

Mary's Song

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[0 : 00] The scripture for this morning is taken from Luke chapter 1, beginning at verse 39 and going through to 56.

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

[1 : 10] And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

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

For he who is mighty has done great things for me. And holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm. He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy.

[2 : 27] As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his offspring forever. And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Thank you so much, Faye, for reading God's word to us.

Well, two weeks from today, we will be celebrating Christmas. And this morning we begin a three-part sermon series titled The Songs of Christmas.

And so over the next three Sundays, including this Sunday, we'll be considering the first three songs of the Christmas story that we find in the Gospel of Luke.

This morning we'll be considering Mary's song. And then next Sunday, Zechariah's song. And then the following Sunday, we will conclude on Christmas Day with the angel's song.

[3 : 38] And I have two very important objectives for this short Christmas sermon series. And my first is that it will be the impetus, it will help us to really keep Christ central in Christmas.

I think you would agree with me that with the passing of time, Christ is pushed more to the edges of the celebration of Christmas if he is there at all.

And what we find is even for those who profess faith in Christ. Their approach to Christmas, if you were to compare it to unbelieving friends and unbelieving loved ones and co-workers, there's really little difference in how they approach it.

And so I want us to allow the next three weeks, and indeed the Christmas presentation that's coming up, as we sing these songs, let our hearts be saturated with the person of Christmas and why we are celebrating what we are celebrating.

And then second, I want us to grow in our certainty about these things surrounding Christmas. The central part about Christmas is that Christ came to this earth, that he was incarnated in human flesh.

[5 : 03] And if you're halfway listening, you would realize that this truth is being considered by many as fable and as fantasy.

And I really believe that it is as we hear God's word and continue to hear God's word that we believe this truth. This is an amazing truth that God has come down in human flesh. As we sang, Come Thou Long Expected Jesus this morning, my heart was just overwhelmed with trying to understand and grasp the length and breadth and height and depth of all of that. And one of the thoughts that came to me is that we cannot be amazed at the death of Christ unless we are amazed at the birth of Christ. Because the birth of Christ is very unique. He was conceived of the Virgin Mary. He was born the Savior of the world. And so, I pray that we will grow in our certainty about these things.

[6 : 14] And I pray that with conviction we will look those square in the eyes who think that we believe fable and fantasy and we will say, Christ came. He came as God in the flesh.

He came to rescue helpless sinners like me and you. And so, by God's grace, I pray that those two objectives will be achieved over the next two weeks.

Would you bow in prayer with me as we look to God's word? Father, we bow our hearts this morning and we are amazed at the grace of God that has come to us.

We are amazed, O Lord, that before the foundations of the world you determined that Christ will be slain for undeserving sinners. and Lord, you began the fulfillment of that by sending your Son to be born of a virgin, to walk in this world and on this earth and to experience all of its brokenness and all of its fallenness and then to give his life as a ransom for many.

God, would you grip our hearts afresh with this old story? Would you guard us from familiarity? Guard us, O Lord, from just checking out because we know the story.

[7 : 43] Meet us afresh this morning, I pray. And awaken our souls and enable us, O Lord, in this first sermon to truly begin to turn our hearts and fix our minds on the one about whom we celebrate.

We pray and ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. I want to begin by just giving us some background since the three sermons that we are going to be considering over the next three Sundays are going to be out of Luke's gospel, I want to begin by giving some introductory thoughts about the gospel of Luke.

We see from the very outset of Luke's gospel that Luke wrote his gospel to a man by the name of Theophilus. And he tells us the overarching reason that he wrote this gospel to Theophilus.

He tells us that in verse four of chapter one. he says, I'm writing to you that you might have certainty concerning the things you've been taught.

For Luke, it was not enough that Theophilus had been taught these things, but he said, Theophilus, I want you to have certainty. And so what Luke did was Luke went and he investigated the things that had been taught.

[9 : 19] And he was able to do that because he was writing very close to all of these events. And what Luke did for us, sorry, what Luke did for Theophilus, he also did for us and for all of God's people, that through reading God's word, reading this account, that we will have certainty about the things that we have been taught.

And what we see in Luke's gospel as he begins it, is that he goes to great lengths to show us that the birth of John, John the Baptist, the one who prepared the way for God's salvation, and the birth of Jesus Christ, the one who brought God's salvation, were both promised by God and both proclaimed by the angel Gabriel.

