

Theme: Those who delight in the supremacy of Jesus will believe the Word of God and receive the joy of God's deepest, richest blessing.

I. Intro - A Test: The Songs of Christmas

- A. Messiah - Unto Us A Child Is Born
- B. Joy To the World!
- C. All I Want for Christmas
- D. Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer
- E. Our series - The First Songs of Christmas (Luke 1-2)

II. The Setting: Intertwining Two Narratives

A. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. Luke 1:39-40

1. Mary, a young unmarried woman, visits Elizabeth
 - a. A journey of about 70 miles - long and arduous
 - b. Young unmarried women did not travel on their own normally - this is very unusual.
 - c. But Mary had been told Elizabeth was pregnant - and this was a very unusual situation!
2. A very unusual situation prompted this visit!
 - a. Mary had been visited by an angel who told her she was to bear the Messiah - even though she was a virgin!
 - b. The angel told her that Elizabeth was pregnant - even though she was too old and had been barren her whole life!
 - c. This is why Mary broke the normal conventions and took the long solo journey to visit Elizabeth

B. The intertwining of two narratives

1. There are several things that link them together
 - a. Luke alternates between the birth of John the Baptist and the birth of Jesus throughout Luke 1-2
 - b. Both Elizabeth and Mary are miraculously pregnant
 - c. The angel Gabriel visited Zechariah and Mary to announce the impending miraculous pregnancies (the only two times he is mentioned in the NT!)
 - d. The identities and destinies of John and Jesus will be intertwined throughout their lives - and it begins during this visit!
2. This intertwining of the two narratives explains the visit, what happens when Mary arrives, and Elizabeth's song!

III. The Song of Elizabeth

A. Elizabeth's song delights in the supremacy of Jesus

In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Luke 1:42-44

1. Elizabeth is the superior in Israelite culture - she is older and the wife of a priest, while Mary is an unmarried, poor teen!
2. Yet Elizabeth speaks a word of blessing and praise to Mary and her Child Jesus!
 - a. The Greek word for "blessed" (εὐλογέω) is used for speaking a word of benediction or to offer praise.
 - b. When used in this manner, it does not pronounce blessing but rather recognizes that one is blessed

(as in Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”

- c. Mary is blessed because she is carrying Jesus in her womb!
- d. Elizabeth is favored just to have Mary visit her - for Mary is the mother of Elizabeth’s Lord!

3. John reacts to the Presence of Jesus the Lord and Mary is filled with the Holy Spirit

When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit... ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Luke 1:41, 44

- a. We are told twice that John the Baptist leapt in the womb as soon as Mary arrived and spoke!
- b. John is already fulfilling his destiny to point to Jesus’ identity as the Messianic Lord!
- c. This is no mere movement of a pre-born child, for Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and speaks these words. Thus, this is God’s Word regarding what happened.
- d. This text shows that John, who was 6 months after conception, and Jesus, who was mere days after conception, were already John and Jesus! Pre-born children are fully human - not blobs of cells!
- e. After Hours - A Pro-Life Advent!

4. Jesus is not just another child - He is the Lord!

But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Luke 1:43

- a. She is calling the Child in Mary’s womb the Lord!
- b. This word is used 25 times in Luke 1-2, and it always refers to Yahweh, the God of Israel, never to a high-ranking human or angel!

- c. This fact explains why Elizabeth accepts the inferior position before Mary, why John the Baptist leaps in the womb, why Elizabeth is filled by the Holy Spirit, and why she bursts forth in this inspired song!

5. Elizabeth’s song of joyful blessing is centered on and delights in the supremacy of Jesus the Lord!

- 6. Because Jesus is the Lord, there is no jealousy regarding a superior role for Mary or Jesus, but rather a humble, joyful gratitude to have any role in His Kingdom! Rather than asking “Why is Mary so favored?” she rejoices with Mary and asks “Why am I so favored?”

B. Elizabeth’s song pronounces the joy of blessing

In a loud voice she exclaimed: “**Blessed** are you among women, and **blessed** is the child you will bear!...

⁴⁵ **Blessed** is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!” Luke 1:42, 45

1. Blessing is key in this song - it is used 3 times!
2. As we have seen, in v42 the Greek word for blessing (εὐλογέω) is used for speaking a word of benediction or to offer praise.
3. In v45 a different Greek word (μακάριος) is used - and it has the idea of blessing in the sense of happiness and joy.
4. This word is what is used in the beatitudes in Matthew 5 - the settled joy that comes with knowing we are blessed by God, even when scorned, rejected, and persecuted.
5. Those who know they are part of God’s people, who know God is working in and through them, who experience His Presence in their lives, are filled with the joy of knowing they are blessed!

C. Elizabeth's song teaches the blessing of believing God's Word

Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished! Luke 1:45

1. Elizabeth says Mary is blessed because she believed God's Word to her would be fulfilled!
2. In Luke's narrative this is in strong contrast to Zechariah the priest who did not believe that God's Word to him would be accomplished!
3. Zechariah's faith faltered to think his barren old wife could become pregnant, but this blessed teen girl believed that she could conceive by the Holy Spirit while remaining a virgin!
4. The priest did not believe and was struck silent, while Mary did believe and is blessed and about to erupt in song!
5. The deepest, richest, joy-filled blessings comes when we believe the Word of God and act in faith-filled obedience!

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I delight in the supremacy of Jesus?

1. All of life should be centered on Jesus!
2. Advent is a special season to renew our focus and intensify our delight in the supremacy of Jesus!
3. Today the celebration of Christmas run from sublime Christmas carols to cheesy modern songs, from remembering Jesus Jesus to looking for Santa Claus and everything in between.

4. We can participate in the modern additions to Christmas, but our central focus needs to be on the marvel of the Incarnation - Jesus has come to save us!
5. As Elizabeth did, we must recognize and delight in the supremacy of Jesus - He is not just a baby, but the Lord!
6. Have I recognized and delighted in His Supremacy, so that I marvel that He allows me to play a small part in His play? Or do I look for Him to become a supporting actor in the play of my life?
7. If you have never embraced Christ as the Lord, do so today! It is the path to life and joy!
8. As a believer, has my delight in the Supremacy and glory of Jesus faded over time? Let's have it renewed this Advent season!

B. Do I believe the Word of God?

1. God is offering us deep, rich joy and blessing!
2. But the door to this is believing God's Word, trusting in His promises
3. Mary is held up to us as a model of simple trust in the promises of God!
4. During this season, let God renew your faith that He will do all He has promised!
5. During this season, let's learn to doubt our doubts and believe our God!
6. To aid in this, take time each day to read the devotional, to meditate on these first songs of Christmas, to let God's Spirit stir up faith within us!

C. The Table of Joyful Blessing

1. God calls us to the Table to bless us
2. Here we confess the faith and the Spirit renews our trust in God and His promises
3. The Apostles Creed and the Table

Elizabeth's Song of Joyful Blessing (Beatitude)

Luke 1:39-45
December 1, 2024
Communion
Romans 15:13

Teaching keywords: Advent and Christmas; Christology; biblical characters; worship; joy; humility

5 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5-6

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Luke 1:39-45