

Advent 2021 - Week 3, Joy
A Sharing of Joy
Luke 1:39-56
Dec. 5th, 2021

I. Elizabeth: A MOMENT of CONFIRMATION. (v.39-45)

- A. A GIVING of the SPIRIT. (v.41)**
- B. A DEEP sense of KNOWING. (v.42-44)**
- C. A BLESSING for BELIEF. (v.42,45)**

Last week Mary heard the message from God through Gabriel and surrendered to whatever the Lord had planned for her. Then she promptly headed off to visit her relative Elizabeth. Elizabeth would understand, even more than Mary could have imagined. Her words continued the work of God in Mary's life.

1. Kid's question: When have you been so excited by something that you screamed or squealed out loud?
2. Elizabeth knew by the Spirit, but she felt it in her own body. When have you had an experience where you just felt that something was true? (or not true?)

II. Mary: Filled with PRAISE and JOY. (v.46-56)

- A. How God has CHANGED Mary's REALITY. (v.46-49)**
- B. DESCRIBING the NATURE of God. (v.50-55)**
- C. And then LIFE goes ON. (v.56)**

The experience with Elizabeth filled Mary with praise for God and with a deep joy. It inspires a song that today we call the Magnificat which comes from the Latin word for "glorifies" or "magnifies". She sings of her life, of God's character, and then her life goes on.

3. What phrases of Mary's song can you identify with the most and why?
4. What do you wonder about that moment when Mary and Elizabeth meet? What questions do you have that the text doesn't answer?
5. How does Mary's description of God ring true to you? What are the challenges you find when you hear her words but your experience at the moment may seem different?

III. Joy: The larger STORY we are INVITED into. (Eph. 1:9-10)

- A. Mary had been SHAPED by SCRIPTURE. (v.39-56; I Sam. 2:1-10)**
- B. The Spirit AFFIRMED it in RELATIONSHIPS. (v.39-45; Lk. 10:21)**
- C. Her (our) LIFE would (will) be a VEHICLE... (v.46-49; Gal. 4:19, 2:20)**

D. ...to EXPRESS the NATURE of God. (v.50-56; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24)

What we see in Mary's life and her embrace of the joy that comes from her calling, is what we are called to as well. The story told in Scripture is the story that our lives are enfolded into. As the Spirit leads us God will use our surrender to clearly communicate to the world who He is. That is the pathway to joy, true joy that is deeper than circumstance.

6. What are the ways you have found to better incorporate Scripture into you life? What works well and what doesn't?
7. When has God used someone else to help affirm for you the direction he was calling you to move? What was that like for you? For them?
8. Look at the descriptions of God's nature in Mary's song. How can you express those in your life in the coming weeks?