And these were not ordinary births. God promised them, Gabriel proclaimed them. But we don't read Luke's gospel and get any idea that the birth of John and the birth of Jesus was similar.

They aren't similar. We know that even though Elizabeth was old and even though Zechariah was old, God met them and blessed them with a child that was born in the ordinary way.

But Jesus, and Luke goes to great lengths to show us that his birth was unique, that he was born of the Holy Spirit. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

[11 : 02] He was born of the Virgin Mary. And what Luke wants to do is he wants to show us that Christ's life was unique so that when he gets to the end of his gospel, he can show us that his death is unique.

Because if the birth of Christ was not unique, then the death of Christ would not be unique either.

And so with that introduction, let's turn our attention to the text that we just read. And for the remaining time, I want us to consider Mary's song. And I want to do so under three headings.

The first is the setting of Mary's song. And by that I mean the circumstances of Mary's song. And we read the circumstances in verses 26 to 45.

Sorry, in verses 39 to 45. And what we read is that we read about an encounter between Mary and her elderly relative by the name of Elizabeth, who had been considered barren because all of her life, even when she was a younger woman, she was not able to have children.

[12:25] And so we read in this encounter, the setting is that Mary, after she has been told by Gabriel that she's going to have this miraculously conceived child, she goes some 70 miles away into the hillside of the Judean country, and she visits her relative Elizabeth.

They tell us this journey would have taken some three to four days. And Mary meets her cousin Elizabeth, and she meets her cousin Elizabeth, who now is pregnant, six months pregnant, with a child that she and her husband had longed for, but a special child, not just one for them, but one for God, who would go before the Lord, and who would prepare his way.

And why is Elizabeth pregnant? Why is Elizabeth six months pregnant? She is pregnant because, as the angel told Mary, nothing is impossible with God.

And in verses 39 to 41, we see Mary entering the house of her old cousin Elizabeth, and she greets her, and when she greets her, six months old John in her womb leaps.

And Luke helps us to see that this leaping in the womb of Elizabeth was not just ordinary baby moving around.

[14:04] Luke associates it with Elizabeth's being filled with the Holy Spirit, and also he tells us that John was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth earlier in chapter one.

And so what Luke communicates to us is from the briefest of greetings, all we can see is that Mary came and she greeted Elizabeth in an ordinary way.

And the Bible says that Elizabeth was inspired by the Holy Spirit. She supernaturally had a revelation that John, sorry, both her and John had this revelation that the child in Mary's womb, just days old, would be and was indeed the Son of God.

And Elizabeth counted a privilege that the mother of her Lord would come to visit her. And when you think about this, was Elizabeth really stirred because Mary was very excited?

I'm sure Mary was excited, but maybe Mary was not excited. She could have been filled with a lot of questions in her mind. and it was not because there was anything special about Mary.

[15:25] It was not anything that was exciting in her voice. Instead, what caused this response from Elizabeth and John was this days old child in the womb of Mary.

And we see that John is always, even from the womb, John is functioning as the forerunner of Christ. He recognizes the Messiah days old, in Mary's womb.

And we see in verse 43 that Mary refers to, Mary is referred to by Elizabeth as the mother of my Lord. And verse 45, she refers to that which was spoken to her from the Lord.

And we shouldn't pass that up rather quickly, because what we see Elizabeth doing is Elizabeth is attributing the same title to Jesus that is given to God himself.

And she's recognizing that even from the womb that Jesus was divine, that Jesus was God coming in human flesh.

[16:47] marriage. And so that's the setting of Mary's song. Mary's song came about from this encounter that she had with her cousin Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth, inspired by the Holy Spirit, began to confirm the things that Gabriel had spoken to her. And we see Mary's song breaking forth at that particular point.

Notice it didn't break forth when Gabriel came. It didn't break forth when Gabriel told her all the wonderful things that would happen to her. Instead it broke forth when Elizabeth, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, confirmed those things to say to her, there is a child in your womb.

And who knows, maybe even at that point, Mary was not feeling anything different in her body with a conception just about three or so days old.

but under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth reveals to her, there is a child in your womb. He is called the Lord. He is my Lord and my Savior.

[17:56] So that's the setting of the song. So what did Mary sing about?

