

T R I N I T Y
B I B L E C H U R C H
D A L L A S

The Sermon

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Luke 1:46-55

"Mary's Song of Praise"

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TRANSCRIPT

Well, I'm so glad you're here, and I'm glad to be here. We have a wonderful, wonderful passage we're going to be looking at today and I can't wait to just delve right into it. So I want you to take your Bible and turn with me to the gospel of Luke, Luke chapter 1, and today we're going to be looking at verses 46 to 55. The title of this message is "Mary's Song of Praise." So I want to begin as always by reading the passage.

Luke chapter 1, beginning in verse 46: "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. For the Mighty One has done great things for me; and holy is His name. And His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear Him. He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were humble. He has filled the hungry with good things; and sent away the rich empty-handed. He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever.'"

This is the reading of God's word, and it'll be the focus of our study this morning. Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, as we approach Your word we are mindful that we step onto holy ground, that Your word has proceeded from Your mouth; it shall not return to You void; that the grass withers, the flower fades away, but the word of our God abides forever; that Your word is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and pierces as far as the division of soul and spirit of both joints and marrow. It's a lamp under our feet, a light under our path. It is a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces. It is a fire that burns away the dross. It is a seed that contains the principle of life. And so, Father, as we look into Your word this morning, we are aware that You are speaking to us through Your written word even this day. May You give us ears to hear and eyes to see the truth of Your word. We pray this in the mighty name of Jesus Christ our Lord and our Savior. Amen. [End]

In these verses we see the praise that Mary offers to God as a result of the report that she has heard from Elizabeth, that she will bear a son. And in response to what the angel Gabriel has said to her, that she too will bear a son, but not just any son; that she will bear the Son of God, and He will be the holy Child. And so there wells up within the soul of Mary this exuberant praise for God that is recorded in these verses that I have just read. This is one extraordinary song that Mary sings to God.

And by way of introduction, there are three things that I want to bring to your attention about this song that might not initially capture your eye, and the first is, that as Mary opens her mouth and sings this song to God, it is Scripture that comes pouring out of her mouth. If you have a reference Bible, as I have, you will notice in the side margin the cross-references, and you can see that every line of this anthem of praise is drawn from the wells of Scripture. Mary is literally filled to overflowing with the love for and knowledge of the word of God.

In verse 46, it's a restatement of a verse from Psalm 34. And verse 47 is a restatement of Psalm 35:9. Verse 48 is a restatement of Psalm 138:6; and verse 49, a restatement of Psalm 22:3. When we come to verse 50, in my New American Standard Bible it's in all capital letters, which signifies that it is a direct quote from the Old Testament. So it's not just a restatement,

but it's a precise quoting of Psalm 103:17. And then verse 51 is a restatement of Psalm 98:1, verse 52 restates Job 5:11, verse 53 quotes Psalm 107:9 verbatim, and then verse 55 is a restatement of the Abrahamic promise in Genesis 17.

So this is amazing. It's amazing for several reasons that Mary is so full of Scripture. First of all, she's a young teenager. She might be as young as 13 years of age, as old as 15 or 16 years of age. But she she's a young lady, she has not had a lifetime of memorizing Scripture and learning Scripture. And on top of that, she does not own a copy of the Bible. No one back then owned a copy of the Bible, except a few in Jerusalem there in the temple area. She has no Study Bible, she has no commentaries, she has no Bible index, she has just simply soaked up the word of God; and she's living in a nation that is in apostasy.

Israel is in a nation of unbelief. And so she is standing out, really, like a bright star on a dark night. And on top of that, she lives in Nazareth, which is nowhere; it's in the middle of nowhere. She's not in Jerusalem, she's not near Jerusalem, she's way up to the north. And the only explanation is that she has grown up in a home where the word of God was honored. And as Deuteronomy 6 says, to "have it posted in the house, and to hear it as you come and as you go," that's the only explanation there can be for this.

And on top of that, she probably attended the local synagogue, where it would be a small gathering of believers and the word of God would be read. But this is astonishing, this much Scripture pouring out of Mary, and she has no notes in front of her, she has no copy of a Bible in front of her. She obviously has memorized Scripture. Her very language is Scripture. The way she talks, the way she sings, the way she prays, it's just interlaced with Scripture. Surely, this is an example for you and me to delve even deeper into the word of God and to soak it up and to be a very part of our fiber. Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you."

