Text: Luke 1:46-55

**Text**

“My soul magnifies the LORD and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Mary’s entire song hinges on what that word magnifies means. The way we use that word today is in a scientific sense. We think magnifying glass, which is the small version of the microscope or telescope. It is taking something really small or really far away and making it visible to us. And there are parts of that definition – the making it visible to us – that are meaningful, but that word magnify didn’t really have that scientific domain when it was originally used by the King James translators. To magnify something was to praise it. A courtier might magnify a king, extol the praises of his grace. To magnify could shade into buttering up or pandering. If you magnified a petty tyrant into mighty Caesar, or a local noble into a king. But pandering is never from the heart or the soul. Pandering is what the mind makes up so that the body might get something. Mary’s Soul magnifies the LORD. Her Spirit rejoices.

**Why Magnify?**

Everything else in the song is an explanation of why. Why does Mary – and if Mary does it, so should the Christian – why does Mary’s very being, her soul, magnify or extol the LORD? Why does her spirit, the breath of God in her, rejoice in God?

God has taken lifted us from our humble estate to a blessed place. Mary’s experience is the exemplar of that, but her words are true for every Christian. God has taken us from sinners destined to hell to saints. He looked upon our lost condition and sent his son to save us. We magnify the LORD by rightly saying what he has done for us.

We magnify the LORD rightly for who he is. The Mighty one has done this. The one whose name is Holy. God is worthy of praise in his own right. The fact that the mighty one has done great things for me is great. But his name alone deserves my praise.

**Why Fear?**

Now Mary’s experience of bearing the LORD is unique, but this praise, this magnification of God is right from all people. Why? Because even as all generations shall call her blessed. From generation to generation the mercy of this Mighty One is for all who fear him. You normally fear the Mighty Ones for their anger or wrath. You feat them for what they can take. But this Holy One you fear because of his mercy.

We rightly fear this one because of how he has used the strength of his arm. He has not used to extract tribute from the defeated. He has not used it to enslave. He has used that arm to scatter the pround. The world and all its pomp are made meaningless when God himself acts. The Kingdoms and thrones and powers and dominions in all their finery are brought down. Those who oppress the poor and take from the widow and the fatherless are brought to nothing. When this LORD acts he exalts the humble. He evens the scales. He restores double what has been taken.

We rightly fear this one because he is the judge and the one who holds all accountable. In our sinful use of that authority we let people go hungry while feasting. He corrects that. He feeds the 5000 with 5 loaves. With every word from his mouth, the souls that magnify him are fed. While those who are satisfied with rich fare from the world’s table he sends away empty. Their bodies magnify, while their spirit starves. Those that have more will be given, those who lack even what they have will be taken away. And that day will show who has the good things.

**Promises Kept**

We rightly fear and love God – our souls magnify the LORD - because he has kept his promises.

He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy. As he spoke to our Fathers, to Abraham, so it will be to his offspring forever.

Satan made a promise in the Garden- “You will not die, but you will be like God.” That was the first and greatest of his many lies.

The World lies to us daily. It tells us get as much as you can now. It tells us to fear those who can kill the body. It tells us to magnify those who can give pleasure. But this is the foolish road to ruin. For which of us has enough temporal goods to trade for the smallest of eternity? All thrones are eventually cast down.

Even our own flesh confuses us. We fear and love the wrong things. And we know we do, but we continue to do so. And we make up lies to cover for it.

Only one thing in our existence have ever kept his promises. The HOLY one promised mercy and deliverance. And in Mary’s son he kept those promises. In Mary’s son cast down Satan, the World and even overcame this flesh.

And that promise is ours in the faith of Abraham. Abraham believed God’s promises and it was credited to him as righteousness. And the same promises is held out generation to generation. To all of Abraham’s offspring forever.

The mercy and might of the LORD is for you.

It is right that our Souls should magnify him, and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior. Amen