

**First Baptist Church Merritt Island**  
**Senior Pastor Titus Green**  
**December 14, 2025**  
**DAWN IS BREAKING – Living with Joy for God’s Glory**  
**Luke 1:39-56**

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On October 2, 1608, a Dutch eyeglass maker named Hans Lippershey applied for a patent for an invention that would literally change the way humanity understood the entire universe. All of us have been impacted in a way that is impossible to measure. Hans Lippershey patented the telescope. With two simple lenses, his telescope was able to magnify objects up to 3 times larger than they appeared to the natural eye.

For some perspective, on average, the moon appears to be about the size of our thumbnail at arm’s length. But, with Lippershey’s telescope, the moon appeared to be about the width of three fingers. That might not sound like much, but it opened up the heavens in a way that shattered previously held assumptions about the moon and stars and our own place in the universe. The technology was so simple and so revolutionary that it immediately caught on like wildfire. A few weeks after Lippershey applied for a patent, another Dutchman applied for a similar patent. A few months later, in 1609, a man named Galileo heard about the telescope and designed one for himself. He quickly increased the ability of his telescope to magnify and eventually went from 3x magnification to 20x magnification.

That meant he could not only see our moon in greater detail, but he could see Jupiter and discovered that it has moons of its own. The discoveries that were made from that first telescope paved the way for us to get a really close look at the moon by landing on it and driving around for a while.

The telescope changed the way this entire world lives in relationship to the universe. But it didn’t change the universe in which we live. It magnified the moon and stars, but it didn’t make them any bigger than they already are. As I was reading about telescopes this week, I learned that they weren’t originally called telescopes. Early on, they were commonly referred to as “perspective glasses.” What they changed was our perspective. They allowed us to see things more accurately than we had before. They changed our perspective on how we saw our place in this universe. That change of perspective revolutionized our lives.

And this morning’s text shares with us something that has a similar effect in our relationship with God, something that magnifies the Lord in a way that changes our perspective and revolutionizes our lives. And with that in mind, let me go ahead and give you the Big Idea for this morning so you can be looking for it in our text.

**Big Idea: The Lord is Magnified in the Joyful Praise of His People.**

**Luke 1:39–56**

***In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, 40 and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, 42 and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was***

*spoken to her from the Lord.” 46 And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. 51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; 52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. 54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55 as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.” 56 And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.*

Our text begins with Mary making a trip to visit her relative Elizabeth. Remember, this whole chapter is about two miraculous pregnancies. Elizabeth and her husband, Zechariah, were old and physically unable to have children. But, in verses 5-25, God sent an angel to Zechariah with the good news that He was going to miraculously give them a son who would grow up to be a great prophet to prepare God’s people to receive the Messiah.

Six months after Elizabeth becomes pregnant, in verses 26-38, God sent the same angel to Mary with even better news. He was going to miraculously give her a child. This child would not have an earthly father because He would be the eternal Son of God. He would be the Messiah, the One God had promised to send who would save this world from the effects of sin. He would be the Eternal King who would reign over a Kingdom that will never end. His name is Jesus.

Within that announcement, the angel tells Mary about Elizabeth’s miraculous pregnancy. And our text picks up with Mary making the 80 or so mile trip from Nazareth to the hill country outside of Jerusalem. These two women, one old and the other young, are the only two women in the world who can somewhat grasp what’s going on inside the other. When Mary sees Elizabeth, she sees that Elizabeth is pregnant. It’s a kind reassurance from God that the angel’s message was true. Even more, Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and reiterates what the angel had said about Mary – she would be blessed by God as the mother of the Lord.

And Mary’s response is something known as the Magnificat. The word “Magnificat” is the first word of the Latin translation of this text and represents the word “magnify” in verse 46. It’s written in the style of an Old Testament Psalm of Praise which is why it’s often referred to as Mary’s Song of Praise.

We don’t know when she actually composed this song. The journey from her home in Nazareth to Elizabeth’s home in Judea would have taken 4-5 days. There’s something about music that helps pass the time on a road trip. Maybe that’s when she wrote it. Maybe she spontaneously erupted into a song that she never forgot. Paul McCartney says he had a dream about the music for “Yesterday” and woke up with the complete melody. If Paul could do that in a dream, then Mary could spontaneously write this by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The point is that Mary responds to what God is doing in and around her with this song of praise.