And so not only is this just Scripture-saturated, but the second thing I need to bring to your attention is that it's just so God- centered. As I look at this

song that she sings, Mary has a towering, transcendent, majestic, high view of God. Let me just walk you back through this just one more time, if I may.

In verse 46, she addresses God as "the Lord," which means the Sovereign One. In verse 47, she refers to God as "my Savior," which means the deliverer of her soul from eternal destruction. In verse 49, she refers to God as "the Mighty One." In verse 49 also, "His name is holy." Verse 50, she refers to "His mercy." In verse 51, "He has scattered." Verse 52, "He has brought down." Verse 52, "He is exalted." Verse 53, "He has filled." Verse 53, "He has sent away." Verse 54, "He has given help." Verse 54, "He has remembered His mercy." Verse 55, "He spoke." God, God, God, God, God. That's the way your Christian life needs to be: God, God, God, God. If you want to grow as a Christian, you've got to have, you must have a God-centered life.

But the third thing I would draw to your attention, not only is it Bible-centered, Bible-saturated, and not only is it God-exalting, but the third thing – and this is still by way of introduction that I want you to see this – it's not just what Mary says, but it's how she says it. This is in beautiful poetic form. This isn't recorded or written like an epistle, which is a letter of correspondence. It's not written like a narrative, which is a story. This is Hebrew poetry at its best.

This is how the Psalms read. This is how the song of Moses reads in Exodus 15. This is how the prophets so often spoke, especially Isaiah and Jeremiah. There is a beauty about the way they say what they say. And there are two main features in Hebrew poetry that Mary is using here, which tells me she's well-taught, she's well-read. This is amazing. I mean, most millennials today can't even sign their name. They can type their name, they can text their name; cursive handwriting is long gone. But Mary knows how to communicate with beautiful language.

Now, there are two main features to Hebrew poetry you need to know about that's different from English poetry, and the first is parallelism, which

there's an A line and a B line, or a first line and a second line. And there are all different kinds of parallelism, two of which Mary is using here. There is synonymous parallelism, where the second line of a verse simply restates or repeats the first line, it just reinforces it – same thought, just different synonyms, different words. The other kind of parallelism that she uses here is what we call antithetical parallelism, which is a contrast where the second line says the total opposite of the first line. And there's such an economy of words, and as it's laid out here, you can see it's like a song. And I've often wondered, "Why have Bible commentators called this a song where verse 46 it says, 'Mary said,' it doesn't say, 'Mary sang'?" Well, the reason is the form of this is a song, the form of this is a poem. And so even as she opens her mouth, Scripture comes out, God comes out, but even the perfect structure of this.

And another feature of Hebrew poetry is what we call figures of speech: "As the deer pants after the water brooks, so does my heart pant after you, O God," things like that. And Mary uses figures of speech here. I mean, for example, in verse 51, "He has done mighty deeds with His arm," referring to God's arm. Well, God doesn't have an arm. God doesn't have eyes. God doesn't have a body. It's a figure of speech analogous to, in this case, that God has great power; and when God flexes His muscles and raises His arm, He can accomplish anything and everything that He sets His heart to do, and that there can be no opposition against Him to halt His purposes. But it's metaphorical language.

And so, what we have recorded here is one of the most beautiful pieces of literature that you'll ever read anywhere. And as Luke records this, he is mindful that it's not just what Mary said, it's how she said it. And that's true in all of life. It's true in a marriage, is it not? It's not just what you say, but when you say it, how you say it. And we see this beautifully on display here with Mary. So she is an example for you, for me, on how we should be living our Christian lives – be deep in Scripture, high in our thoughts of God, and to be careful in how we say what we say, especially when we're talking about the things of God. He deserves the best.

So, let's walk through this song of praise, which starts in verse 46, and there's four main headings that I want to set before you, and the first is in verse 46, "Mary's exaltation of God." This is where this starts. This starts at the summit. This starts at the pinnacle. This starts at the mountain peak, at the highest peak. It starts with the exaltation of God.