Well, Mary sang about the words that we find in verses 46 to 55, which is my second point.

We want to talk about the substance of Mary's song. What is it really about? What did she sing about? Mary's song is not like some songs you listen to.

You could hear music, you could hear words, but you don't know what it's about. No, Mary's song is different. Mary's song is popularly referred to as the Magnificat.

And the word Magnificat is the first word of the Latin translation of the first line of the song, my soul magnifies the Lord. And the structure of the song is a typical psalm that is magnifying the Lord.
[19 : 05] Mary's song is the first of four incarnation songs that we find in scripture. It's the first one that sings about God coming down in human flesh to redeem sinners.

The other three, and if you went to an Anglican school or Roman Catholic school, you probably know these incarnation songs.

But the after, the first one, the Magnificat by Mary. The second is the Benedictus by Zechariah, which he sang at the birth of John.

We'll consider that next week. The third is the Gloria in Altissimus of the angels, which they sang on the day of Christ's birth. And then the fourth one is the Nunc Dimittus, which is sung by Simeon.

When he was at the temple, when the Lord Jesus was presented, and he was overwhelmed that God had allowed him to see the Savior, and he said, Lord, I can now depart in peace.

[20 : 16] I want to make two observations about Mary's song. And the first is when we look at Mary's song, we see that Mary's song is from God's word. Mary's song, when you read it, you don't get the sense that the Holy Spirit just came upon Mary, and Mary was saying things that she did not know or she didn't understand.

And what is clear is that Mary was very familiar with God's word, and the words of her song are from the Bible, which she would have studied and memorized and done that as a child, as a young child.

girl. And we see this in almost every single line of her song. There's some reference to Psalms, and she begins her song in a very similar way that Hannah's song begins in 1 Samuel chapter 2.

And so what is clear is that Mary was among God's people who were looking for and longing for the Messiah to come. And as a young Jewish girl, she would have had that desire that maybe I will be the mother of the Messiah.

But what we see is that Mary was no ignorant person about the scriptures and about the promises of God contained in the scripture. But not only do we see that Mary's song was from God's word, the second observation is that Mary's song is about God's mercy.

[21 : 52] mercy. She sings of God's mercy. It's what preoccupies her mind as she is singing.

She is aware of God's mercy to her personally, and she is aware of God's mercy to his people generally. We see in verses 46 to 49 that Mary rejoices in God and his mercy to her personally. She rejoices in what God has done for her. She says, the mighty one has done great things for me. She rejoices in God her Savior.

We see that in verses 46 to 47. And in so doing, Mary acknowledging that God is her Savior is at the same time acknowledging that she needs a Savior, that she is a sinner just like the rest of us. And she is overwhelmed that the God of the universe has looked upon her, a poor virgin girl from a backside town in Nazareth, and he is blessed her with the privilege of bearing the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

[23 : 09] And then she says in verses 48 to 49 that generations, all generations will call her blessed, not because she was born without sin, which is what is taught in Roman Catholicism, but simply because the Mighty One had done great things for her and holy was his name.

That's why she was going to be called blessed in all generations. Christians. So Mary praises God, and in so doing, she sets an example for us and points us to our own need to praise God and not her.

Some of you may be aware, but on this particular aspect of the story of the birth of Christ, there have been some erroneous teachings of Roman Catholicism that has come out of it.

There are countless millions of Roman Catholics around the world today who pray to Mary, who revere Mary because of misunderstandings surrounding the Song of Mary and what God actually did for Mary.

There are five of them in particular. which we can easily overlook or not even fully understand. The first one is what is called the Immaculate Conception.

[24 : 44] For many years, I thought that this spoke about Jesus. I thought this spoke about his virgin conception. But the Immaculate Conception isn't a reference to Jesus.

It's a reference to Mary. And what Roman Catholics teach is that Mary had a miraculous conception in that she was born without original sin like the rest of us.

What they say is that God, because he had ordained it that Mary would bear the Son of God, that he so worked that Mary was born without original sin like the rest of us.

And brothers and sisters, the witness of Scripture does not know anything about that. The witness of Scripture is that all of Adam's fallen race are born in the same way, born in sin, and they're shaped in iniquity because of the inherited sinful nature from Adam.

So Mary was not immaculately conceived. Mary was conceived like the rest of us, but God showed mercy on her. And God was kind to her in his providence to choose her to be the mother of the Messiah.

