

SERMON NOTES

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MESSAGE: CHRISTMAS IS AFTER THANKSGIVING

Scriptures: 1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20; Luke 1:46–47; Luke 1:39–56; Luke 1:67–79; Luke 2:8–21; Luke 2:22–38

INTRODUCTION

Thanksgiving is not just a holiday—it's a posture. Scripture calls us to give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thess. 5:18) and to offer gratitude always and for everything (Eph. 5:20). The early chapters of Luke give us four Spirit-filled songs—Mary's Magnificat, Zechariah's Benedictus, the angels' Gloria, and Simeon's Nunc Dimittis—each bursting with praise long before the miracle was fully seen.

MARY'S SONG — THE MAGNIFICAT (Luke 1:46–55)

Mary echoes Hannah (1 Sam. 2:2,10) as she magnifies the Lord with a heart full of faith.

1. MAGNIFY THE LORD

"My soul magnifies the Lord..." (Lk. 1:46). To magnify God is to make Him bigger in our hearts than our fear. Psalm 34:3 invites us: "Magnify the Lord with me."

2. HE IS HOLY

Mary declares: "Holy is His name" (Lk. 1:49). God's holiness is our anchor—Isa. 6:3, 1 Pet. 1:15, and 1 Pet. 2:9 remind us that His character never shifts.

3. REJOICE IN HIM

Mary rejoices in God her Savior (Lk. 1:47). Her joy mirrors Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1) and Paul's call: "Rejoice... the Lord is near" (Phil. 4:4–6).

4. GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE

"He who is mighty has done great things..." (Lk. 1:49). Psalm 126:3 says it simply: "The Lord has done great things for us."

5. HIS MERCY ENDURES

Mary celebrates God's mercy (Lk. 1:50). From the mercy seat (Ex. 25:22) to the unending compassion of Lam. 3:22–23 to the rich mercy of Eph. 2:4—His mercies meet us fresh every morning.

6. STRENGTH TO RESCUE

God scatters the proud and lifts the lowly (Lk. 1:51). He is strong to save.

7. HE IS FAITHFUL

Mary praises the God who remembers His promises (Lk. 1:53). He is the same faithful God of Rev. 2:14, 1 Cor. 1:9, and 1 Thes. 5:24: "He who calls you is faithful."

EXPECTING THE MIRACLE

Mary believed the angel's word: "For nothing will be impossible with God" (Lk. 1:37). Her response remains the model for every believer: "Let it be to me according to Your word" (Lk. 1:38).

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Thanksgiving isn't something we offer after God moves—it's something we offer because God will move. The songs surrounding Christ's birth teach us to live in expectation, to praise before the breakthrough, and to trust the God who keeps every promise.

PRAYER

Lord, like Mary, fill my heart with gratitude rooted in who You are—holy, merciful, strong, and faithful. Help me to magnify You in every circumstance and to expect the miracles You have already set in motion. Amen.