And look again at **verses 46-47**:

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

Those are the verses that give us our big idea. Mary is magnifying the Lord. The word in the original language of the Bible is *megaluno*. It has two primary meanings.

- To make something large or great
- To make something to be held in greater esteem

Those definitions represent two ways you can magnify something. You can make something small look larger than it is. That's what you do with a microscope. Or you can make something that is already large appear closer to its actual size. That's what you do with a telescope. And that's how Mary is magnifying the Lord. She isn't making Him look bigger and better than He is. She is enabling Him to be seen in a way that is closer to what He is actually like. She's holding Him in greater esteem and helping us hold Him in greater esteem, too. She's magnifying the Lord.

And how is she magnifying Him? Verses 46 and 47 use something called synonymous parallelism. That simply means these two lines parallel each other by restating the same idea using different words. In verse 46, she says she is magnifying the Lord. And in the next line, you find the parallel statement – my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Magnifying the Lord happens through joyful praise. Joyful praise causes us to view God with greater esteem.

Joyful praise does that with almost anything.

For instance, imagine you are a kid visiting a playground you've never visited before. There are only a couple of pieces of playground equipment. Around one, there is a big group of kids who are laughing and smiling, having the time of their lives. You hear them saying things like, "This is the most amazing thing I've ever done." "I've got to tell my friends at school." Then, you look at the other piece of playground equipment and there are a couple of kids who look miserable. They look like they are enduring the experience, not enjoying it. You hear them grumble to each other, "This is terrible. I can't believe my mom is making me do this. I'd rather be cleaning my room." Which piece of playground equipment would you think is greater? The one with the kids who are enjoying themselves and talking about it. Great things bring us joy and joyful praise causes our esteem for something to increase.

That's true about almost everything. It's true about food at a dinner party. It's true about television shows or cruise ships or college professors. It's true about almost anything you can name. When something produces joyful praise in you or the people around you, it magnifies that thing. It makes your esteem for that thing to become greater and greater. And at the same time, the more you see and experience just how great something is, the more it produces a kind of joy in you that you can't keep to yourself.

That's what Mary's song is all about. Her soul magnified the Lord as she rejoiced in Him. And, as she saw more and more clearly just how great the Lord is, her joy increased more and more.

Listen, friends, we need to get serious about pursuing joy. God is not magnified in our complaining or grumbling or worrying or critical spirits. He is glorified in souls that find deep and abiding joy in Him.

I don't mean the superficial, frenetic, frivolous thing our world thinks of as joy. The thing that happens when kids get their Christmas presents but is gone by the time school starts again because they're already over the presents. I'm talking about the joy that sustained Carolyn Wegerif and her family whose funeral was in this room yesterday. I visited with her days before her death when she knew she wasn't far from dying and she had real, sober joy. I gathered with her family yesterday and they will miss that incredible woman for the rest of their lives, but they have joy. I'm talking about that. We need to pursue that. It magnifies the Lord because it only comes from Him.

And in the time we have remaining, I want to give you three simple keys to rejoicing in the Lord that we find right here in our text.

### KEY #1 – FIX YOUR FOCUS ON THE LORD

Notice how the rest of this song focuses on the Lord.

***48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. 51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; 52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. 54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55 as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.***

In just those verses, there are at least 10-12 things Mary sees about who the Lord is and what He has done that makes her heart rejoice. He is mighty. He is holy. He is merciful. He has looked on her humble condition. He has filled the hungry and helped His people. He has defeated His enemies and humbled the proud.

Mary is focused on the Lord – who He is and what He has done. And as a result, she has joy. So, if you want joy, fix your attention on the Lord. Focus on who He is and what He has done.

Imagine being with someone who said they wanted to see the moon through a telescope. So, you set everything up. And as they look through the lens, they insist on pointing it toward the ground. How in awe would they be of the moon? Not at all. They are focused on the earth. What if you heard them talking the next day and all they did was complain about how they don't get why people enjoy telescopes? You'd want to say, "Knock it off, bozo. Of course you didn't enjoy it, you were focused on the wrong thing the whole time."

You want to know why so many of us are failing to experience joy? We've got our telescopes pointed on earth and not heaven. We've fixed our focus on the economy, or politics, or the brokenness of the world, or turned around and focused on ourselves. And the result is that we magnify the problems of this world and our lives in a way that makes them seem bigger than God. And of course, you won't have joy when your problems seem bigger than God. That ties into the second key to living with joy.

