



HOME GROUP QUESTIONS FROM SERMON 10th December 2023

Sermon – Luke 1: 45-55 – Personal/Group Study and Reflection “Mary – The Right Perspective”

Luke 1: 45-55 (English Standard Version)

Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat

45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment 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.”

These questions relate to the morning sermon (10.30 and 12.00 services) on Sunday 10th December 2023 (available on the church website). **Feel free to pick and choose questions as appropriate for your group – they are there to facilitate good discussion / reflection.**

(1) Opening reflection / discussion.

(a) How do you typically respond when you sense strongly that God is telling you to do something which you find daunting or scary or makes you feel vulnerable? Think of some specific examples and what then happened.

(2) Mary's and Our Faith (v45-49). Mary wholeheartedly embraces God's calling on her life despite her young age, her realistic fears, and the acute social risks she faced.

(a) What do you think enabled her to have such a strong faith in God's Word?

(b) Because of her strong faith, Mary proclaims as fact and celebrates things which are yet to happen. How does proclaiming and praying in this way help us? Think of examples where you could do this.

(c) Why do you think she could be so joyful (v45-47) and excited despite her fears?

(d) What can you learn from her faith? Are there any situations right now which you might approach with a different perspective as a result?

(3) Mary's and our Place (v54-55). Mary sees her position in the context of God's purposes and plans for the Jewish people going right back to Abraham.

(a) Why do you think Mary includes this reference?

(b) What difference does it make to how we follow God and serve if we think of our lives in the context of the wider purposes and plans of God? Think of some specific situations and how thinking this way might impact your attitude and actions.

(4) Mary's and Our Understanding (v48a and 50-53). Mary proclaims how in God's kingdom the world's values are and will be turned upside down. She celebrates a God of reversals.

(a) Mary is a scared teenager (14 maximum). What enables her to have such a confident and hope-filled outlook of God and what He will accomplish? Consider as well, what these verses and her language tell us about her understanding of Scripture. If time, take a look at 1 Samuel 2 v1-10 (Hannah's Prayer).

(b) How do you respond to these verses at both theological / intellectual level and personal level?

(c) Drawing on Mary's example, how might your understanding of God and confidence in the future increase.

(5) Final Reflection.

(a) Consider again the opening question (1) above. How might your response to answering God's call on you differ now as a result of reflecting on Mary's perspective on her faith, place in God's plans, and understanding of the nature and values of God's Kingdom?