So we read, "And Mary said: 'My soul exalts the Lord.'" When she says "soul," *psuché*. It means all that is within me, with everything that I have, from the very depth of my being. She's not speaking this off just the top, it's down deep within her, arising like an artesian geyser, "My soul exalts the Lord." This word "exalts," it's a compound word. I bring this to your attention only to tell you that the prefix is mega, mega rejoicing: "My soul mega exalts God, the Lord who is the Sovereign One."

Now, we need to think this through. Mary cannot enlarge the Lord. She cannot enlarge the name of God. God is who God is. "He is the God who was, who is, who shall be forever," Revelation 4:8. What this means for her soul to exalt the Lord is to, within her own heart, to lift His name above every other name, to magnify Him in her own heart and soul, and declare His greatness above all else, above every other name.

Mary, as I've already pointed out to you, has this towering view of God. And I want to say to us today that none of us here can have too high of a view of God; if anything, we have too low of a view of God. And as we grow as Christians, we grow to find out that God is larger, God is greater, God is bigger, God is more awesome. The more we grow as Christians, it becomes a discovery of the infinite magnitude of God. And if you want your soul to be enlarged, if you want your soul to be deepened, then you must have an enlarged and deepened knowledge of who God is. And apart from Christ and Him crucified, the most important knowledge for you to have is to know who God is.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon when he was 19 years old went to London to assume a pastorate there; he was a child prodigy in the pulpit. And I have his 63-volume set of his sermons. Volume 1, Sermon 1, Paragraph 1, he's

preaching on Malachi 3:6, "I am the Lord your God, I change not." And as a 20-year-old young preacher, Spurgeon said this: "Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the soul of man as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy which can engage the attention of a child of God is the name, the nature, the person, the doings, the existence of our great God."

I would encourage you to be like Mary and have an exalted view of God, to be ever-growing in your awareness of who God is, to study the attributes of God, to study the character and the being of God. R. C. Sproul once told me that it is the study of the of the being of God that becomes the master lens through which you see the entire Bible, becomes the master paradigm through which you see every other area of theology, which gives you a Christian worldview and allows you to see the world around you through the lens of who God is.

It was back in the 1960s that a man named J. B. Phillips wrote a book that had a great impact, the title of which was *Your God Is Too Small*. And for the most part, our God is too small. Our knowledge of God is too diminished. And in the 1970s J. I. Packer wrote a book, *Knowing God*. It hit the shores of America and the evangelical church like a tsunami and brought us back to seeking the knowledge of who God is. I would encourage you all that I can to study the attributes of God and to know who God is. A. W. Pink has written an extraordinary book called *The Attributes of God*. It is so devotional. It is so mind-enlarging, heart-expanding. And the whole rest of your Christian life just seems to be pulled along as you grow in your knowledge of who God is.

That's exactly where Mary is in her life. This is just a window into her soul. This is just insight, pulling back the veil and allowing us to peer inside her heart. It's Scripture, it's God that comes out.

Now, the second thing that I want you to note is in verse 47, and it's "Mary's celebration of God," because as we come to verse 47, we see that

her knowledge of God has not made her dower, nor has it made her drab. It has made her excited and has given her true enthusiasm for God. And so in verse 47 we read, "and my spirit rejoices in God." I need to point out to you that "spirit" in verse 47 is a synonym for "soul" in verse 46, and that this too is parallelism, synonymous parallelism. She's not making a distinction between soul and spirit; they are one in the same. It's just referring to one's innermost being. From the depths of her spirit she says, "My spirit rejoices in God."

This word "rejoice" is a very intense word, and it means greatly rejoices, exceedingly rejoices with abundant excitement. And notice, it's in God, it's in God. Hear me say this: all true joy is in God. There is no joy outside of knowing God. All true joy is found in the Lord. And when she says, "in God," it's not in her circumstances, it's not in the world, it's not in other things, it's in God, in who God is, in what God is doing.

This sounds like the apostle Paul to me. I mean, Philippians 3:1, "Rejoice in the Lord." Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord; again I say, rejoice!" All rejoicing is in God. That's why an unbeliever can never know one drop of joy, because he or she doesn't know God. They can have happiness; and happiness is a very shallow, fleeting thing. Happiness has wings, and happiness flies in and then it flutters out, depending upon our happenings, depending upon our circumstances. And when our football team wins, we're happy; and when our football team loses - as mine did this weekend - we're depressed.

