



Gift of Grace

SERMON SERIES

NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 19

LUKE 1:45-56



GIFT OF GRACE; WEEK 4, OVERWHELMED BY GRACE

We are in our four week of Advent, moving through the Gospel of Luke together, Shannon Coon gives us a deeper look into the passage.

- If you are discussing in a group, share with each other what your favorite Christmas song or carol is. Why is it your favorite?
- Have you ever experienced a time when something happened to you or occurred to you which completely overwhelmed you and your reaction was to simply praise God? Or something moved you so much that you just burst out telling someone about it? (Or maybe you even burst into song??).

Read Luke 1:46-56 together.

DIVING DEEPER:
Process together.

- There are two major movements in this “song” of Mary’s. See if you can identify where the focus shifts in this text. What does the first movement focus on and what does the second movement focus on?
- Mary was a devout Jewish young woman. How do we know this? Much of her song echoes words from Scripture. It is clear that Mary has the words of Scripture deep inside of her and can draw from them when she realizes that the fulfillment of Scripture is happening in her very life. Take a look at these Old Testament scriptures and see where they are echoed in Mary’s words: 1 Samuel 2:1-10 (this is Hannah’s song); Psalms 34, 35, 89, 98, 138.
- Mary is amazed at what has happened to her. Notice that when she sings of this occurrence, she gives all the glory to God, not to herself. In fact, she identifies herself as being of “humble estate” or “lowly state” (different translations have different words). What is the significance of Mary being “humble” or “lowly?”
- Verse 50 transitions into the second movement of the song. Mary makes a revolutionary statement. The Israelites had long believed that the Savior was coming for them. But here, Mary sings of God’s mercy for...who?



LIVING IT OUT

- Mary was a humble young woman who received the most privileged status a woman could be given — the bearer of the Son of God. It is because of her humble estate in the social order of her world that she was able to receive God's gift to her. Author Kathleen Norris says, "If we have it all, or think we can buy it all, there will be no room for Christmas inside of us. If we are full of ourselves, there will be no room for God to enter our hearts at Christmas."
- One of the beautiful aspects of this Scripture gets lost in translation. Mary sings as if the justice of God's Kingdom has already happened, it is rendered in English in the past tense. But in the original Greek, it is a verb tense that indicates an on-going action...it has happened, it is happening, it will continue to happen. This captures God's Kingdom here on earth. We are in the on-going process of the Kingdom happening. This causes us to reflect on our lives and our participation in bringing glimpses of the Kingdom into the "here and now." We do this by living by the law of love — loving one another. Now is a good time to evaluate ourselves...how are we doing this in our lives? Where are we doing it? Where can we do it better?

