

To all members of the St James Traditional Services

A Weekly Word of Encouragement: God has done great things

Christmas is almost here, so we turn to one of the most famous songs in the Bible – the song of Mary (called Magnificat – its first word in Latin). Read Luke 1:46-55 reflectively (or sing it joyfully).

Mary sang this exuberant song while visiting her older cousin Elizabeth, the only woman who could possibly have understood Mary's unique experience (read Luke 1:26-45)

This is a song of celebrating the Lord: the God who always takes the initiative of grace; God who is Lord, Saviour, all powerful, the Holy one, the Merciful one, the Faithful one.

God is always the ultimate reason to celebrate.

Mary's unique experience illustrates the way God has always acted in bringing salvation to His people.

Read Mary's personal experience vv. 46-49.

She was a poor, ordinary, humble, God-fearing young woman, eagerly looking for God's kingdom, and God has chosen her to give birth to His Son; the culmination of all His promises to His people. No wonder Mary sang with overwhelmed joy, as well as counting the cost!

Read the experience of all true believers vv. 50-55.

God's way of salvation turns the value systems of this world upside down. It is revolutionary!

- the proud and arrogant are scattered, while those who reverence and fear the Lord are shown mercy;
- the world rulers are brought down, but the humble are exalted;
- those who hunger after God's kingdom are satisfied, not those who have worldly riches.

Those who display Mary's qualities of reverence, humility and spiritual hunger, inherited the blessings of God, are heirs of salvation. Mary's song of exuberant joy 30 weeks before Bethlehem (Christmas) and 30 years before Calvary (Easter) is all about God's saving work of renewal and fulfilment; and it is all because of Jesus. To God be the glory!

Prayer

Lord, Thank you for always taking the initiative in your love for me. May I keep close to Jesus my Saviour and daily grow in likeness to Him. Teach me the ongoing need for reverence for you, humility before you, and hunger after you, so that I may enjoy your blessings each day. Amen.

Remember

- keep praying daily
- keep reading God's Word
- see you in St James this Christmas

With Christian love,

Robert

PLEASE NOTE: this will be the final devotion for 2020