And so the world can have happiness. And even Christians can have fleeting moments of happiness. But joy rises above circumstances. Joy is in the Lord, who never changes, who towers over our circumstances, who is the source of all joy. Let me give you some cross-references. Psalm 35:9, "My soul shall rejoice in the Lord." Psalm 63:11, a Davidic Psalm, "The king will rejoice in God." In Isaiah 61:10, "I will rejoice greatly" - listen to this - "in the Lord."

Listen, I need to hear this as much as anyone in this room. I mean, we can be so distracted in this world and be locked in on changing circumstances and mistake, really, happiness for joy. But even in the midst of difficulty, we can have joy. I mean, there's a pipeline to the throne of grace that is unbroken, that there's a flood of joy. I mean, Paul could be in prison and have joy. Jesus, before He went to the cross, had joy in the midst of difficulty. John 15:11, "These things I've spoken unto you that My joy might be in you, and that your joy might be made full." Well, Mary is bubbling over with joy because it's in the Lord.

And notice the last two words of verse 47, "my Savior." Again, this is why she has joy. If God's not your Savior, you have no joy. If God is your Savior, you have oceans of joy. And the keyword here is really the word "my." There's a world of difference between "God is the Savior" and "God is my Savior." For God to be my Savior, that means Mary has a personal relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ. The word "Savior" means deliverer from destruction. It means rescuer from ruin. And Mary knows that her soul has been rescued. She knows that her soul has been delivered from sin and the consequences of it, because God is her Savior.

And so even Mary needed to be saved. Don't have any crazy ideas that Mary had an immaculate conception, and that she was sinless and the mother of God and, therefore, did not need a Savior. No, Mary was a filthy, rotten sinner, just like you and I are filthy rotten sinners, and she needed the grace of God to wash over her soul, and to remove the pollution and stain of sin; and she acknowledges that here.

Before I go on, I don't want to save this for the end of this message, I just want to insert it right now. I just want to ask you, "Is God your Savior? Is Jesus Christ your Savior?" because you need a Savior; and you'll not find it in religion, and you'll not find it in rituals or rules, you will only find it in a relationship with God in your heart and in your soul. And I've been mindful of some people recently that I've talked to about the Lord who need the Lord, how we need to learn what it is to press someone, not just tell them about the Lord, but urge them to make the Lord their Lord. That necessitates that you confess your sin, that you acknowledge to God that

you have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and that you're aware that the wages of sin is death, and that there's only one Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of a virgin, lived a sinless and perfect life, went to the cross and was lifted up to die in the place of sinners, was buried, was raised from the dead, and has ascended back to the right hand of God the Father. And whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

So I want to press the question to you, "Have you called on the name of the Lord to save you? Have you come to Him acknowledging your sin and trusting in Jesus Christ alone to save you?" If you have, then you can say with Mary, "God my Savior." But if you've never had this personal encounter with God through His Son Jesus Christ, perhaps today is the day that you need to come all the way to faith in Christ.

Let's continue to look here. Not only Mary's celebration, but in verse 48 I want you to see "Mary's humiliation before God." She says in verse 48, "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave." "He" again refers to God. I mean, I can't remember if I said this in the introduction, but I've taken a ballpoint pen and gone through this whole song and I've drawn a circle around every time I see "He," and my pen ran out of ink. I needed another pen because it's so repetitive: "He, He, He, He, He." That's just God, God, God, God, God. And I've drawn a circle around every attribute: holy, Mighty One, Lord, Savior. And it's just astonishing. No wonder she's so humble and refers to herself as a bonds slave. As she sees who God is, she now sees who she is.

And it just flashes to my mind, probably the greatest Christian book that's ever been written in the history of the world, John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. How does he begin? It's utterly profound. It's the magnum opus of all that he wrote, but easily the greatest of the Reformation, I think, of 2,000 years.

