

MARY'S SONG

Luke 1:39-56

Sermon for Peace Church

November 30, 2008

PURPOSE – Through Mary's example, prepare people to sing the songs of Advent & Christmas.

MAIN IDEA – Filled with the life of Christ and in fellowship with another believer, Mary sang of God's triumph, received personal, magnifying the Lord.

I. INTRODUCTION

Let's open our Bibles to Luke 1:39

The first Scriptural "song of the season" that I wish to look at is probably the most famous one: MARY'S MAGNIFICAT!

I'll begin in verse 39 because the SETTING for this song is important.

Read Luke 1:39-56

II. THE CONDITION OF A SINGER

First, a few thoughts about the CONDITION & CONTEXT of the singer.

1. She's pregnant with the LIFE OF JESUS within. Spiritually, the IDENTICAL CONDITION a true believer – the regenerate person – sealed by the Spirit.
 - (i) The promise of this miraculous birth was given Mary. She believed. She offered her life in service to God. And the seed of Christ was planted and began to grow within!!

Such is the condition of those who most DEEPLY ENTER song this season!

"You must be born again to enter the kingdom of God" – Jesus (John 3)

... the Kingdom of Song!

2. The CONTEXT of her song is equally important – she’s not alone!

She has gathered in FELLOWSHIP with another believer!

= another person in whom God has done a miraculous work – ELIZABETH!

(i) And the life in Elizabeth – John the Baptist – BEARS WITNESS to the life of Christ in Mary! (As John the Baptist would do for all of his life!)

He kicks!!

A. Then Elizabeth speaks forth and CONFIRMS what God is doing in Mary’s life (what a blessing it would have been for young Mary to have heard these words):

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!

(ii) THIS IS DOING CHURCH ... WELL!

We get together in fellowship and we share how God’s at work in our life. We confirm that NEW LIFE IN US. We encourage and bless one another. (Somewhat like our Thanksgiving Day service.)

We gather to LIFT UP each other:

Why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

We build each others’ faith:

Blessed is she who has believed what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!

3. Mary does not burst forth in song from a STAND-STILL START.

a. She’s not doing the standing long jump event!

b. She’s involved in a RUNNING long jump.

i. She has MOMENTUM leading up to her BURST IN SONG!

She’s in fellowship with someone else whose been genuinely touched by God

She’s been lifted up and blessed in her faith

Christ living in her has been confirmed!

IN THIS CONTEXT / IN THIS CONDITION ... she sings a Song of the Season ... and SO DO WE!

III. THE SONG

A FEW PRELIMINARY REMARKS ABOUT THE SONG:

- (i) It is STEEPED in Scripture. When she breaks out in praise, the words of the Bible flow naturally to her lips. As a teenage girl (probably not over 15 years of age), she obviously had already memorized a lot of Scripture.

Keep it up! – you who are memorizing Scripture

Get to it! – you are yet aren't

Scripture helps us EXPRESS the heart in response to God!

- (ii) In a particular way Mary's Song parallels Hannah's (the mother of Samuel) in 1 Samuel 2, after she dedicated her miraculously-conceived son to God.

Undoubtedly on the walk to Elizabeth's, Mary had thought a lot about Hannah – and how to respond to this new life in her!

Hannah's song gives shape to hers: **MAGNIFYING THE HOLY GOD WHO EXALTS THE HUMBLE AND SENDS THE RICH AWAY EMPTY!**

- (iii) There are THREE PARTS to this song:

- First, Mary's expression of joy (the feelings of her heart)
- Then, Mary's naming what God has done for her as an individual
- And 3rd, a BROADER EXTRACTING of the way God works in this world.

ALL 3 ELEMENTS SHOULD BE PART OF OUR SINGING THE SONGS OF THE SEASON!

- I'll begin with the last part and move to the first.

1. The largest part of the song – Verses 50-55 – is sometimes called, "The Great Reversal".

On account of His work in this world, exemplified in Mary, God:

- Scatters the proud in thought and lifts up the humble
- He fills the hungry and sends the rich away empty
- He brings down rulers from their thrones and helps his servants

- (i) Notice that these verses all CUE OFF a statement at the end of verse 49. Mary has rejoiced in God, named the Mighty One's work in her life ... and then declares:

HOLY IS HIS NAME!

(ii) God's HOLINESS is the KEY to understanding the Great Reversal.

In creation, in the Law, in Jesus – especially His death & resurrection, God has revealed Himself as HOLY.

= Separate and above all creation, perfect in all attributes, pure – free from sin.

- The holiness of the Cross revealing both His justice & mercy.

A. God has mercy on those who fear Him, who humble themselves before the holiness of Christ at that Cross. For those who don't, their JUST DESTINY is in that revelation of destruction.

(iii) So Mary sees (and sings!) that the humble – those who worship God's holiness & greatness; those who LOVE its revelation in this world – THEY WILL BE EXALTED.

= "Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the Kingdom of heaven"

A. BUT THE PROUD in thought, the RICH – those who are indifferent or resentful to God's greatness & holiness – they will be ABASED!!!

Such is the meaning of the birth of this child. Through Him the hearts of all mankind will be revealed. The humble who love Him – and all that He reveals about the Holy God – they will be exalted. The proud who reject Him will be scattered & brought down.

We sing this in our "songs of the season" > "LET ALL MORTAL FLESH KEEP SILENT ... stanza 1

2. But note in the second part of this song that Mary is singing this in a very PERSONAL WAY.

Verse 48 – *He has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things FOR ME!*

(i) This is how we best sing these songs of the season – in a very personal way.

= not only "Joy to the WORLD the Lord has come" ... joy to ME the Lord has come

... no more let sins & sorrows reign in MY LIFE ... for he has come to make His blessing known to me, as far as the curse of sin has infected MY LIFE!

Yes, from now on generations who know me – who truly know me – will call me blessed!

A. To properly sing the songs of the season, we sing them PERSONALLY.

At the Cross, the GREAT REVERSAL has happened in MY LIFE.

= I died there – my pride, my self – and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me ... and the life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me!

III. CONCLUSION

... which brings us, in conclusion, to the FIRST PART OF THE SONG.

= the most important part of HOW we sing the songs of the season.

“My soul GLORIFIES the Lord and my spirit REJOICES in God my Savior”

1. The translation, “My soul MAGNIFIES the Lord” is actually a better word.

- Not just because this IS called Mary’s MAGNIFICAT ... but the Greek word literally means, “to ENLARGE, MAKE GREAT”

(i) That’s what we do when we MAGNIFY something

- We put the magnifying lens on the back of our hand and the hairs are BIG!!!

- They are MADE LARGE

(ii) So to MAGNIFY GOD – is to make Him big in our MINDS & HEARTS.

- We don’t actually make Him bigger than He is – for God is bigger than we can ever fathom. What we do is make Him bigger to our consciousness!

= more REAL, more IMPORTANT, more NEAR, more CLEAR & FOCUSED, more SIGNIFICANT to every thought we have. ... MAGNIFY the LORD!

2. ... and we do that by REJOICING in God our Savior.

Magnify God by taking JOY in these songs of the season.

I.e. – Yea, you might be in a mall when you hear one ... But when the angels sing, “Gloo..ria” over the sound system, join them! (at least in heart

- Join them in joy - in order to MAGNIFY the God of our salvation.

IN JESUS:

- He has brought the Great Reversal on earth – “He who loses His life for my sake will find it.”

- He has brought the Great Reversal to me – “I no longer live for my glory, I live for HIS”

And so, with Mary, MAGNIFY the Lord ... and let us REJOICE in God my Savior.

AMEN