

# Advent 2016 JOY

## Christmas Songs

### Luke 1.46-56

Joy expands when the Kingdom comes

#### Why Mary's Joy?

##### God worked on her behalf (v.48-49)

- He saw her as she was – weak, troubled, inexperienced
- She was fully known and fully loved
- She was fully known and wholly useful
  - Why? She was willing to let her faith lead to obedience instead of her doubt shackling her in disobedience (v.45)
  - The only people not useful are the unrepentant and proud
    - “A repentant pastor with a repentant people is God’s most powerful instrument for ministry” – Twitter @EdStetzer
  - He used her powerfully – written into God’s story, all generations call her blessed

##### God treats people with mercy (v.50)

- Those who fear Him
  - Proper reverence
  - Familiarity doesn’t breed contempt
  - Holy is His name – merciful in His actions
- Generation to generation
  - This is not trickle down mercy but year over year mercy
  - He has a track record of mercy toward those who fear Him

##### God doesn’t tolerate injustice (v.51-53)

- He opposes the proud (v.51)
  - The strength of His arm is not flexing for show – it has a purpose
  - He scatters the proud with the sweep of His arm
- He deposes the entitled (v.52)
  - God reminds us that the world is not all about me
  - He exalts the humble because they get that
- He reverses our assumed values (v.53)
  - Working underneath all of these statements is the assumption that if I have it easy, God must like me more than those who don’t (Luke 18 – Rich Young Ruler)

- Messiah's Kingdom turns the world upside down because the world is upside down to begin with (Luke 4)
  - As it expands, joy expands

### **God keeps His promises (v.54-55)**

- He has not forgotten or forsaken us
- This is a single story God is telling
  - The Messiah will come
  - The Messiah will bring the Kingdom
  - The Messiah will ready a people
  - Only through His death and resurrection
  - The Messiah will make everything right

### Questions for Discussion

\*\*\* It's always good to reread the passage from the sermon to make sure it's fresh as you discuss these questions.

1. The argument throughout the sermon was that joy expands when the Kingdom comes. Have you seen this in your own life? Where and when? To whom did it spread? How?
2. Mary was fully known and fully loved and wholly useful to God. On a 1-5 scale, how much do you believe that to be true for yourself? Why did you rate it that way? Do you have more trouble believing you're fully loved or wholly useful? In what ways does pride lessen usefulness in the Kingdom?
3. God has a track record of showing mercy to generations. Is that true in your family? If so, how have you seen it? If not, what do you owe the generation to come to demonstrate God's mercy? What role does joy play in enticing the next generation to fear God?
4. Reread Luke 4.18-19. In some ways, this is the launching message of Jesus' ministry. How do these verses reflect what Jesus did, said, and modeled? What examples can you think of? How are these values different than the typical values found in the world? How often was joy the result?
5. Where are the injustices (places where the values of Jesus are not cherished or followed) in your world that need to be addressed? What is your role in addressing it? How will that release joy into the world?