

Reflection Questions: Luke 1:39-56

For the message, "Mary's Revolutionary Christmas Song" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on December 16, 2018

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Luke 1:39-56

A summary of the message: When Mary visits her relative, Elizabeth, she is greeted by words of blessing by Elizabeth as well as a leaping baby in Elizabeth's womb. Mary then breaks out in a revolutionary song about God turning the world upside down and right side up in the baby she is carrying who will be God's chosen King to bring God's peaceful kingdom.

Key Quotes:

- NT Wright, "It's one of the most famous songs of Christianity. It's been whispered in monasteries, chanted in cathedrals, recited in small remote churches by evening candlelight, and set to music with trumpet and kettledrums by Johann Sebastian Bach.... It's the gospel before the gospel, a fierce bright shout of triumph thirty weeks before Bethlehem, thirty years before Calvary and Easter.... It's all about God, and it's all about revolution. And it's all because of Jesus—Jesus who's only just been conceived, not yet born, but...who has made Mary giddy with excitement and hope and triumph."
- John Ferguson, "God for the moment allows the the arrogant and the proud to continue in their hate that is so strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men while he patiently calls....But there will come a day, V-Day — the Day of Victory known throughout the documents that make up The Scriptures as "the Day of the Lord" — when God will say no more. His kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven, and finally, there will be the peace on earth we all long for."
- Joni Ereckson Tada, "On this side of eternity, Christmas is still a promise.... Every Christmas is still a 'turning of the page' until Jesus returns. Every December 25 marks another year that draws us closer to the fulfillment of the ages, that draws us closer to home. When we realize that Jesus is the answer to our deepest longing, even Christmas longings, each Advent brings us closer to his glorious return to earth. When we see him as he is, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, that will be 'Christmas' indeed!"

Let's get started...

QUESTIONS

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- What grabs your attention in this text? How are you challenged, convicted, encouraged, or surprised by this text?
- How does this text help us to understand our personal stories in the light of God's story of redemption? How does rooting yourself in Mary's revolutionary song keep you from sinking into despair?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- How does this text help us to understand the kind of church we want MHC to be? How do we live in the tension of the promise of the peace of God's coming kingdom and our current world "where hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men"?
- How does this passage serve as an invitation for us to join God's mission?

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- How does this text serve as Good News for those outside the faith? What kind of new life / future in Christ is this text calling our city to experience?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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- _____
- _____