

BLESSED

Scripture: Luke 1: 47-55

Saturday, December 15, 2018

Blessed has become a Facebook meme and “feeling blessed” makes regular appearances in the posts. People treat images or post pictures of themselves enjoying a delicious meal or a great vacation, or a shopping spree at a favorite store. Blessed has come to mean living a life of privilege and comfort. Using the term has become a way of celebrating those moments when everything is going well and all seems right with the world—or at least one’s own little corner of it.

The blessedness Mary celebrated stands in stark contrast to our culture’s attitude. By our standards she does not look blessed at all. God has chosen her to be the Mother of the Messiah, but in practical terms what does that mean for her? She is from a poor family, a peasant girl from a small village. Friends see her as a disgrace as she is unmarried and pregnant.

Being the Mother of the Messiah became a mixed blessing. As she would watch her son be rejected, shamed and crucified. Despite all this, Mary praised God for honoring her.

Mary sings about God who saves not just souls, but embodies people. God fills the hungry not only with food, but with hope. Mary’s Lord lifts the lowly up, granting them dignity and honor. He also gives each who will believe a seat at the table and a voice in the conversation. Both in Mary’s song and Jesus’ ministry, we see the God who loves us as we are but does not leave us as we are.

Mary’s song magnifies the Savior for His love that will make creation whole. God’s saving judgment is for all of us. It brings us down from the pride that fills us until we can’t see either God or neighbor. It brings us from the shame that distorts our world view and convinces us that no one, not even God, could love us.

Mary experienced God’s blessing. Her blessing, like ours, is a cross-shaped blessing, “a condition of complete simplicity,” bringing true freedom, the priceless gift of God’s salvation.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for blessing us. Continue to love us and remind us that you will always be there for us as we go along on our journey with you. Thank you for Mary and for blessing her as she stood by her son. Teach us to be like Mary and always stand by us as we do your will. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Melanie Herr, Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church, Huntington,
me_herr@msn.com