He begins with the knowledge of God and the knowledge of self, that all true religion flows out of, first, a knowledge of God and a knowledge of self; and his argument is you cannot have an accurate view of yourself until

you have an accurate view of God. I mean, you can never know how weak you are until you know how strong He is. You can never know how sinful you are until you know how holy He is. And it's having this affect on Mary, because in verses 46 and 47, she is beginning to express the knowledge of God, which in turn gives an accurate assessment of self. And because God is sovereign; therefore, she's a slave. "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave." The word "bonds slave," it's the Greek word *doulos*, and it just means a slave, one who has no rights, one who has no property, that your master owns you and your master's will has now become your will, and what possessions you have are, in reality, on loan from your master. And that's how Mary understands herself. High view of God always leads to a humble view of self.

And so she said, "He has had regard" - do you see that "regard"? Literally it means, "He has looked upon me, He has looked my way, He has singled me out of the crowd and He has set His gaze upon me as if I'm the only person alive. He has had regard with my optic vision, with tunnel vision. God has pinpointed me and He's looked upon me individually and personally." That's what this word means.

"He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave." The word "humble state" means a lowly - the lowly estate of my soul. And it is as if the eyes of the Lord roam to and fro throughout the whole earth looking to strengthen the one whose heart is completely His; and the eye of the Lord has looked upon Mary. And why has He looked upon Mary? Well, one, it's His sovereign discretion. But, two, because she's humble.

You see, God only works through humble instruments. He does not share His glory with another. **James 4:6**, "God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble." There's a message here for you and me, that if you want to be used greatly by God, you have to be greatly humble before God. And God looks upon Mary and sees the humble state of her soul. The word "humble" also means lowliness. She has humbled herself because of her knowledge of God and it has caught God's eye. It has drawn God's attention and focus to her.

And then she says at the end of verse 48, "for behold," - meaning, "see this" - "from this time on all generations will count me blessed, will count me favored by God, will count me unusually graced by God because of this assignment that He has given to me to play this special role to bring into this world through earthly means the Son of God to become the Son of Man." What a mission God has entrusted to Mary. And in a lesser way, God has given somewhat of the same mission to you and me, in that we are to bring the name of Christ to others. We are to tell others about Christ.

But this leads now to verse 49, and the last main heading that I want you to see, "Mary's recognition of God," because Mary now, what will come flowing out of her mouth from verses 49 to 55 are five attributes of God, five distinguishing character qualities of God. I mean, Mary's somewhat of a little systematic theologian. I mean, Mary knows sound doctrine. Mary knows theology. Mary knows who God is, and she now begins to express some distinctive features of God. These need to mark our lives as well.

The first is in verse 49, "God's power." "For the Mighty One has done great things for me." I mean, this points back to the time of the conception within her womb sired by the Holy Spirit who overshadowed her, and the impregnation within her now to join eternal deity to sinless humanity. She is not yet delivered, but by the power of God, this has happened. Surely a reference back to verse 35, in which Gabriel said, "The power the Most High will overshadow you."

And so the direct reference here is to this conception within her that only God could have done, only God could have done. And she acknowledges that it's "the Mighty One"; literally, *dunatos*. It means the Powerful One, the Dynamic One. That's who God is. In fact, He's not just the Powerful One, He is the All-Powerful One. "He is the Almighty One," Genesis 17:1.

And so this is very important, because Mary not only believes that God has a special plan for her life, but that God has the power to bring to fruition His plan. It's one thing for God to have a plan; but if it was left up to us, the plan would never come about, it would never come to be. But not only

does He have the plan for Mary, He has the power as a make-it-happen God to bring this to pass.

And the same is true for your life and my life. Only God knows the path that He has marked out for us. Only God knows the number of days that we have here upon the earth. But God has the power to bring His purposes and His plan to pass in your life. What an encouragement this should be to us. It's not up to us to bring about His plans. He must work through us and in us to bring about His plans.

The second attribute is also in verse 49 and it's "God's holiness." That's a powerful combination. God's holiness is now joined to God's power. And we read, "and holy is His name." The word "holy" has multiple layers of meaning. First and foremost, it means that God is transcendent, that God is majestic, that God is high and lifted up, that He is a cut above us. And there's separation between God and us; He's on another level. The secondary meaning is that God is sinless, that He's flawless, that He's perfect in His character, in His being, in His plans, in His acts, in His judgments. Everything that God does is perfect.

And so Mary recognizes this, that "if this is God's will for my life, then it's perfect. And what God has done in me is perfect, and what God will do through this Child is perfect." So not only are His plans well-conceived and He has the power to bring them about, but that they are perfect plans that He can bring to pass.

