

# My Soul Magnifies the Lord

Christmas 2020

**Sermon Two:** My Soul Magnifies the Lord because He Honors the Humble.  
December 13, 2020

**Opening Illustration:** Are you a “nobody”? Another very common theme in Christmas movies and tv specials is the idea of our significance.

Example #1—George Bailey, in the classic movie, “It’s a Wonderful Life,” feels like he wastes his life living in the shadow of other people. He feels like a “nobody” surrounded by “somebodies” and other “nobodies.” The lasting beauty of that movie is that George is shown how much impact he really had on others. He was not only “somebody” but as his brother would call him at the end of the movie, he was the “Richest man in town.”

Example #2—Ebenezer Scrooge, in any of the wonderful adaptations of “A Christmas Carol,” is somebody who is completely obsessed with being “somebody”. He measures everything by money and reputation in his little business circle. In this story, the ghosts of Christmas show him that the more he tries to be a “somebody,” the more of a nobody he really is.

The common theme is this—God uses nobodies to bless everybody, but somebodies really bless nobody.

## I. Introduction

### A. God doesn’t want to support our idolatry.

1. **Isaiah 42:8** "I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.
2. We can have many idols. We can have physical literal idols, such as statues that we worship. We can also have metaphorical idols, like the desire to be important or respected by others.
3. My point is this: We are often overwhelmed by the fact that God chooses to use us. Why? Because who are we (ultimately) in the grand scheme of things? We are nobodies!

### B. God works in truly mysterious ways.

1. **Isaiah 55:8-9** "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. <sup>9</sup> "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.
2. We tend to be so concerned with how we appear to others, and so concerned about our own glory, that we may very well end up virtually unusable.

### C. Mary was a nobody...and so are we.

1. In our text today, we will wonder with Mary at the amazing truth that He uses regular people...humble people...normal people to do His wonderful will.
2. Mary’s magnificence here is simply that she is not magnificent at all. That’s why magnifies the Lord.

## II. The Reaction: My Soul Magnifies (Luke 1:46-47)

### A. What does it mean to “magnify” the Lord here?

1. This the Greek word *megalunw*, which means: “figuratively, as recognizing the greatness of someone's name or reputation [Friberg].”
  - a. We see the word magnify and we think of two things (as John Piper puts it):
    - i. To make something really small look bigger. Microscope.
    - ii. To make something really huge, that is far away, look more like its actual size for us. Telescope.
2. When we “magnify” the Lord, we are not making Him bigger or more significant.
3. Instead, when we magnify the Lord, we are recognizing more clearly just how big and amazing and transcendent He really is.

### B. What does this really look like?

1. It shows itself primarily by joy in Christ.
  - a. This joy in Christ sharpens our focus.

- b. This joy is real, actually affecting us.
- c. This joy fixes our eyes on God in everything we do.
- d. This joy humbles us and leads us to point away from ourselves and to Him.

### III. The Reasons My Soul Magnifies (Luke 1:48-56)

#### A. I magnify the Lord because He condescends to magnify me (v. 48).

1. Why does God even bother with us? We are nobodies!
  - a. **Psalm 8:4** What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him?
2. He has regard for me, His slave (48a)
  - a. The idea of “having regard” here renders the Greek word *epiblepo* (*epiblepw*) which means to “look upon,” or “to notice.”
  - b. God notices Mary, a nobody. God looks at her. She gets His attention!
3. From now all all generations will call me blessed (48b)
  - a. Tell me, is there any person more widely known among outsiders and non-believers in our culture than Mary, the mother of Jesus? Maybe a few, but not many. Almost everyone know who she is.
    - i. She is a somebody!
    - ii. She is a somebody simply because God made her a somebody. He made her significant. Now, generations upon generations call her somebody.

#### B. I magnify the Lord because He ministers to me (vv. 49-50).

1. He has done great things for me.
  - a. Notice that she says that HE has done great things. Not her.
  - b. What are these great things?
    - i. The constant blessings she has experienced her whole life.
    - ii. These specific blessings that will forever change her life.
2. He is holy.
  - a. There is nobody like this God!
  - b. He is entirely set apart in His character and His glory!
3. He is perpetually gracious to every generation that honors Him.
  - a. ILL: “You can take that to the bank!” The graciousness of God toward those who delight in Him is not a “hope so”. It is an “absolutely!”
  - b. What would your life be like if God treated you exactly as your attitudes and actions demand?
  - c. What would your life be like if God didn’t treat you graciously?

**Point:** Now that might be a movie idea! In addition to “It’s a Wonderful Life,” we could have “Here’s the horrible life you really deserve.” I don’t think that would bring people in, though ☹️.

#### C. I magnify the Lord because He shows Himself mighty to me (v. 51)

1. He shows Himself mighty in acting on behalf of nobodies.
2. He shows Himself mighty in acting against all the somebodies.
  - a. He “scatters” the proud.
  - b. Notice that this pride doesn’t necessarily show up in the person’s actions—it is the pride of their heart. Sometimes the most arrogant person in the room can be the quietest.

#### D. I magnify the Lord because He breaks the pride of magistrates (v. 52).

1. The present government is in God’s hands.
  - a. Romans 13:1-6
2. The present government is temporary.
  - a. Here’s a wonderful and soothing thought: One day the entire world will be under the absolute authority of the Son of God.
    - i. **Isaiah 9:6-7** For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.<sup>7</sup> There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and

righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

- b. Here's another wonderful and soothing thought: God will exalt the humble (v. 52b)
  - i. **1 Peter 5:6** Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

**E. I magnify the Lord because He demonstrates His mercy (vv. 53-55).**

- 1. He fills the hungry and sends the rich away empty.
- 2. He remains faithful to the people of Israel, regardless of their imperfections. He is also faithful to us.

**Final point:** Jesus is a somebody who took the form of a nobody for everybody so that anybody who knows that they're a nobody could become somebody in Him.

See Philippians 2:5-11

**IV. Conclusions**

- A. **The Dispositional Challenge**—Are you a “nobody”? How do you feel when someone treats you like you are a nobody?
  
- B. **The Distractional Challenge**—Are you so caught up in the busyness of this life, that you have not yet magnified the Lord?
  
- C. **The Devotional Challenge**—Set aside some time to genuinely magnify the Lord.
  - 1. Please allow me to challenge you to spend time this week in quiet, simple devotion to the Lord.
  - 2. Please allow me to challenge you to begin now to prepare to develop devotional habits in 2021.

O, Calvary Bible Church, let's preach this truth to ourselves, each other and the world  
To the Praise of His Glory,  
Amen.