

The Light Has Dawned – Part 3

Overflowing Joy – Luke 1:39-56

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – December 14, 2025

Introduction

- As the Christmas story unfolds, we read about two ordinary women in a quiet Judean town. Mary is young, unknown, likely no more than a teenager. Elizabeth is older, having carried for years the ache of unanswered prayers. Neither of them would have been noticed by the powerful or elite.
- And yet Luke tells us that in their simple, hidden meeting, the Holy Spirit breaks in, causing joy, prophecy, and worship to erupt. Through their voices, especially Mary's song, we hear the reality of Christmas: What God is doing in Jesus is bigger, deeper, and more world-shaping than they could imagine.
- So whether you are here every Sunday or you are a guest today, welcome. The heart of Christmas is not sentiment or seasonal tradition. It is not gifts under a tree or family around a table. The core of Christmas is that God Himself has stepped into our world to save.
- This morning, we turn to Luke 1:39-56 (page 879), where we will read about these two women, their interactions and conversations, and what this means for us here and now, nearly 2000 years later.

The Presence of Christ Produces Deep Joy

Luke 1:39-45 NIV

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. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 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. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

- Mary goes quickly to see Elizabeth. Why? Because just before this, an angel announced to her that she was to conceive and give birth to a son, that she was to call Him "Jesus," that He would be called the "Son of God," and that His kingdom would never end (Luke 1:26-38). The angel's announcement was not a dream, not a myth, not a private imagination; it was God breaking into history, and she needed to be near someone who could understand, make sense of, and share her joy.
- When Mary enters the house, Luke tells us three things happen immediately:
 1. John leaps in Elizabeth's womb
 2. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit
 3. Elizabeth speaks a word of blessing and faith
- This is the first human response to the incarnate Christ—uncontainable joy. John leaps because Jesus has entered the room. Elizabeth praises because the Messiah is near. Mary is overwhelmed because God is faithful.
- Notice: Mary did not arrive with credentials. She did not carry a resume. She did not have wealth, influence, or status. All she brought was the presence of Christ within her, and that was

enough to awaken joy. That is the heart of Christmas. Joy does not come from what we possess, what we've accomplished, or how life is going. True joy comes from the presence of Jesus. Joy is the inevitable fruit of recognizing who Jesus truly is and what that means for us.

- Elizabeth asks a remarkable question in verse 43. "Why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Here is humble faith: Elizabeth sees in the tiny, hidden, unborn Christ the Lord of Glory, and she is now in the presence of the long-expected great king.
- This Christmas, God is inviting you and me to see Him with the same eyes. Many of us carry heaviness today, confusion, anxiety, disappointment, grief, and loneliness. But the joy offered here does not deny pain; it welcomes Christ into it. Where the presence of Christ is recognized and received, deep joy is born, which is the anchor that grounds us in the reality of God's redemptive plan and His presence with us.

The Mercy of God Turns the World Right-Side Up

Luke 1:46-53 NIV

And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, 49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.

50 His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. 51 He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. 52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. 53 He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

- Mary's "Magnificat" is not a sweet poem; it's a revolution. So much so that the Chinese government does not allow registered churches to speak on this passage. This is praise bursting from a heart stunned by grace and the majesty of God. "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..." (v. 46-47) Mary does not speak as royalty, but as one who knows her need: "God my Savior." Christmas begins with the confession that all of us, religious or not, successful or struggling, confident or fearful, need a Savior.
- And then Mary declares what God is doing through Jesus:
 - He scatters the proud
 - He brings down the mighty
 - He lifts up the humble
 - He fills the hungry
 - He remembers His covenant
- The birth of Jesus is God turning the world right-side up. From the very beginning, God makes it clear that the gospel is not a reward for the capable and strong; *it is making things right for the needy, the hungry, and the humble*. Mary is not boasting about herself; she is marveling at God. "For He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant" (v. 48). "He has performed mighty deeds with His arm" (v. 51). There is a day when the world will be turned right-side up. Rejoice you who are oppressed, who are humble, and are hungry, for great will be your reward with the coming of the reigning King.
- Christmas reveals a God who sees. He sees the forgotten. He sees the struggling. He sees the oppressed, He sees the hopeless, the helpless, the humble. Mary's song shouts back: Yes! Yes, He sees you. Yes, He comes for you. Yes, His mercy and His might are for you.

