

A WORD ON WORSHIP

REVIEW OF MESSAGE FROM DECEMBER 20, 2015

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Luke 1:46-48

“And Mary said: “My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; for behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.”

Mary’s hymn of praise overflows with information about the attributes of God. But it’s not dry, academic information. Mary exults in God as she considers what He has done in choosing her to be the mother of the Savior. She calls Him “God my Savior,” because Mary knew she was a sinner; since no one but sinners need a Savior. Everyone who realizes they need a “Savior” understands they are lost and alienated from God because of the sin they personally have committed. We don’t just need a little boost from God to set things right or a few tips on how to succeed in life. Savior is a radical term that implies that we are helplessly, hopelessly lost unless God in His mighty power intervenes to rescue us.



Mary refers to God’s power when she speaks of how, “He has done mighty deeds with His arm,” referring to His scattering the proud, who would scoff at the notion that they needed a Savior. Pride is a heart attitude of self-sufficiency, not humility. The proud person thinks that he doesn’t need God. God is mighty in mercy to the humble, but mighty in judgment toward the proud. Mary also teaches that God’s name is holy. His name refers to His person, the sum of His attributes. To be holy means to be set apart. In this context, it refers not only to God’s absolute moral righteousness, but also to His being set apart as the only sovereign authority over people. He is to be held in highest esteem and to be feared because He is holy.

Thankfully, Mary does not leave us with just these attributes of God, or we would not dare to approach Him. She goes on to emphasize God’s mercy, “His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear Him ... He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy.” Mercy tells us of God’s compassion due to our misery as sinners. His mercy is on those who recognize His holiness and bow in reverence before Him. It was His mercy that caused Him to send the Savior. How wonderful would it be if everyone acknowledged their need of the mercy of the Lord like Mary did?

You can’t pick and choose which attributes of God you like, and ignore the rest. God isn’t operating a religious cafeteria. You come to Him His way, as a guilty sinner needing a Savior, or not at all. If you repent of your pride and selfishness and sin, and come to the cross, He will pour out His tender mercy on you. If you proudly cling to your own righteousness and self-sufficiency, God will send you away empty. And if God sends you away empty, you are absolutely empty. You don’t want to go into eternity empty, without God’s mercy. Come to the Savior this Christmas.

Sunrise Community Church
Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst
EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.

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