

# He Has Done Great Things – Part 1

## The Praise of God - Luke 1:46-49

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### Intro:

- Being in a hospital waiting room is not a fun place to be. You are separated from your loved one, who is in the hands of people you don't really know, somewhere in the building. You trust them to do their job and pray that everything will be okay. The minutes tick by, one agonizing minute after another, as you keep checking the screen to see if there is any news and try to occupy your mind with something, anything, so as not to be anxious. But your mind keeps going back to the subject at hand. Will everything be alright? What is happening? And there is nothing you can do but wait and pray and wait some more. When the news finally comes that everything went well and will be okay, with a sigh of relief, you praise God.
- This feeling of anxiousness, hopelessness, and desperation was in the stomachs of the people of God as they waited with baited breath for the promised one to come and deliver them. Generations came and went with still nothing. Not a single word. Not a sign of any kind. Silence. Year after year, decade after decade, century after century. The longer they waited, the worse their anxiety and desperation became. Then, four hundred years after the last promise was given, after the light of hope had almost gone out, finally, finally, there was news.
- While on duty, a priest in the temple—Zechariah—had an encounter with an angel who told him that he and his barren wife, Elizabeth, would have a son. And this son was to “prepare the people for the coming of the Lord” (Luke 1:17).
- A few months later, this same angel spoke to a woman named Mary and announced that the favor of the Lord was upon her and that she would conceive in her womb by the power of the Spirit a Son and **“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” (Luke 1:32).**
- Elizabeth and Mary, the two new expectant mothers, met. When the voice of Mary reached the ears of Elizabeth, the baby “leaped in her womb” (Luke 1:41), and she was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed, **“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?” (Luke 1:42-43).**
- At this encounter, Mary responded by the power of the Spirit what is now called the “Magnificat.” From this response will be our Christmas series entitled “He Has Done Great Things,” where we will look to the praise, mercy, justice, and promise of God. And as we focus on God's various attributes, your faith will grow, your hope will increase, and God will be magnified in you. Today's topic is the praise of God, and we will learn from the words of Mary recorded in scripture.

### Praise God

Luke 1:46-47 ESV

And Mary said, **“My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God.”**

- What does it mean to “praise God?” Does it mean to say the words “praise God” or sing His praise? Surely these things are included, but these expressions are to be the outward overflow of what is happening in our soul and spirit.
- How do we praise God? By “magnifying the Lord” in our souls. To magnify is to make bigger, but we cannot make God bigger than He already is. So, to praise God is to expand Him in our hearts and minds, making our souls bigger and allowing Him to take up more space within us. This is an expansion of our theological and experiential knowledge of God. Our thinking is expanding, knowing more, and thinking greater of Him, and our experiential knowledge is expanding by tangibly participating in His goodness.
- How do we praise God? By “rejoicing in God” in our spirits. We are to praise Him in “spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). And our spirits, that which is life in us, can rejoice in His goodness. This is when our minds and hearts are expanded by knowledge and experience of the goodness of God, and our spirit rejoices in Him. There is an emotion of rejoicing, a joy that overflows from the knowledge and experience of the goodness of God. This is how we are to praise God—this is worship that is both of the spirit and of truth. This is what Mary was expressing, and this is the worship that honors God. May you and I and we together have this experience as ours as well!
- The passage then goes on to give us reasons why we should magnify and rejoice in God.

### Praise God because He saves those who believe

Luke 1:46-47 ESV

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

- Mary was a believer. She believed the word of God. Elizabeth said of her, “**blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord**” (Luke 145). For us to be believers, we must do the same thing. We must believe what is written in the word about us and for us and that God will fulfill what He has spoken to us. This is what it means to be a believer; we believe what the word says about us and says to us. Those who do so are “blessed.” And we know that God who is with us is our savior.
- Now, this saving has its ultimate and final fulfillment is saving us from the wrath of God due us from our sins. This is the final eschatological fulfillment of saving. As we already are promised this and have not yet received it, we rejoice in the sureness of what will be given. Even Mary needed this savior because of her sin.
- The second sense of the salvation of God is when He saves us time and time and time again in this life. He saves us from our own stupidity, saves us from our own lack of wisdom, saves us by His protection, and provision and guidance. He saves us from our powerlessness and our pride. Not only is there our final once and for all saving from the penalty of sin, but there is also a daily saving from the effects of our limitations as we cry out to God for help. In both of these ways, we magnify the Lord in our soul and rejoice in our spirits because He is the one who helps us, He is the one who saves us, He is the one who is always with us, and He is the hero of our story. He is mighty to save.

## Praise God because He blesses the humble servant

**Luke 1:48** ESV

**For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed.**

- He has looked upon—not looked beyond—not looked over—He has focused on me, one of humble estate, the one that is so often looked over by others. This was the case for Noah, Abram and Sarai, David, Ruth and Esther, Peter and Paul, blind Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus, the lepers and the demonized—Jesus looked on their humble estate, called them, and their lives were never the same.

**2 Chron 16:9** HCSB

**For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to show Himself strong for those whose hearts are completely His.**

**1 Peter 3:12** ESV

**For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer.**

- Mary could not do anything to bring about her deliverance. Mary was a nobody from a non-place. The Lord looked on her humble estate, and He looked upon his servant. He makes somebodies out of nobodies. And He blesses His servants. He has always done so, and He always will.

**1 Cor 1:27-29** NIV

**But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are.**

**James 4:10** NIV

**Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

- He draws near to the humble and blesses those who serve Him. God took a nobody, Mary, and now all people call her “blessed.” God will reward you and lift you up at the proper time. Praise Him for what He is doing. Praise Him for what He will do. He blesses His humble servants, and we will see the truth of this in all eternity. **“But many who are first will be last, and the last first” (Mark 10:31** ESV).

## Praise God because He has done great things for me

**Luke 1:49** ESV

**For he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.**

- Now we come to the theme of our series, “He has done great things.” Every time you walk into this sanctuary and see these words, I want you to remember the great things that He has done for you. Every time you walk into this sanctuary and see these words, I want you to believe the

great things that He will do for you. This place should cause you to remember and believe in the One who is mighty and the One who is holy, to remember the great things that He has done and will do, and this should help us to magnify the Lord in our souls and rejoice in the Lord from our spirits, resulting in praise and honor to Him.

- He who is mighty is the one who is able to save, to deliver, to protect, to provide. He is the one who can do all things, who is uniquely mighty. Has done great things for me. I want you to make this personal. He has done great things in history. He has done great things collectively. He has done great things for others, and He has and will do great things for you personally!
- I have been praying this for you, that you will see this in a greater degree, that your soul will grow with the knowledge of the holy, and your spirit will rejoice in Him because of what He has done for you. God give us eyes that can see you, and God work among us in great ways.
- Holy is His name. There is none like Him. Pure, perfect, beautiful, without flaw or blemish. The one in which the greatest of angels, when seeing him, proclaim, **“Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” (Rev. 4:8 ESV).**
- The mighty one, He has done great things for me. And holy is His name!

### **Conclusion**

- Praise God by magnifying Him in your soul and rejoicing in Him with your Spirit.
- Praise God because He saves those who believe.
- Praise God because He blesses His humble servants.
- Praise God because He has done great things for me.
- Prayer people and prayer