



Magnificat
Luke 1:46-55 Dec 16, 2018 (1713)

I. Introduction:

- A. Dan Bellamy will be here this Wednesday night, for our MV Kids Christmas Party, from 6:30PM- 8:30PM! There will be hotdogs, chips, cupcakes and then storyteller Dan Bellamy sharing the gospel in a unique way that will absolutely impact your little ones and how they see life with Christ. This night is for everyone, young and old, kids or not, we want you to come out and enjoy the night!
- B. As we continue today to look at the Christmas story through the eyes of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, we will see her response to the announcement from the Angel Gabriel that she will be the mother of the Son of God, the Messiah, the Christ, Jesus!
 - 1. This section has been called the Magnificat, which comes from the first word of the first line in the Latin version of the Bible, the vulgate of Mary's declaration of praise. ("Magnificat anima mea Dominum," or "My soul magnifies the Lord.")
- C. The setting of this praise was that after Gabriel told Mary the news of Jesus' birth through her that she went to visit her relative Elizabeth, the old barren woman now six months pregnant with the forerunner of the King, John the Baptist.
 - 1. When Mary arrived and the two greeted each other, Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, listen to what she said.
 - a) And note as I read that two times she will call Mary blessed.
 - b) Read v42-45 Emphasize blessed in both places
- D. And now we come to this morning's passage, the response of Mary to what Elizabeth said and what the Angel told her, the Magnificat!
- E. Before I read it, let me tell you a bit about this section of Scripture.

1. In this section Mary tells us that she is exalting or magnifying, lifting up the greatness of God and rejoicing in God who is her Savior!
 2. It is loaded with OT allusions, which tells us that Mary, even at a young age , most likely in her teens between 15-17, knew her Bible well, the Old Testament and the promises it had made especially about the coming King and Savior, the Messiah!
 3. Also this Psalm of praise is broken up into three sections:
 - a) What God has done for Mary
 - b) What He does for all who fear him and are humble
 - c) What He has and will do for Israel
 4. Finally the driving theme of this passage is God's mercy
 - a) Mercy is simply an inward concern for someone in serious need and bringing the outward help that they need.
 - b) We see this idea as the word mercy is used two times and a third reference to mercy in the word regard which means to take special notice of someone with the implication of concerning oneself with the one you are noticing.
 - c) I believe that the thrust of this praise is the fact that God is merciful to the humble by doing great things for them and merciful to Israe. by remembering His promises to them. Simply God is merciful to the humble and to Israel!
 5. Watch for all of this as I Read v46-55
- Let's start by looking at the first section about

II. God is merciful to the humble by doing great things for them

- A. Read 48a. God has taken notice of Mary who was not someone of high position or importance in the community. She was just another one of the young girls, one of humble state.
 1. She recognized that from then on every generation would consider her as blessed, just like Elizabeth just did for being the mother of the Lord and believing His word!
 2. Then she states that the Mighty One, the Holy One, has done great things for her, the one who is of a humble state!
 3. Listen as I read v48b-49 "for...."

- B. Then Mary continues her praise of God's mercy by extending beyond just herself as a person of a humble state and expands it to God's mercy to everyone who is humble, those who fear Him. To them also the Mighty One has done mighty deeds!
1. Basically she is saying it's not just me that God is merciful to and does great things for everyone who is humble, everyone who fears Him, He does great things.
 2. And here is the good news – that means what we read in the Magnificat includes you and me who are humble before the Lord and fear Him!
 3. Watch as I read v50-53 for how God shows His mercy to the humble by exalting them and doing great things for them while he brings down the proud.
- C. The proud, the powerful and the wealthy she is referring to here are those who do not know God, or in our day we could say they are lost people who do not know Jesus.
1. While God is always down on pride, there is a big difference between a lost person who is so proud they have no need for Jesus and can do it all themselves versus a believer who may struggle with pride.
 2. Also the Bible shows us many examples of wealthy and powerful people who love God are Humble and have had His blessing.
- D. And we also know many lost people who are proud, have high positions and many possessions who are not empty handed, and at the same time many Christians whose lives do not seem so exalted and filled.
1. Even the Psalmist was very troubled when he considered the prosperity and ease of the wicked while he was being stricken all day long. But all that changed when he went into the presence of God and perceived their end!
 2. I think that Ps 107:8-9 gives us some perspective here.
 - a) The wonders, the mighty deeds God does for the humble are things in the spirit and soul and in the future. Things that are a part of the unseen internal world and future world rather than the things we see right now!
(1) We need to get our eyes off the two second life here and put them upon the big one!
 - b) God scatters the lost proud and brings them down and sends them away empty handed regarding the things that really matter, the things that money cannot buy, the things that are eternal, the things of the soul and spirit!

c) Makes me think of the picture I saw around Thanksgiving of a homeless man on his knees in the middle of the street thanking God.

(1) Listen to what He said when he was asked why a homeless man with nothing would be thanking God?

(2) He replied: “God will never forsake me and though I might not have much in material things, I have the greatest gift of all – salvation... thanks to Jesus Christ”! He said, “My riches don’t come from man and money, but from our heavenly Father”!

- So we learn in the first two-thirds of this psalm of praise that God is merciful to the humble by doing great things for them! In the last third of this psalm of praise we see

III. God is Merciful to Israel by remembering His promises to them

A. Watch for this as I read v54-55

B. God in His covenant with Abraham promised him many things which they had been looking forward to the fulfilment of these for centuries! God promised He would:

1. Bless Abraham and his descendants,
2. That God would be their God,
3. Save them from their enemies,
4. Give them a land forever,
5. Through Abraham’s seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

C. This is all part of the larger story of redemption we will look at on Christmas Eve, but by the way we are in on these blessings and promises as well because those promises were spoken to Abraham and His seed Jesus, and because of our relationship with Jesus we are in on all these promises and blessings!

IV. So what can we take away from all of this?

V. Final Application

A. First “God is attracted to and blesses the humble!”

1. Listen to what 1 Pet 5:5 says
 - a) There is a greater experience of God’s grace when a believer is humble because we see throughout Scripture that God blesses the humble!
2. The Pharisees were a great picture of pride.
 - a) They did deeds to be noticed and admired by men,

- b) They loved to be seated at the place of honor at banquets and religious gatherings,
 - c) They loved the respectful greetings they got in the market place
 - d) And loved being called teacher,
 - e) Basically they wanted to be seen by others as impressive, important and successful.
3. Listen to what Jesus said to them after confronting them about these things.
Read Mt 23:12
4. Even believers struggle with wanting to be around people who are impressive, important and successful so we can feel significant and look significant to others.
5. If this is the case for your own benefit and the blessing of others and the glory of God, you need to confess your sin of pride, seek God to build into you a spirit of humility like Mary's.
- B. Secondly, do you need mercy today? Prayer is one of the greatest forms of humility as we put everything else aside and turn to God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves – Heb 4:16
- C. Finally when we consider worship, John Piper says, “The only people whose soul can truly magnify the Lord are people like Elizabeth and Mary—people who acknowledge their lowly estate and are overwhelmed by the condescension of the merciful God.