[26 : 04] And when you think about that, I think we see God's mercy and grace even more in recognizing that Mary was just like one of us. If Mary was somebody special, then we don't see the mercy and grace of God as much.

But God took a young girl, a peasant girl, a poor girl, and he bestowed on her the kindness and the amazing consideration of bearing the Son of God.

The second false teaching is that Mary lived a sinful life. Mary, for all the years that she was on this earth, she lived without sin.

Again, Scripture doesn't know anything about that. Mary acknowledges herself in her song that she needed a Savior, that God was her Savior, and pointing to the fact that she likewise was a sinner. Roman Catholicism also falsely teaches that Mary was a perpetual virgin, that Mary never knew sexual relations. in all of her life.

[27 : 27] And yet, Scripture is very clear to tell us that Jesus had biological brothers and sisters through Mary. And the fourth false teaching is what is called the assumption of Mary.

And this flows from the teaching that Mary was sinless, and by assumption what is meant is that Mary didn't die. You know, we've read about people who didn't die, that Elijah didn't die, and Enoch didn't die.

But the Roman Catholics will tell us that Mary also didn't die. She was just assumed up to heaven. Scripture does not teach that.

And then finally, connected to this assumption of Mary, is that Mary is co-mediator with Christ. That it isn't just God the Father and God the Son on thrones, but there's God the Father, God the Son, and there's also God the Mother sitting on the side of God the Son.

And that she co-mediates. And there's this view that if you can't get it from Jesus, you can get it from Mary. So pray to Mary, and Mary will nudge Jesus and give you whatever you want.

[28 : 56] Friends, those teachings are heretical. Those teachings are not founded in Scripture. And many people are being misled by them.

And they're being misled because they're not even considering Mary's song herself. Mary's song is very different.

Mary's song sings about a God who is gracious in his dealings with her. She says, I rejoice in God my Savior because he has looked on my humble estate.

And she points to us to magnify God and not to magnify herself.

It's an amazing story that of all places where the mother of the Messiah would come from is a place called Nazareth.

[30 : 03] You may remember the statement that was made when Jesus was entering into his ministry. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?

Nazareth had that kind of reputation. It was a place of no repute. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? And yet God, the all-knowing God, goes into Nazareth of all places.

And he chooses a young, poor girl to be the mother of the Messiah. And I'm sure you've heard people say, it's better to show than to tell.

And I think that's what God is doing here. God is showing us. He's showing us the kind of God that he is. That he has the option of choosing from the vast humanity that existed in all the different stations of life.

And he goes into a poor place and chooses a poor girl upon whom he shows the mercy and the kindness of being the mother of the Messiah.

[31 : 18] One of the ways I think we should consider this is to just realize that God knows where we are. God knows who we are. God knows where we are. God has not lost our dress.

He didn't lose Mary's. He can locate us. And we can rest in that. We can rest in this all knowing, this all wise, this all seeing God who will work out his purposes according to his sovereign will.

Friends, God sees us. God knows us. And he still looks on the humble. He still looks on the helpless estate of his people. God does great things for them.

And then after singing about God's mercy to her, Mary transitions and she begins to sing about God's mercy to his people generally. You see that starting in verse 50.

There's this strong theme of the mercy of God from verse 50 and it ends in verse 55. life. And Mary's words are informed by God's dealings in human history as recorded in Holy Scripture.

[32 : 39] And she reminds us in verse 50 that God's mercy is from generation to generation. generation. No matter how wicked or bad those generations are, last Sunday we considered the difficult and sinful conditions during the time of Noah and we see that God's mercy was still very much present.

Mary tells us that his mercy is from generation to generation. I think we could say it another way his mercy is from time beginning to time immemorial to the end.

It will always always be there. That is an amazing God who will have steadfast mercy to sinful men and women over the generations.

His mercy is from generation to generation. And this refutes this false idea that the God of the Old Testament was a God of anger and a lack of mercy and then the God of the New Testament because of Jesus Christ he is no longer angry and he shows mercy.

No, Mary sings about the truth of scripture that our God is a God of mercy from generation to generation. brothers and sisters, that encourages me because it doesn't matter how difficult this world becomes.

[34 : 17] It doesn't matter how much sin abounds. We know that the mercy of God will be steadfast from generation to generation.

