

Sermon Text: Luke 1:46 – 55
Sermon Theme: Meditate on the Magnificat!

⁴⁶And Mary said:
"My soul glorifies the Lord
⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.
⁵⁰His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
⁵¹He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
⁵⁵to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers."

This is the Word of the Lord.

On our computer at home, we have an icon that we are able to click on and it will tell us down to the second how long until Christmas Day. How do you feel knowing that Christmas is only 5 days away? Perhaps you are looking forward to being off of school for awhile. Maybe you are getting more and more excited, wondering what gifts you will receive this Christmas. Maybe you are feeling more and more stressed out, as you think of everything you want to get done between now and Christmas day. There are only 5 days left until Christmas! And the devil would like nothing more than for us to get distracted, and have us focus on all the things this world says we need to get or that we need to do to have a truly Merry Christmas. So today, you and I have come into God's house to spend time in his Word, to keep ourselves focused on what this time of year is really all about. Today, you and I will spend some time looking at the Song of Mary, which is also known as the "Magnificat". It is called the "Magnificat" because in the Latin translation of the Bible, the opening word is "magnificat", which means "glorifies". What words of comfort, what lessons, what encouragement are you and I able to draw from this magnificent Song of Mary? So we pray: "O Holy Spirit, bless us as together we open your Word and MEDITATE ON THE MAGNIFICAT."

The first point I would like us to focus on from this section of God's Word is how Mary felt about herself. Mary says, "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for 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—holy is his name." Mary knew that she didn't deserve to become the Mother of the Lord. In humility, she confessed her personal need for a Savior. After hearing the angel Gabriel say to her, "the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God", Mary trusted that what was taking place in her life was the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah. She knew that generations to come would join her in her joy that she was chosen as an instrument the almighty God would use to carry out his plan to send the Savior of all mankind. Offering all praise and thanks to her Savior-God, Mary confesses, "the Mighty One has done great things for me – holy is HIS name."

An old country song goes like this:

"Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble, when you're perfect in every way.
I can't wait to look in the mirror, 'cause I get better looking each day.
To know me is to love me...
Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble, but I'm doing the best that I can."

What a contrast in attitude we see in the words of this song when compared to the Song of Mary! As you and I meditate on the Magnificat, who among us would be willing to stand before the throne of the holy and just God and say to him, "O Lord, it's hard to be humble when you're perfect in every way..."? You and I know from God's Word that we fall far short of the perfection the Lord God requires of us. The fact

is that the only Christmas present from the Lord God that you and I have earned for ourselves is not just a lump of coal, but rather to burn forever in the burning coals of hell. So, with a humble and repentant heart, we come before our Lord and plead, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." And the Good News for you and me to hear is that "His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation." Because of the forgiveness of sins that Jesus won for you and for me, as we meditate on the Magnificat, we are able to join with Mary and say, "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name."

As Mary's song continues, she not only praises her Savior-God for his mercy, but also for his Almighty power. We read, "He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty." The Almighty Lord is the one who is charge of history. It is the Lord of the nations who decides when kingdoms will raise and when they will fall. It is the Owner of all things who determines the wealth that people enjoy.

But this section of Mary's song not only applies to physical kingdoms and physical wealth. It also speaks to those who would rely on themselves and their ability to make things right between them and God. Those who try to make themselves spiritually "rich" will go away spiritually poor. Those who try to fill the spiritual void in their lives on their own with all the things of this sinful world, will go away spiritually hungry. It is only in his Word, that the Savior-God tells us about Jesus and the forgiveness of sins that Jesus won for you and me. It is only through the Word of God that you and I are made spiritually rich, with the gifts of the forgiveness of our sins and the promise of everlasting life in heaven. It is in the meal of the Lord's Supper, that you and I are fed with the very price that Jesus paid to win our forgiveness: namely, his body which was given for us; and, his blood which was shed for us.

We learn all these great spiritual truths from the Word of God. This brings up another point we are able to take away for ourselves as we meditate on the Magnificat. Mary's song is filled with quotations from the Old Testament. Her words especially quote several different verses found in the Psalms. Mary knew her Old Testament. She had spent time in the Word of her God. As she thought about all the blessings she enjoyed from the hand of her Savior-God, Mary responded with words she had learned from Scripture. As we mediate on the Magnificat, you and I hear encouragement to be in the Word of God ourselves. We open our Bibles in our homes. We make use of the opportunities we have to gather around the Word of God here in God's house during our worship services. We look forward to getting together with our Brothers and Sisters in Christ as we read and study the Word of God together. For as you and I spend time in God's Word, the promise is that we will "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

And that brings up one final point that you and I are able to find as we mediate on the Magnificat. The Lord God keeps his promises. From the Song of Mary we read, "He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers." To Abraham, and throughout the Old Testament time period, the gracious Savior-God promised that he would send the world a Savior. Mary now rejoices that the Lord is fulfilling the promise he had made. As we meditate on the Magnificat today you and I rejoice that the Lord keeps all his promises to us. The loving Lord God, who kept his promise and sent us the Savior we needed, makes you and me several other promises as well: the promise of forgiveness of all of our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ; the promise of eternal life at his side in heaven; the promise that he is watching over us each and every day; the promise that everything that happens in our life is for our eternal good. As you meditate on the Magnificat, join your voice with Mary and praise the gracious Lord for keeping all the promises he has made to you.

While I was thinking about a theme for the sermon this weekend, I was hoping to use a style of writing called "alliteration". For those who may not know, "alliteration" is when you repeat the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words that are close together. I wanted to use this style of writing, not only as an attempt to help you remember the theme of today's sermon, but more importantly to help all of us remember the message from God's Word for us as we meditate on the Magnificat. But then I got to thinking about the two "M's" that I made use of, and that made me think of the "M&M's" candy pieces. Remember the slogan for M&M's? "They melt in your mouth and not in your hand." Changing that slogan just slightly, it is my prayer that this section of God's Word will "melt in your heart and not in your hands." As this section of Scripture melts in your heart, as this section of God's Word fills your heart with the Good News from our Savior-God, as you mediate on the Magnificat, don't keep it to yourself. Rather, share the sweet message of the Gospel with others. Amen.