

MY SOUL MAGNIFIES THE LORD

“My Soul Magnifies the Lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.” (Luke 1:46,47) is an expression gushing forth from a heart filled to overflowing with gratitude. It is the opening line of the Magnificat sung by Mary after hearing the following words from her cousin Elizabeth: ***“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, but why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”*** (Luke 1:42)

This young teenage girl was truly overwhelmed by the message brought to her by the Archangel Gabriel. *“How can this be, since I do not know a man?”* The Archangel’s reply was both comforting and yet overwhelming, ***“For, with God nothing will be impossible.”***

And Mary’s response was the one response that is needed from all of us... *“Yes Lord, I want to serve you. I do accept your offer of love. Change me so that I can be a clean vessel carrying you within me.”* Mary’s song, bursting with praise, is the manifestation of a heart filled with gratitude and thanksgiving. As we know, Mary knew her Scriptures, the Bible was her inspiration and guide. *“My soul magnifies the Lord”* was a hymn first offered by Hannah who in her advanced years uttered this inspired prayer (1 Samuel 2:1-10), and it was prayed by expectant Jewish mothers for centuries. Mary’s words echo thanksgiving and gratitude:

“He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth 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 on those who fear Him from generation to
generation.”

Now this was not the only response that Mary could have given to the announcement from the Archangel and the words of Elizabeth. She could have said, *“Thanks, but no thanks. I really don’t want to be a spectacle carrying a child under these strange circumstances. I don’t need all that pressure on me to try to live up to some high standard that will curtail my activities, restrain my exercise program and entertainment. I don’t have time to raise a child. I don’t have the financial means, for I am so over my head in debt already. I didn’t ask for this honour. Give it to someone else! Why is it always me who is given the difficult issues? How come Miss ‘so and so’ gets off so easy and I am the one saddled with a child. I have so much more to experience in life before I need to take on the responsibilities of motherhood? Why me!”*

Yes, Mary could have responded in this or some other negative way, but thankfully she didn’t. She knew intuitively that a life of complaining, dissatisfaction, resentment, jealousy, grumbling and lament never brings happiness. Nor does indifference. Happiness comes not when we reluctantly accept a new situation, a burdensome challenge or difficult responsibility, but rather, when we embrace it and thank God for the opportunity to grow. Mary did not simply resign herself to her fate. She saw God acting, God loving, God offering, and she wholeheartedly embraced the new reality and burst into a song of praise and thanksgiving. She found true happiness in a life filled with gratitude.

God was able to do something great through Mary’s humility and desire to be used. She remains a model for all generations. She is the “Canon” the rule or measure by which all of us are to gauge our attitudes. She said, ‘yes’ to God’s offer of love. She gratefully worshipped and thanked Him. May we be wise enough to do the same.

I. Mary worshipped Because of Jesus

Mary says, “my soul magnifies the Lord.” Some texts say glorify or exalts. The interesting thing about this text is this. Mary is saying my spirit, or my soul is a reflection of how good God has been to me. And from now on when people look at me they are going to see God’s greatness because of what he has done in my life. To magnify in the Greek is “to make great.”

II. Mary worshipped because she was being used by God

Mary worshipped because God was using her in an incredible way. She was excited about the possibilities and opportunities. She was committed to being who God wanted her to be first and then to allow Him to work in her life. A life surrendered to God allows Him to do immeasurably more than we would have imagined. He is in the business of people, He grows people, He loves people, and when we have a desire to make it count he used people. All of us have a desire to matter, our search for significance and the truth is significance is not found in stature, it’s found in Jesus.

III. Mary worshipped because God’s strength and justice were enough for her

“The Mighty One has done great things for me... Holy is His name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.”

Mary knew her history she knew how God's justice and provision has sustained His people for centuries, She knew of His strength and of His mercy. So she praises Him for it; she praises God for using the Humble. Christ came in humility, was born through humility, and continues to use the humble. Once again, take a close look at Mary. True blessings in this life can only be seen in spiritual terms by those whose hearts have been opened to believe in their Saviour. You can see the same blessings Mary saw when you carry Jesus within your hearts and minds. When you see Jesus not only as a man but as someone far bigger and far greater than yourselves.

Mary saw those who are humble, who have made their own works small and have made the work of Jesus Christ large (magnified); she saw them lifted up and made great in the kingdom of heaven. The humble, who set their hope on God, who fix their eyes on Jesus, are the ones who are truly blessed. Humility always makes room for a blessing!

Some time ago a young man went into the office of one of the largest dry-goods houses in New York and asked for a job. He was told to call again another day. Going down Broadway that same afternoon, he saw an old apple woman, in trying to cross the street she was knocked down, and her basket of apples sent scattering into the gutter. The young man stepped out of the crowd, helped the old woman to her feet, put her apples into her basket, and went on his way - without thinking of it. Now a proud man would never have thought of doing such a thing as that. But this young man had learned the lesson of humility, and did not hesitate a moment to do this kind act. When he called again to see about the situation, he was asked what wages he expected. He stated what he thought would be right and his proposal was accepted. The job was given to him, and he went to work.

About a year afterwards, his employer took him aside one day, reminded him of the incident about the old apple woman; told him he was passing at the time, and saw it; and that it was this circumstance which induced him to offer the vacant position to him, in preference to a hundred others who were applying for it. Here we see what a blessing this young man's humility proved to be to him! A humble heart makes way for God's blessings! And a humble heart knows how to magnify the Lord in every situation.

The dictionary definition of "magnify" is:

- to cause to be held in greater esteem or respect
- to increase in significance
- to intensify
- to enlarge in fact

So every day, in all humility, let us remind (tell) our souls to magnify the Lord! That means, our view of God must increase significantly to accommodate the truth of "how great He is." Often, when we are in negative situations it is easy to see God in the context of our personal difficulties. But God is infinitely greater than our circumstances! So in order to get the victory we must change our view of God. You cant have view of God that says, "He is not able!" The only way to live a victorious life is to increase God's significance and reduce the significance of your circumstances. Cause His presence to intensify in that situation and enlarge His fact (who He really is).