The third attribute is in verse 50, and this is an attribute of which we need to be reminded, and it's "God's mercy." "And His mercy is upon generation after generation."

Looking back throughout all of the Old Testament, you know, sometimes people draw a wrong conclusion that the God of the New Testament is a God of love and the God of the Old Testament was a God of wrath. Nothing could be further from the truth. There was so much mercy in the Old

Testament, and there's so much wrath in the New Testament. Malachi 3:6, again, "I am the LORD, I change not." And so Mary is extolling the Lord that His mercy is upon generation after generation after generation. This goes all the way back to the garden when Adam first sinned, and God pronounced a curse on the woman and the man and the serpent and the whole earth. But even then there was mercy, as God clothed them with clothes that would depict a sacrificial offering that one day would be made. In the midst of wrath He remembers mercy.

What does the word "mercy" mean? Well, the word "mercy" means God's pity towards those who are helpless and hurting, speaks of God's compassion. It means God's tenderheartedness. And I think we need to remember this, because we who love the sovereignty of God, we love these bold attributes of God, we need to remember that it's married to His mercy.

I was reading Spurgeon this week, and as only he can say it, he had a powerful sentence – I'm going to paraphrase. But in essence, is when God's attributes sing, no one attribute can drown out another attribute, that they all sing in harmony together. And so let us be reminded that God is not a stoic sovereign, and He's not a robotic ruler. He's not a mechanical manager of the universe. He's full of mercy towards His people, and He's tenderhearted towards us; and Mary praises God and His mercy. That's a quote from Psalm 103:17, by the way: "His mercy is upon generation after generation." The idea is it's an inexhaustible supply of mercy. He can never run short of mercy. He always has mercy for His people.

But here's the qualifier. At the end of verse 50, here's the qualifier; and I need to bring this to your attention, because He doesn't show mercy to everyone. He doesn't show mercy to those who are in hell. It says, "toward those who fear Him," to those who take God seriously and who take His word seriously, and who tremble before the Lord. This is a distinguishing mark of saving faith. Let me say that again. A distinguishing mark of saving faith is that you are a God-fearing person, and you will never outgrow the fear of God. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." That's the first step into the kingdom of God is the fear of the Lord. And Ecclesiastes, I think it's 12:13, says, "And the end of all is this:

fear God and everything in between." And how is the unbeliever described? Romans 3:18 says that "there is no fear of God before their eyes."

So I just need to say again: saving faith is never flippant, it's never casual, it's never laidback, it's never cool, it's never easygoing. There is always a trembling in the soul of the one who repents of their sin and entrusts their life to the One who died upon the cross for their sins. And I've got a verse I need to give you right now, Isaiah 66:2, and it's probably the verse that God used in my life to confirm my call to preach. Isaiah 66:2, "To this one I will look." And I thought, "Oh, God, I want You to look my way." "To this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite to spirit, and who trembles at My word." I thought, "Lord, I'm not this and I'm not that, and I don't bring this to the table; but I do tremble at Your word."

This word "tremble" means to be fearful. It means to have terror, that you take God very, very seriously. And so this is the one who knows mercy. And if there is no fear of God in the soul, there will be no mercy for you until you come under the deep conviction that produces fear.

There's a fourth attribute here in verse 51. I mean, Mary is a systematic theology in herself here. I mean, this is a walk through the attributes of God. In verse 51, "God's sovereignty." Verse 51, "He has done mighty deeds with His arm." The verb "done" means make it to happen. God's not a mere spectator of what's going on down here; no, God has His hand - He's got the whole world in the palm of His hand, and God is causing to happen mighty deeds with His arm. Again, this is an image of the power of God to do whatever is in His heart to do.

Notice it says, "He has scattered those who are proud." He just brushes them aside. He casts them away. He disperses them. "They are proud," it says, "in the thoughts of their heart." No, the only one who will enter into the kingdom of God is one who comes like a little child, trusting, believing.

