

Sermon Notes

8th December 2019

Luke 1:26-38, 46-55

Advent: God the disrupter

Disruption for Mary

- The words used are favour (1:28, 30) and blessed (1:48) – all very positive words.
- But the reality was very challenging for a young girl:
 - The cost of not being believed
 - The cost of having doubts put in Joseph's mind
 - Nazareth was a small town, the cost of what village gossip would say
 - The cost of the shame to her and her family
- Later (2:35) there's a prophecy that 'a sword will pierce her own soul too' – she will live to see this promised child crucified.
- Yet she accepts (1:38) and even rejoices (1:47) and calls herself blessed (1:48).
- Mary shows us an ideal of discipleship.
- God's call doesn't always fit with our plans. It can be troublesome and costly for us.
- Look at the promises God gave:
 - The Lord is with you (1:28) – echoes of the name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:14-15)
 - This is part of God's plan to rescue the world (the name Jesus means 'rescuer'), which started with his promises to Abraham (1:55)
 - This is the fulfilment of God's promise to send the Messiah/king (1:32-33)
- Mary agrees. She accepts the disruption of her life. She wants to be part of God's plan.
- God calls us to serve him in some way, probably not as disruptive for us as for Mary. What are we going to do?

Disruption for the world

- The Magnificat (1:46-55) is Mary's song of celebration and praise.
- It actually promises disruption for the whole world – the status quo is turned upside down:
 - The proud are scattered, rulers brought down and the humble lifted up
 - The hungry are fed and the rich sent away empty
- Echoes of the turning upside down (or is the right way up?) that we find in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12). A promise for God's kingdom.
- This all seems to be something more than just an accident of history, but something God does deliberately according to his plan.

Disruption for God himself

- So, does God stand aloof and disrupt our lives, or even whole societies, at no cost to himself? Is that fair?
- No! The disruption starts with God himself. He only asks us to follow where he's gone first.
- The description in 1:32-33 seems to be full of words of honour, power and rule, but think of the cost behind it:
 - Look at Philippians 2:5-8 – he emptied himself, he made himself nothing, he became a servant, he humbled himself, he was obedient even to death on a cross
 - In Mark we met Jesus the servant king, who came to serve and not to be served, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45)
 - His enthronement was on a cross
- Accepting the disruption that God's call puts on our lives is Jesus' own example.
- He says that no servant is greater than his master. We follow his example (John 13:15-17).
- We can't walk exactly in Mary's footsteps – what she did can only be done once. But God has an individual call for us. What are we going to do with it?

Space for your notes

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