

Refuge City Church
“Praiseworthy”: Magnify the Lord (Luke 1:26-55)
December 12, 2021

Introduction

- For the past 4 weeks, we’ve talked about our Praise of God for...
 - Who He is
 - Why we praise
 - Remember to praise
 - Just praise
- **TODAY:** we look at the song of praise spoken by Mary in the acceptance of her role given to her by God, and in preparation for what He chose her to do.

The Announcement [verses 26-37]

“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.”

- Mary was chosen by God.
 - He was with her [that may have been accepted]. He found favor [special honor/grace/acceptance] with her [this is what troubled/agitated/disturbed her].
 - Who was she? She was from Nazareth [John 1:46, “[Nathaniel] Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”] Why was she considered so special?
- It’s okay to question the things of God.
 - When God works in the realm of the infinite and impossible, we will more than likely not understand to the fullest.
 - So we ask questions to receive as much clarity and understanding as we can.

The Acceptance [verse 38]

“And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.”

- We still may not fully comprehend what God wants to do, but faith/trust in God should lead us to the same conclusion as Mary.

- **Another Example:** Gideon was chosen by God to lead an army to defeat the Midianites... but it took some convincing on Gideon's part.
 - **Judges 6:12-17**, "And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor." And Gideon said to him, "Please, my Lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian." And the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?" And he said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." And the Lord said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man." And he said to him, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me."
 - He then tests the angel of God for confirmation.
 - He then tests God Himself twice for confirmation.
 - After multiple confirmations, Gideon worshipped [Judges 7:15] and God delivered the Midianites into their hands.
- Mary's response: "Let it be to me according to your word."
 - She didn't pray to **change** God's will. She prayed in **submission** to God's will.
 - We may not be anything special in the eyes of the world. You may have a tremendous amount of doubt, fear, or even a suspect 'history'.
 - Yet God chooses to use those exactly like you and me. We just need to recognize that what God will accomplish has nothing to do with us, but simply our submission and obedience to His call, all for His glory!
 - About 33 years later, Jesus would pray something similar prior to fulfilling His ministry on earth.
 - **Luke 22:42**, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

The Adulation [verses 39-45]

"In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

- Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and was provided discernment in who was before her.
 - In the presence of Jesus, we should rejoice.

The Adoration [verses 46-55]

- Magnificat [latin translation] = magnify; exalt or glorify

- **Psalm 69:30**, “I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving.”
- **Verses 46-47: “And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,”**
 - We rejoice, we praise God because He saved our life!
 - **Habakkuk 3:18**, “yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.”
 - He is our salvation. Sinners need saving, and we like Mary, need to recognize this fact.
- **Verse 48: “for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;”**
 - God will *not* use the proud to accomplish His will.
 - It is only in humility that we are open to a submissive spirit.
 - **Psalm 138:6**, “For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.”
 - **Matthew 5:5**, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”
- **Verses 49-50: “for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.”**
 - We praise God for Who He is! He is mighty, holy, and merciful.
 - **Zephaniah 3:17**, “The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.”
 - **Isaiah 57:15**, “For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite [crushed; broken; remorse].”
- **Verses 51-53: “He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.”**
 - We serve a God who reverses the expected natural order of life, so we would enjoy His blessings.
 - When we live humbly, our God lifts us up.
- **Verses 54-55: “He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”**
 - When we reflect on what God has done in the past for His people, we can hold fast that His promises remain true for us today.
 - **QUOTE:** “God’s past faithfulness gives us hope for the future.” [unknown]

The Application [Conclusion]

- What’s pausing your willing spirit to be used by God?
 - **Psalm 51:10-11**, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
 - **Jeremiah 17:9**, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”

- **Psalm 139:23-24**, “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”
- Maybe you’ve gone long enough resting on your own laurels [past accomplishments].
 - **Psalm 51:12**, “Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a *willing* spirit.”
 - “Let it be to me according to your word.”
 - “Not my will, but Yours be done.”
 - “Here I am! Send me.”
- God’s Spirit lives in each of us, granting us His grace and power to do all He calls us to do. In that alone, there should be no hesitation.
 - **Psalm 51:13-15**, “Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.”