

“The Magnificat” was Mary’s song of praise. “Magnificat” means “to magnify”; it’s taken from the first line of the song: **“My soul glorifies (or “magnifies”) the Lord.”** Tonight, we’re going to explore what was going on in Mary’s soul that she might feel this way and talk about what this might have to do with our walk with God and with one another.

OPENING PRAYER

LUKE 1:46-55

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

Of course, before Mary sang her song, Gabriel the archangel visited her to break the news: “Your pregnant!” But her case was special, as we know: She was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. At first, she was a little flustered, but she came around and accepted the pronouncement, saying, or praying, really, **“I am the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your Word” (Luke 1:38).**

These words reveal the depth of Mary's faith. Even as a young teen she had made the decision to put her life into God's hands. This wasn't something that just happened on the spot. But her faith was deep. She was steeped in the traditions of the Jewish faith. But, naturally, everyone around her was too. The thing that made Mary special is that she believed in what she knew, that God had promised a savior, that he keeps his promises, and that he loved her.

"I am the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your Word": It's such a great prayer for us too. For we also are God's servants; we receive his Word, and we obey it. **"I am the servant of the Lord."** Please say it with me: **"I am the servant of the Lord."**

"(L)et it be done to me according to your word." Please say it with me: **"(L)et it be done to me according to you word."**

We read that the next thing Mary did was **"hurry"** (or maybe she **"ran"**?) to visit her elderly cousin, Elizabeth, who, herself, was 6-months pregnant.

When the women greeted each other, the babe in Elizabeth's womb had a revelation. We read that he **"leaped in her womb."** This was not a, "Put your hand here. Did you feel that?" kind of thing! It was a LEAP! As in, Did you SEE that?! That baby would one day be John the Baptist, the one who would **"Make ready the way of the Lord"** (Luke 3:4).

Mary proclaimed: **"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant"** (vv.46-48a).

Luther wrote, "(Mary's) words express the strong passion and exuberant joy whereby all (her) mind and life were inwardly lifted up in the Spirit" as she praised God.

She didn't praise herself for being found worthy. She didn't glory in her own awesomeness. If she had, it would've been like a piece of pottery thanking himself for being so wonderfully made instead of the potter who had created him.

Also, Mary did not say, “I exalt the Lord.” But she said her SOUL exalted, her SOUL magnified the Lord. Luther said, “It is as though (Mary) said, ‘My life and all my senses float in the love and praise of God..., so that I am no longer mistress of myself; I am lifted up [in my heart] to praise the Lord.’”

Mary’s spirit was filled with joy, a joy which confirmed in her heart God’s promise to never leave her. She was filled to overflowing with God’s love, an abiding sense of his occupation of her heart.

Mary sang, **“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” (vv.48b-52).**

Luther said that “When the power of man fails, the power of God begins.” Because Mary had nothing—no property, no money, no power – but because she had faith in God, she was perfect for the mission the Lord gave her.

But she was not without-sin-perfect. She was whole because she had faith. There is no evidence Mary ever had this kind of direct experience with the Lord or one of his angels again. However, we do know she had God’s Word and she had her son, God’s Son, Jesus. That’s God’s gift to you and me as well: His Word and his son, Jesus.

Mary sang, **“The Mighty One has done great things for me.”** Luther said Mary pointed to God who did “all the work” on her behalf and on behalf of Israel. She saw herself as his workshop. Adopting this idea for himself, Luther said, “I am but the workshop wherein God performs his work. I have nothing to do with the work itself.”

God’s workshop: That place where God launches his ministry in our neighborhood. That’s what we are: God’s workshop.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, during our Advent meditations let us commit ourselves to the Lord's Word, to know it in our minds and hearts, to take faith in that word that it would draw us ever closer to the heart of Jesus.

During Advent let us commit ourselves to pray just as Mary did: **"I am the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your Word."**

And let us take opportunity to share this Good News with another person who really needs to hear it, in the name of Jesus. Amen.