a boy and confounds the scribes. When his parents eventually find him the scripture says that he responded by claiming to be about his father's business. The scripture continues to state that his parents did not understand what he was saying. At what point did the real meaning click with Mary?

#### John 2:2-5

There was a crisis at the wedding. The wine supply was out. Mary asked Jesus for a favor and Jesus came close to rebuking her. Imagine being corrected by your son who happens to be The Son. I wonder if there was a "knee-jerk" reaction by Mary. Or I wonder if this was one of those moments where Mary remembered "three wise men who came from afar."

#### Matthew 27:55-56

The longest day of Mary's life was watching her son on the cross. Hearing the screams. Listening to the taunts. Seeing the torture. Can you imagine what it was like to be Mary?

#### Matthew 28:1

The perfect ending to Mary's experience was Jesus at the grave. Who deserved to see Jesus that day more than Mary?

Mary witnessed what was said, the good and the bad. Mary as a woman in that culture had little voice at best about what was said. God knew the pain that Mary would suffer. He knew the words she would hear. He knew the tears that would be shed. He knew the images that would be seen. God prepared Mary everyday and then at the grave, SUDDENLY

Mary had a huge calling. She walked under an extremely heavy mantle. God knew this. Every moment with Jesus, both the easy and the difficult, was a part of the processing for Mary to prepare her for what was to come.