Verse 52, "He has brought down" - He has taken down, He has put down - "rulers" - meaning potentates - "from their thrones," - meaning God has just removed them from office, from their seats of authority, from their chairs of state - "and has exalted those who are humble." God delights in reversing the tables of this fallen world. God delights in removing the proud and God delights in promoting the humble; and this is in direct reference to even what God is doing in Mary's life. There could not have been anyone off the radar than Mary, in a remote place, a young teenage girl, unmarried; and this is who God picked up, and elevated her to be the earthly mother of the heavenly Son.

Verse 53, "He" - God - "He, God, has filled the hungry with good things; and sent away the rich empty-handed." Once again we see how God just likes to flip everything in this world system. And right now it looks like the rich are getting ahead and the poor are being trampled down. Wait till you see what God does at the end of this age; it's going to be a total, complete reversal; and God will elevate the humble and the poor, and God will cast aside rulers. And God will be the Judge of the judges, and He will be the Ruler of the rulers, and He will preside as King of kings and Lord of lords!

Verse 54, "God's faithfulness," God's faithfulness. "He has given help to Israel His servant." Their purpose is to serve God in remembrance of His mercy. In Mary's day it had been four hundred years since there had been a prophet. Four hundred years the heavens have been as brass. Four hundred years God has been silent; and it would appear that God has forgotten Israel as though they have been set aside forever. But, no, God has given help to Israel His servant in remembrance of His mercy. And Mary understands that now, at this time, there would be a dam break of His mercy that would come flooding out of heaven, really, into her womb, and would come out of her would be the Son of God, the Son of Man, and God would remember mercy to Israel.

We need to remember that, even today as there are fanatics who say that they will extinguish Israel. It will never happen. It will never happen. God will remember His mercy to Israel. And at the end of this age before Jesus Christ returns, Romans 11:26 says that "all Israel shall be saved." And there

will be a dramatic conversion of Jews to come to saving faith in Jesus Christ, and they will mourn for Christ as one mourns for a firstborn son, and they will call upon His name and they will be saved.

No, God will remember His mercy. They have not been set aside permanently. In verse 55, "as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants" – for how long? – "forever." Not for a few centuries, not for a brief period of time, but forever and ever and ever. No, there will be a salvation that comes to the nation Israel, just like salvation has come to you. It will be in the person of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way of Salvation. They will repent of their hard-heartedness. Right now they're an apostate nation. Right now they are under the curse of God. Right now they are suffering their just do because of their unbelief. But the time will come when God will remove the scales from their eyes, and they will behold Christ as God removed the scales from your eyes to behold Christ, and the day is coming when they will believe.

So what does this say for you and me today? This says for you and me today that we need to emulate much of what we see in this precious young woman Mary. We do not hold her up as a co-redemptrix. We do not hold her up as the only way we can get to Jesus – none of that. We see that she is a sinner, like anyone else, who needed a Savior; and there is only one Savior. And she humbled herself and repented of her sin and called upon the Lord, and her heart and her life was filled with Scripture, Scripture, which gave her this towering view and understanding of God. This is what God must do in each and every one of us.

And so I press the question to you again: "Has there come a time in your life when you have believed in Jesus Christ?" And by believe, I don't mean just intellectual head knowledge, and I don't mean just emotional feelings. I mean as a decisive act of your will, have you turned away from a life pursuit of sin and have you turned to Jesus Christ? Have you thrown yourself upon His mercy? Have you said, "God, have mercy to me, the sinner"?

If you have never done that, today is the day. If you've never done that, come to Christ today, this moment. When you entered this building, that may not have been on your mind. It may have been, "I'm just coming to one more church service to do my thing and then I'm going back home." But perhaps during this time, God has been actively at work in your heart and in your soul and has revealed to you your need for a Savior. And if you have never come to Christ by faith, I plead with you, I beg you, I beg for your soul to this day, receive Christ as your Lord and Savior. There is no other hope. There is no other Savior. For those of us who have believed in Christ, let us reaffirm our commitment even deeper to our Lord, and let us grow in the knowledge of our great God. Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, how we praise You and thank You for Your goodness to us, that You have remembered mercy when You should have remembered wrath. But Your mercy triumphed over Your judgments, and Your mercy has flooded our souls; and for this, we are eternally grateful. I pray that everyone in this house of worship today is under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and have firmly committed their life to Him. May no one leave here today without Christ. I pray this in His name. Amen. [End]

"Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." God bless you.