We need mercy. God to deal with us as we do not deserve. We don't need him to give us what we deserve because if he does that we're all done.

But he mercifully withholds from us the judgment and the punishment that we deserve and he gives us the grace and the kindness and the blessings that none of us deserve.

Mary says it's from generation to generation. That wasn't her idea. She was surveying the pages of Holy Scripture and she was able to say his mercy is from generation to generation.

She also tells us in verse 50 that his mercy is on those who fear him, those who reverence him, those who worship him, not those who are terrified by him. in some kind of a negative, fearful way, but his mercy is upon those who fear him.

[35 : 38] And she's talking about God's mercy towards his people. And she's referring to God's mercy in terms of his redemptive acts throughout human history.

I know those of you who were here last week, Brother Linden shared the illustration about his dad and how he, on one occasion, disciplined all the children, then he started to weep.

And he shared with us that he kind of sees that with the Lord, how as he brought judgment, as he brought the flood, that he was touched by our own weakness and the condition in which we find ourselves in.

And that's God's mercy, brothers and sisters. That's God's mercy that is extended to undeserving sinners throughout all the generations. When we read the account of scripture, humankind should not have lasted very long.

It should have been over pretty quickly, but a merciful God extended a people, a race that deserved to be destroyed.

[37 : 00] And he did it all because of his great mercy. Mary tells us in verses 51 to 53 that while God extends mercy to the humble, he exercises his might against the proud.

God he brings down the mighty from his high horse, but he exalts the humble and he fills those who in humility recognize their emptiness.

But he sends away empty, those who can't see their emptiness because in their own eyes they are rich, in their own eyes they are sufficient, in their own eyes they need nothing.

And notice how Mary concludes her song with language that is inescapably redemptive when she says that God has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy as he spoke to our fathers to Abraham and his offspring forever.

And here while Mary is no doubt referencing historical events where God scattered the proud and brought down the mighty like Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and raised up the humble like Joseph and David and Daniel and Esther.

[38 : 29] There's also a sense that Mary is singing about what the incarnation means. that it is a divine breaking into human history, that it is a readjustment of life generally, and that God through the Messiah is extending mercy to the humble.

She's not just talking about God's mercy in a historical sense to his people, but she's talking about God's mercy in the sense that he has broken into human history with the birth of Jesus Christ and he has made readjustments and he continues to make readjustments in life generally, extending his mercy to the humble and bringing down the proud.

And it reminds us that there are really just two ways to live. Those who have God's mercy extended to them and those who have God's might exercise against them.

The humble who recognize their need will experience his mercy towards them and the proud will experience his might against them.

Some have taken these words to promote liberation theology. They've taken these words to take from God's word a basis upon which they can go and in their own might using whatever means necessary and bring about the changes that they want in society.

[40 : 13] But there's no warrant in these words to draw that conclusion. It's very clear that the bringing down of the proud is a divine activity that God does himself and he does not delegate that to humans.

there's one thing that we should learn about God's breaking into history thousands of years after making the promise that he would send the Messiah is that we must wait and be patient as God works out his plans and fulfills his promises.

We don't take it into our own hands to bring it about. We don't take it into our own hands God's mercy. Well, that's the substance of Mary's song. It's about God's mercy.

God's mercy to Mary personally and God's mercy to his people generally. So now we've considered the setting of Mary's song and the substance of Mary's song and then finally and briefly let's consider the subject of Mary's song.

When we consider the subject of Mary's song, the question is, it's really not what is Mary's song about, that's what we already considered under the substance, what is it about?

[41 : 44] Instead, the question we ask on this is, who is it about? When we consider the subject of Mary's song, the question is, who is Mary's song about?

Now, I've been told that whenever you're reading and you want to understand a paragraph, that the way to do that is when you read the paragraph, pay special attention to the first sentence and the last sentence.

And generally, if the paragraph is well-written, you will understand what the paragraph is about by paying attention to the first sentence and to the last sentence. If we look at Mary's song, the first sentence is a kind of long one.

It's over three verses, 46 through 49. Actually, four verses, 46 through 49. Mary is singing about the Lord and God my Savior.

Mary's God, Mary's Savior. He's her God and He's the God of all those who trust in Him. And then the last sentence in verses 54 to 55, it's about God who helped Israel and remembered them in His promise of mercy.

