

My Soul Glorifies the Lord

Introduction:

The title of Mary's song, The Magnificat, comes from the Latin text, "My soul magnifies the Lord." In this lesson we focus on the first three verses.

The occasion of the story is a meeting between two women. One who was thought to be beyond the years of having a child. The other engaged but not yet married. Early in Mary's pregnancy she visits her relative Elizabeth, who was also pregnant. Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, have a remarkable encounter. Elizabeth feels her child leap at Mary's greeting. What results is a Spirit-filled prophecy from Elizabeth and a song from Mary. This part of the story occurs just prior to our reading in Luke 1:39-45.

Mary's song has strong echoes in the Old Testament. The prophet Samuel's mother, Hannah, sang a thematically similar tune in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Psalm 138 also echoes the singer's praise for God even in the face of danger. Mary sings too, in the face of an uncertain future. She's not yet married, and this will cause unrest between her and Joseph. Her pregnancy could mean societal violence toward her and her unborn child.

Yet she has faith. She believes that God is working his salvation through the child she is carrying. Nothing will stop that! She believes God will use her humble state, and he will. It is this faith and obedience that will bring glory to God.

Read Your Bible

- Psalm 138

- Luke 1:46-48

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. What are the occasions when you sing?
2. How do you give glory or praise to God?
3. Have you or when have you experienced God's unfailing love?
4. How has the Lord answered your prayers?
5. When has he preserved your life?
6. How does Jesus bring joy to your spirit?
7. Why do you think Mary's humble state was important?
8. How will you share the excitement, joy, and salvation of Jesus?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise for your Son, Jesus. We praise your name that you saved us through his death and resurrection. Our spirits rejoice that your Holy Spirit dwells within us. With gladness, joy, and delight may we sing of your goodness, and invite all people to know your faithfulness in Christ. Amen.