### KEY #2 – SATURATE YOUR SOUL WITH SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 19:8*

*the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;*

When our hearts see the Word of God as right and true, it produces joy in our hearts. That's what you see in Mary's song. She's taking what God has said in His word and seeing Him fulfill it in her life. And that's producing joy.

One of the things that jumps out at you when you study Mary's song is how filled it is with references to the Old Testament scriptures. We don't have nearly enough time to go through them all but let me just give you some examples.

Her song echoes the themes of another woman who had a miraculous pregnancy in the Old Testament – Hannah, the mother of Samuel. 1 Samuel 2 records Hannah's song of praise.

*Luke 1*

*46 "My soul magnifies the Lord,  
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,*

*49 ...holy is his name.*

*52 he has brought down the mighty from their  
thrones and exalted those of humble estate;*

*53 he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.*

*1 Samuel 2*

*1 "My heart exults in the LORD...I rejoice in  
your salvation.*

*2 "There is none holy like the LORD:*

*4 The bows of the mighty are broken, but the  
feeble bind on strength.*

*5 Those who were full have hired themselves  
out for bread, but those who were hungry have  
ceased to hunger.*

There are very clear similarities between Hannah's song and Mary's. But, as I was studying for this week, I counted no less than 30 references to other Old Testament passages. Over 20 of them are from the Psalms. She was so saturated in the Scriptures that they poured out of her.

Most people are saturated with something. Think of your favorite movie and how many lines you can quote from it. Think of your favorite sport or team and how many things you can say about it off the top of your head. Think about how many songs you can sing along to...Sweet Caroline...

And Mary was so saturated with the Scriptures that not only flowed out of her speech, they became a lens through which she was able to interpret the events of her life. She knew what God had promised to do through the Messiah, so once she understood that her Child was that promised Messiah, she could rattle off a dozen things God was doing around her. And when you see God fulfilling His promises in your life, it produces joy. We are spiritually hard-wired for it.

So, saturate your soul with the Scriptures. Read the Bible. Pray the Bible. Meditate on it. Memorize it. If you want to rejoice in the Lord, then saturate your soul in His word.

KEY #3 – CONSIDER GOD'S PROMISES COMPLETE

Mary knew that the child in her womb was the Lord, the Son of God. She also knew that He was the Savior. That's what the angel said to her in our text last week in verses 31-35. And verse 45 says she believed what the angel said. In addition to that, Elizabeth explicitly refers to the unborn baby as the Lord. Look back at verse 43:

**Luke 1:43**

***And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?***

Jesus is the Lord. Jesus is the holy Son of God, which means He Himself shares the nature of God with the Father and the Spirit. So, as Mary sings about magnifying the Lord and rejoicing in God her Savior, that incorporates the person and work of Jesus. As a matter of fact, all of her praise finds its fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus.

***49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, 51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud 52 he has brought down the mighty...and exalted those of humble estate; 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, 54 He has helped his servant Israel...55 as he spoke to our fathers, (meaning He has fulfilled the promises to the patriarchs)***

All of those things would find their ultimate fulfillment in the work of Jesus at the cross and in His resurrection. The strength of God was fully displayed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The defeat of God's enemies occurred at the cross and the empty tomb. The way God would satisfy the hungry souls of people would be through the work of Jesus. The help He would give His people would be through the work of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. The promises He spoke to the fathers of Israel – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – would be fulfilled in the work of Christ. But notice that Mary speaks of all of that in the past tense. Jesus hasn't even been born, but her language describes something that is already done.

*Mary believed God was doing what He said He would do to the point that she considered the promises complete in Christ. And it brought her joy.*

Just think how that would transform the way you live.

- How would you rejoice if you believed this life and all its trials will soon pass away like a vapor and you will spend eternity in the presence of God where there the Bible says there is fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore?
- How would you rejoice if you believed you will be transformed into a glorious, immortal being who is like the very Son of God?
- How would you rejoice if you believed you will one day reign with Christ in the new heavens and earth and inherit everything that belongs to God?

If you are trusting in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, God has promised all of that to you and His promises are as good as done. Go ahead and consider them complete. The long night of is almost over. Dawn is breaking. Christ came at Christmas and is coming again.

So, if you want to live with the kind of joyful praise that magnifies the Lord,

- Fix your Focus on the Lord
- Saturate your soul with Scripture
- Consider God's Promises Complete in Christ