The Faithfulness of God Is Our Confidence for the Future

Luke 1:54-56 NIV

He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful 55 to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

- Mary ends by anchoring her hope in the character of God: “He has helped His servant Israel, remembering to be merciful . . .” (v. 54). Christmas is not God’s new idea; it is the fulfillment of ancient promises. To Abraham, to David, through the prophets, across centuries of waiting, Mary sees that the child she carries is the eternal proof that *God keeps His word*.
- The world changes. People fail. Nations rise and fall. *But God does not forget, and He does not forsake*. In Jesus: every promise finds its “yes,” every injustice is made right, every fear has a refuge, every weary heart has hope. Every sin has a Savior. If God has come this far to save—entering our world, taking on flesh, bearing our sin—*then you can trust Him with your life, your questions, your past, your present, your future, and your eternity*.

What Does This Mean for Us Today?

- *Let Him enter your life personally*. John leapt when Jesus entered the room. Joy came when His presence arrived. Jesus is not a seasonal idea or a theological concept. He is living, He is reigning, He is present, and He will return. Whether you are a believer in need of refreshment or a guest exploring faith, *open your heart to Him*. Welcome Him. Trust Him. Call on Him. He came for you.
- *Humble yourself before your Savior*. Mary magnified the Lord because she knew she needed mercy. Christmas is not a self-congratulation for the spiritual. It is a surrender to the God who saves sinners. Confess your need. Bring your burdens. Lay down your pride. His mercy and His might lift the humble and fill the hungry.
- *Anchor your life in God’s faithfulness*. Mary looks back to God’s promises and forward to God’s future. The same God who kept His word then will keep it now. If He gave His beloved Son, He will be faithful to complete what He began in you. Let this Christmas strengthen your confidence in God.

Conclusion

- When Mary sang, Jesus had not yet been born. The cross was still distant. The tomb still closed. Yet she praised, because God Himself had come. Today, we stand on the other side of the manger, the cross, and the empty tomb. We know the full story: *Christ has come, Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will return*. Let this truth be the anchor for your soul, the foundation that you build your life upon, the future that is guaranteed by faith through the faithfulness of Christ. Know that the end of your story is “they lived happily ever after.”
- And the same Spirit who filled Elizabeth and moved Mary to worship is at work here today, calling us to joy, humility, surrender, and faith. So let us magnify the Lord. Let our souls rejoice in God our Savior. For unto us a Child is born. Unto us a Son is given. And His name is Jesus. He is here. He sees you. He invites you. And He is enough.
- Closing Prayer

Our prayer team is available to pray with you after the service, near the “prayer” sign at the front of the sanctuary, and in the prayer room next to the offices. Also, you can send your prayer request to prayer@crosspointrockford.com

Questions for Growth Groups

1. Why did Mary go “in haste” to see Elizabeth? What does her response to God’s promise teach us about how believers should respond when God speaks, leads, or convicts?
2. Elizabeth recognizes the unborn Jesus as “my Lord.” What does this reveal about Jesus’s identity, even before His birth? How does Elizabeth’s faith challenge us to see Christ more clearly?
3. Joy is the first human response to the presence of Christ. Where have you seen Christ bring joy into your life recently, even in the midst of hardship? If you have been lacking joy, what might it look like to intentionally welcome Christ into that place?
4. Mary confesses God as “my Savior.” Why is admitting our need for a Savior essential to truly understanding Christmas? What keeps people, both believers and unbelievers, from humbly acknowledging that need?
5. Mary’s song describes God lifting the humble, filling the hungry, and remembering His promises. Which part of her song resonates most with you right now? Why?
6. Mary anchors her hope in God’s faithfulness across generations. Share a time when God has proven Himself faithful in your life. How can remembering God’s past faithfulness strengthen your trust in Him now?
7. Consider the three applications from the sermon: Let Him enter personally. Humble yourself before your Savior. Anchor your life in God’s faithfulness. Which one do you sense God calling you to embrace most deeply this Christmas, and what is one practical step you will take in response?