

**“GREAT JOY starts small”**

**December 23, 2018**

**Luke 1:46-55**

**CORE:** Long before a great multitude of angels announced *“good news of great joy for all people”*—an angel interrupted a young girl’s life with the news that she would carry the seed of God and birth the Messiah. The greatest move of God on the earth—began quietly in the heart of young Jewish girl named, Mary.

**Great joy starts small! Joy is a journey!**

**Mary’s song reveals what makes that journey possible.**

### **1. MAGNIFYING THE LORD**

- **“Magnify”**—to make large; make conspicuous; allow nothing to eclipse Him
- **“Great is the LORD”**—He is unrivaled
- **“My spirit rejoices”**- expresses joy→ so that joy increases!
- **“Worship”**—Lit., “worth-ship”; He then sets us in a secure place (*Psalm 91:14*)

### **2. SIMPLY BELIEVING**

**Romans 15:13-** May God *“fill you to overflowing with uncontainable joy and perfect peace as you trust in him.”* TPT

- Faith is being “confident of what we do not yet see” and Hope is the “joyful anticipation of good (or fulfillment)”
- When we choose to believe—joy is not far behind (*NASB- we “find joy in believing”*)
- The Bible is not “photo-shopped”; gives us an “unfiltered” pic of people (*i.e., Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Gideon, Jonah, the disciples—all struggled to believe*)
- Yet, Mary moved quickly from *“how can this be?”* to *“be it unto me as You have said!”* (*NOTE: There was no precedent for the miracle of incarnation & virgin birth*)
- NOTE: Believing is not just about what we believe—but about Whom we trust!
- Prepare for unprecedented miracles!

### **3. HUMBLY RECEIVING**

**James 1:21-** *“Humbly accept the word planted in you.”* NIV; *“With a sensitive spirit, we absorb God’s word”* TPT

- **Luke 1:52, 53-** Mary sang: *“...He lifts up the humble...He fills up the hungry.”*
- False humility shuts us down, as we cringe under the weight of unworthiness.
- True humility opens our hearts wide—as we draw near to the Lover of our souls!

#### 4. SEEING BEYOND THE MOMENT

**Luke 1:49, 50- “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.”**

She concludes her song, **“He has helped His servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as He said to our fathers.” (v. 54, 55)**

- People of joy learn to rejoice in God’s promises—even before He fulfills them!
- Their gladness is rooted in trusting God—not in the way circumstances make them feel.
  
- In Exodus 15 there is an account of an amazing praise service on the eastern banks of the Red Sea AFTER Moses and the children of Israel are delivered from Egypt.
  - They sang, **“Sing to the LORD. For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and rider have been thrown into the sea!”**
  - However, on the western banks of the sea BEFORE their victory, their tune was different. They grumbled, **“Have you brought us here to die in the wilderness? We told you in Egypt, ‘Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians! It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than die here in the wilderness!’”**
  - Imagine if, instead of complaining, they had praised!
  - Listen to the song David sang BEFORE facing his enemies in battle: ***In his shelter in the day of trouble, that’s where you’ll find me, for he hides me there in his holiness. He has smuggled me into his secret place, where I’m kept safe and secure— out of reach from all my enemies. Triumphant now, I’ll bring him my offerings of praise, singing and shouting with ecstatic joy!***  
***Yes, listen and you can hear the fanfare of my shouts of praise to the Lord!***
- The song of joy is a **“sacrifice of joy”** as we rejoice BEFORE the victory!

#### CLOSING

This is where it began—in a humble, trusting heart of a young girl who magnified the LORD and minimized the problem—seeing beyond the moment.

When fulfillment came—the sky erupted with angelic worship as they announced, **“Good news of great joy to all people!”**

- They didn’t say, **“Here’s a new teaching we hope you can follow!”**
- Or, **“Jesus is coming! Boy, is He mad!”**
- Instead, they declared, **“God is about to do for us what we couldn’t do for ourselves! He’s making a way where there was no way! Receive your new King! The door is being opened for intimacy with the Father! You will be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit!”**

**Joy! Great joy is now available to everyone!**