

Luke
See Jesus
All God's People Sing
Luke 1:46-80

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Both Mary and Zechariah get a personal visit from an angel named Gabriel who informs them that God will be giving them a child through miraculous means.

[Read Luke 1:39-80]

From cover to cover—Genesis to Revelation—over and over, we see the people of God singing to God about God.

Sin and stress, both in us and around us, can have a corrosive effect on our ability to praise our God. But God's commands will always be accompanied by God's empowering grace, so that through God's faithful grace, we can remain faithful to Him.

Three sources of spiritual warmth that both Mary and Zechariah drew from for their songs, and that we also can rely on to thaw and stoke our own passionate praise:

I. Heat Source #1: A Continual Submission to God's Sovereign Plan.

We can see here that Mary has already chosen to believe that God's plan for her life is better than the one she had:

Luke 1:48-49 "...For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me..."

We can see this cheerful submission again in Zechariah's song:

Luke 1:76-79 "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins,⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

The events that actually made up Mary and Zechariah's lives were not part of their original plans.

You really can't submit to something that was your idea to begin with.

When we submit to God's redirections, we are reaffirming the foundational truth that there is only one God in the universe - and it is not me or you!

If you're still struggling to work up an affection for God that would lead to heartfelt praise, your problem may not be knowing that God *is* God, but that you're not *happy* He is God.

God's sovereignty is not supposed to be simply a statement of fact. It's supposed to be a source of praise from His people. Each sovereign redirection is a chance to imitate Mary and Zechariah and literally all of Heaven by humbly delighting in God being God.

II. Heat Source #2: Celebrating God's Finished Work

Luke 1:50, 54-55 “And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation...⁵⁴ He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, ⁵⁵ as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Mary is thinking back to all the stories of God's faithfulness in Israel's history - the generations of her people that God has had mercy on, helped, and spoken to.

(See 1 Samuel 1 & 2 for another similar song – the story of Hannah and the birth of Samuel.)

The most stunning thing about these songs celebrating the finished work of God is that in Luke 1 Jesus hadn't even been born yet.

We are on the other side of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection! We don't have to look all the way back to the Exodus from Egypt to celebrate God's redemptive work; we can look to the Cross!

If we are going to be passionately singing God's praises for our whole lives, we need to make the work that God accomplished through Jesus an “every day carry” kind of thing.

The finished work of the cross needs to be closer to us than our wallets and keys. It needs to feel more familiar to us than our cell phones.

The finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf isn't just some add-on to our lives that makes things more convenient or comfortable. It is the very source of our life and the source of our worship.

If we are not careful and not deliberate, even the glorious reality of God's finished work on our behalf can become stale.

The hard work of worship is simultaneously holding on to great biblical truths with one hand and connecting them to real, personal stories and circumstances with the other. But the fruit of that effort is real, heartfelt, passionate worship.

III. Heat Source #3: The Inevitability of His Eternal Victory

Our cheerful submission to God's sovereign plan and our joyful celebration of His finished work would both be worthless if not for the inevitability of His eternal victory!

1 Corinthians 15:19 “If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.”

Mary rejoices in a salvation that hasn't quite happened yet (**Luke 1:47**). She knows this is going to end well for her (**Luke 1:48**), and she was so convinced of the Promised Messiah's victory, she is singing about the effects of it in the past tense (**Luke 1:51-53**). She sings as if it already happened!

Zechariah does the exact same thing in his song just a few verses later. (**See Luke 1:76-79**)

Our songs can be even more confident than these. They were seeing the beginning of the end. We know the whole story!

[See Revelation 7:9-10, Revelation 21, Revelation 22, 1 Corinthians 15:50-56]