[43 : 12] glory. And so, we notice that in verses 46 to 49, although Mary sings about her exalted state, it is God that she is magnifying.

And so, what we find is, starting in verse 46 going down, she refers to God 17 other times by He, His, and Him.

And I sound like to say that Mary's song is about a person. Mary's song is about the mighty God who acted in mercy towards her personally and towards His people generally.

And I think what this should do for us is it should instruct us to ensure that God is the subject of our praise.

That the God who acts in mercy towards us should accent. He should be the focus. He should be the center of the praise of our lips.

[44 : 31] But we can only magnify what we see. we need to do that individually. We need to do that corporately. And the mightiest deed that God has done is what He accomplished on the cross through Jesus Christ.

And we need to see that as what God has done because it helps us to see who He is, the merciful forgiving God sending His Son to die for sinners.

And friends, if we're not amazed by the grace of God displayed on Calvary's cross, we need to be asking God to give us fresh eyes to see it because that work is the greatest work of God.

That He has reconciled sinners to Himself. There is no other deed that is greater. And Mary's song is a song of God's saving mercy and she magnifies Him and we need to do the same.

And that's why we should never get tired when we gather and we're singing about God instead of singing about ourselves and our experiences. We sing about the exalted God who is merciful and mighty.

[46 : 03] I think this is a good opportunity for us to consider who are we magnifying? Who are you magnifying? What's the center of your attention in your heart?

Are you magnifying God at all? And if you are magnifying Him, what are you magnifying Him for? is it because of some temporal thing that He did for you that probably won't even last in this life?

Or is it something more enjoying? Is it what Jesus said to the disciples when they were rejoicing about the results of healing and miracles? And He said, don't rejoice in that.

Rejoice that your name is written in heaven. Rejoice that you have salvation. Brothers and sisters, we have no greater boast and we have no greater one to boast in than the Lord Jesus Christ who has brought us salvation.

You see in verse 56 that Luke skillfully set to the next scene as he has Mary to exit and she's going to head back to home some 70 miles away but three months pregnant.

[47 : 33] she came to Elizabeth probably not feeling anything in her stomach and she's leaving and there is the evidence of the fulfillment of God's word in her life and she knows this is God's word.

Couldn't be Joseph, couldn't be anybody else but this child in her womb was a fulfillment. fulfillment of God's word. Luke doesn't tell us and it would be speculation for me to say that this is what Mary did but I have no doubt in my own heart that Mary went home singing.

Mary went home continuing to sing and to magnify God for the amazing kindness goodness that he bestowed on her that he looked upon her humble estate and he chose her to be the savior of the Messiah.

I pray that Mary's song will inspire our own song and our own singing at this time of the year when we celebrate the Savior's birth.

May our magnificat be uninhibited and maybe sing songs of praise to God. I pray that no gift or no experience that we would have this Christmas season will out sing what we have received in the Lord Jesus Christ and what we have received through him by God mercy and grace that none of us deserve but all of us need.

[49 : 31] As I thought about this I was very aware as we sang the magnificat this morning as we sang the other songs come thou long expected Jesus there are some who really could not sing with conviction Mary's song indeed nor their own song because you cannot sing that God has been merciful to you if you have not yet come to know the reality of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Only those who have come to know him can sing of his mercy and of his grace. And that's you this morning whether present or watching or listening online the good news is that you can have your own song of praise to God.

The good news is that Mary sang of a God whose mercy is from generation to generation and those words are more real today than they were on the day that she sang them because now the Savior who was in her womb has gone to the cross and he has done what she was singing about.

She was singing about what God had prophesied he would do and he began it when Jesus was conceived in her womb but he completed it when Jesus died on the cross. And so we can say that God's mercy is from generation to generation to all those who fear him.

And so if that's you this morning and you don't know the Savior you say come to Jesus and you will find mercy that is far greater than all of your sins.

[51 : 41] Let's pray together. Oh Father we are so grateful that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit that he was born of the Virgin Mary.

We are grateful oh Lord that the song that Mary sang we can continue to sing and we can sing until the day that you return. sing about your mercy that endures from generation to generation.

God would you cause Mary's song to be magnified in all of our hearts and may it be our own song. But we can sing from personal experience and personal conviction that the mighty God has done great things for me and holy is his name.

We ask that you would do this in Jesus name. Amen.