

Christmas -- The Ultimate Possibility

Step One: We admitted that we were powerless over our dependencies -- that our life had become unmanageable. **Step Two:** We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. **Step Three:** We made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of God as we understood Him.

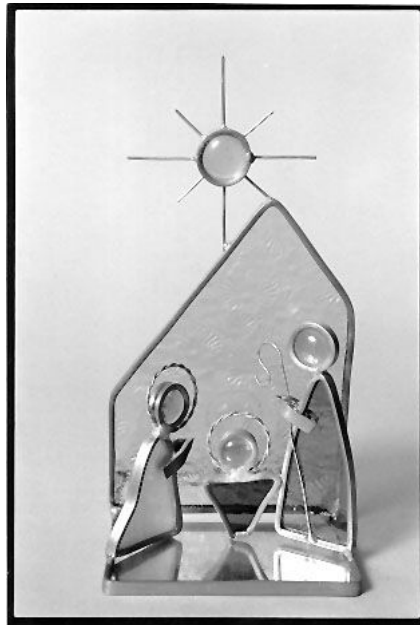
"With God, nothing will be impossible." This is what the angel told Mary when he announced God's intention to have her give birth to His Son, Jesus. Mary discovered this to be true. Her response to God's choice for her was an ecstatic song, flooded with praises to God and full of confidence in God's promise to accomplish His purposes through this humble woman.

Oh how I praise the Lord. How I rejoice in God my Savior! For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and now generation after generation forever shall call me blest of God. For he, the mighty Holy One, has done great things for me. His mercy goes on from generation to generation, to all who reverence him. How powerful is his mighty arm! How he scatters the proud and haughty ones. He has torn princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has satisfied the hungry hearts and sent the rich away with empty hands. How he has helped his servant Israel! He has not forgotten his promise to be merciful. For He promised our fathers -- Abraham and his children -- to be merciful to them forever. (From Luke 1)

This is a song that we, too, can sing. We have been rescued from places of fear and domination. God has reached into the places where our hearts hunger and has chosen to be merciful to us. God reaches out to a hurting world through people like us. Where our family and acquaintances might have given up on us and said we were hopeless or that our life was of little value, God names our value by demonstrating we are worth His saving efforts. God announces to all the world that He chooses us to carry His name and

His message to people who are themselves experiencing pain and exploitation.

The words of Mary's song reflect God's priorities in contrast to the way our world thinks. When life seems unfair and does not turn out the way we might have chosen, God shows us His unique way of caring for us and caring for others through us. Personal fulfillment and genuine recovery do not necessarily come through human greatness and success, but through sincere humility as we allow God to show us who we really are and what His good purposes are for our lives.



Jesus paid special attention to the poor, the despised, the hurt, and the sinful. He rejected no one. He ignored no one. And no one today is beyond the scope of His love or beyond His ability to help -- including us. God cares for us no matter what we have done or what we have suffered. Only this kind of deep love can satisfy our deepest needs, and mobilize us to continue in recovery. When our life seems most unmanageable and we are faced with

our powerlessness, we often feel that no one can understand or care. God both understands and cares and this is the message of the birth of Jesus Christ. Whatever it takes to enter into our experience and our pain, our God is prepared to do that. Whatever it takes to provide healing and restoration, God enthusiastically supplies. We can safely turn our lives over to Him.

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What is there in Mary's song that gives us hope?
2. How does it matter that God notices us?
3. What attitude does God invite me to have in order for Him to satisfy my life with good things?
4. What kinds of things do I hang onto that keep me feeling empty instead of full of God's goodness?
5. On a scale of 1 - 10, where is my faith level that God is available to do whatever it takes to enter into my experience and my pain and to do something healing for me?