

<sup>46</sup> **And Mary said:**

<sup>47</sup> **“My soul glorifies the Lord**  
<sup>48</sup> **and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,**  
**for he has been mindful**  
**of the humble state of his servant.**  
<sup>49</sup> **From now on all generations will call me blessed,**  
**for the Mighty One has done great things for me—**  
**holy is his name.**  
<sup>50</sup> **His mercy extends to those who fear him,**  
**from generation to generation.**  
<sup>51</sup> **He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;**  
**he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost**  
**thoughts.**  
<sup>52</sup> **He has brought down rulers from their thrones**  
**but has lifted up the humble.**  
<sup>53</sup> **He has filled the hungry with good things**  
**but has sent the rich away empty.**  
<sup>54</sup> **He has helped his servant Israel,**  
**remembering to be merciful**  
<sup>55</sup> **to Abraham and his descendants forever,**  
**even as he said to our fathers.”** (NIV 84)

Theme: My Soul Proclaims the Greatness of the Lord.

1. He has done great things for Mary
2. He lifts up the Lowly

There are all kinds of Christmas songs out there today. There are songs about sleigh-bells or jingle bells, Frosty the Snow Man, Rudolph the Red-nosed reindeer, chestnuts, snow, and so on. Then there are those Christmas songs that talk about angels, shepherds, and a little boy named Jesus. What kind do you prefer? Now, it's not wrong by any means to sing secular Christmas songs. But that's not where we want our focus to be; especially during the season of Advent. We want to focus on God showing his love to us by promising and sending us a Savior. And we want to sing songs about it.

So in our midweek advents series this year we are focusing on songs of praise to God; but not just any songs. We will take a look at three out of the four songs recorded by Luke in the first two chapters of his gospel.

Tonight we look at the Song of Mary, or the “Magnificat” as it's often referred as. Tonight we can say along with Mary, “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.” For he has done great things for Mary, and he lifts up the lowly.

We know the story of Mary quite well. We know that she was a virgin living a lowly life in Nazareth when the angel Gabriel appeared to her. He told her that she would have a son, and she was to call his name Jesus. He said, **He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. How could this be?** Mary asked. **The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the son of God.** Gabriel told Mary that her baby wasn't going to be any ordinary baby, but it was going to be the son of God. God himself was growing in Mary. She knew that this baby would reign for ever and ever. He was going to be her Savior.

After Gabriel left Mary, she went to go visit her relative Elizabeth. For the angel told her that Elizabeth was pregnant in her old age. When Mary got to Elizabeth's house, John the Baptist, who was in Elizabeth's womb, jumped for joy. Elizabeth then blessed Mary. For she knew that Mary was pregnant with the Savior of the world. She said to Mary, **why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** It was then that Mary fully realized the implications of what God was blessing her with

And she burst out into song. She couldn't help but sing praises to God. When she realized how much God was blessing her, she had to thank God. She wanted everyone to know, just how much God had done for her. And she wasn't putting on a show. She wasn't simply singing a song without believing what she was saying. She truly believed this. Listen to the first words of her song. **My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.** This song of praise is coming from Mary's heart and soul. She truly believed and couldn't help but sing songs of praise.

Is that what we do? How often do we sing praises to God? What is your reaction when you think about all the great things God has done for you? We often don't have much of a reaction. "It's nice," we think to ourselves. "I'm glad God did that for me." Maybe because we have been hearing about God's love since we were kids, that we have become somewhat callused to it. While we know and believe in God's love, it just doesn't fill us with that much joy. At times, we would rather sing songs about Santa Claus than Jesus. Or about presents than God's love.

But Mary wasn't singing about snow, food, or presents. She was singing about God and his love. **For the Mighty One has done great things for me.** God did many great things for Mary. God chose her to be the mother of all the living. She became the mother of God. It is not as if she deserved this. She was a sinner just like you and I. She confessed that God is her Savior. In fact, she seems to indicate that the son in her womb wasn't just a son. She knew that he was God and her Savior.

In her song Mary says, **From now on all generations will call me blessed.** We call her blessed because of all the blessings God gave her. We do that almost every Sunday. Whenever we say the Apostles or Nicene Creed, we confess that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary. And that is one of the greatest blessings God gave Mary. Every time we sing the Magnificat we also confess that Mary is blessed. We confess that God certainly showed love and mercy to Mary. Through her came the Savior of the world.

But God hasn't just done great things for Mary, he has also done great things for us.

God certainly didn't need to do great things for us. For we are nothing but horrible sinners. We constantly go against God's will. We look toward our own interests. We seek our own pleasure and enjoyment. We fail to do what God wants us to do. And because of our sins we deserve nothing but God's wrath and punishment. We deserve to pay for our sins.

So we go before God with humble hearts. We confess our sins. We bow in his presence. We realize that we are not worthy to stand before

him. That we are not worthy to be called his children. We humble ourselves before him. And we plead for God's mercy.

And we remember that God has done great things for us. Listen to the words of Mary. **He has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things.** God has mercy on all those who come before him with humble hearts. To those who confess their sins, God forgives. Those who are starving for forgiveness will graciously receive all the nourishment they need. Mary also sang, **His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.** God has mercy on all those who respect and honor him. For all people of all time, God has shown us his love. For he has done great things for us through the great thing he did for Mary. Through Mary he sent us his Son. He would go on and live a perfect life in our place. When he died on the cross he took all our sins upon himself. He forgave our sins and does not count them against us. Those who confess their sins in humble repentance are lifted up. And they are given eternal life.

God has come to the help of his people. Just as he promised our spiritual ancestors. He told Abraham and his children that he was going to watch over them. That he was going to take care of them. He promised Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and others that a Savior. Through them the Savior of the world would come. And Mary was their descendent. God had kept his promise. Through them all nations were blessed.

Because God kept his promise to send a Savior the first time, we know that he will keep his promise this time. Jesus will come again. He will take all believers to live with him in heaven forever. This is as good as done since Christ has promised it. We don't have to doubt. We don't have to worry. Our sins are forgiven. We will live in heaven forever. All of this because God did a great thing for Mary by having his son live in her.

As we are getting closer to Christmas and hear more and more secular Christmas songs, let us not forget songs about Christ. Let us join Mary in singing songs of praise to God with our whole heart. For through the great things he did through Mary, he did great things for

us. Through her Son, Jesus Christ, he paid for our sins and won for us eternal life. Amen.