



**THE MIGHTY ONE HAS DONE
GREAT THINGS FOR US!**

**GRACE COMMUNION INTERNATIONAL, NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA
DECEMBER 15, 2019**

The Mighty One has done great things for us!

SCRIPTURE READING LUKE 1:46-55 (ESV)

“46 And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

The Mighty One has done great things for us!

48 For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

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51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;

53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away.

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54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

55 as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”” (Lu 1:46-55 ESV)



During today's sermon, we are going to consider how humbly Jesus came to this world and how humbly he continued to live in this world until his glorification after his resurrection and ascension.

The nation of Israel, chosen by God's grace, broke the covenant relationship God had established with them. Humanity as a whole, from the time of Adam and Eve, never had a sinless or perfect relationship with God the Father.

God, in his love for humanity, was not going to abandon us to the consequence of sin which is death. God loves his creation. He has not created humanity with the intention of destroying it.

His intent was always to have humanity be in relationship with him! That is the reason he gave us his eternal Son Jesus—not to condemn the world but to save all those who would come to faith in him (John 3).

As we saw in last week's sermon, Jesus came from heaven to earth in a way that was completely unexpected.

From his eternal glory he had from eternity in his relationship with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, he made himself nothing, as we read in Philippians 2:6-8.

From a human point of view, Jesus came to the earth as the lowest of the low.

In his wisdom, God chose an unwed mother to bear our Saviour.

That is why Mary the following:

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“48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; (Lu 1:48 ESV)

Mary knew very well that she was chosen because of God’s grace. God looked upon her humble estate of Mary and he chose her to come to earth in humility. Jesus’ whole life was one of humility.

He came to the earth as the light of the world yet no one recognized whom he wants.

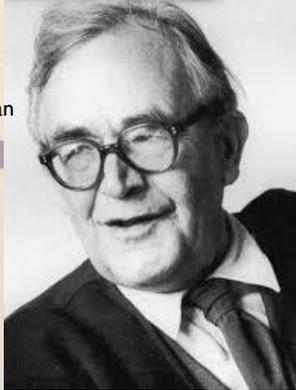
The following is how Karl Barth and his Church Dogmatics volume IV.2 page 167 describes Jesus coming and his life among us while on the earth.

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KARL BARTH - CHURCH DOGMATICS VOLUME IV.2 PAGE 167

Swiss Theologian
Born in Basil,
Switzerland.
(1886-1968)



<https://www.patheos.com/>

“The Royal man shares as such the strange destiny which falls on God in his people—and the world to be the One who is ignored and forgotten and despised and discounted by men.

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Among other men this One who is truly exalted is not as such a great man. He has nothing of what the world counts as recognition and authority and honour and success.

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His place is not one of the recognized peaks on the sunnier side of human life. His kingdom has neither the pomp nor the power, the extent nor the continuance of even the smallest of the human kingdoms which all the same it overshadows and questions. His power is present to men in the form of weakness, his glory in that of lowliness, his victory in that of defeat.

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The final concealment is that of his suffering and death as a condemned criminal. He who alone is rich is present as the poorest of the poor. As the exalted Son of man he did not deny the humiliation of the Son of God, but faithfully represented and reflected it even in the minutest details.”

What we have just read from Karl Barth about Jesus is true and it captures the humble life of Jesus on earth. I believe this is why even today the world does not recognize Jesus. He came to the earth in such a humble and unattractive state.

The devil has hidden from the eyes of the world the unforeseen and unanticipated life of Jesus to rescue humanity from eternal death.

Believing in Jesus is by faith. Just as the Jews and the Romans representing the Gentiles did not recognize Jesus the world in general still does not recognize who Jesus is.

Presently, with our physical eyes, we see kingdoms. We see the kingdoms of this world whether they be in North America, Africa or Asia.

Before his death, Jesus told Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). The kingdom of God continues to be considered as unimportant because it is a hidden from human eyes.

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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE TREASURE HIDDEN IN A FIELD, WHICH A MAN FOUND AND COVERED UP. THEN IN HIS JOY HE GOES AND SELLS ALL THAT HE HAS AND BUYS THAT FIELD.” (MT 13:44 ESV)

The kingdom of God is still not visible like the kingdoms of this world. Jesus compared the kingdom of God to leaven hidden in three measures of meal (Matthew 13:33). We do not see leaven in the bread. However, we see its effect. It is not visible to the naked eye like other kingdoms.

We cannot see Jesus the King of Kings and Lord of Lords with our naked eye. We always have access to him, but it is through faith and prayer.

There are no elections by the masses as practiced by the kingdom of this world. There is no visible physical organization like the kingdoms of this world.

So it was when Jesus walked on the earth. He was most invisible but the few.

He was worshipped by the Gentile kings as a king when he was just a baby or toddler. His family was not of royalty.

Later in life, he was not known even by his half-brother (James and Joseph and Simon and Judas Matt 13.55) and half-sisters that he was born to be the Saviour of the world. They did not know he was God in the flesh.

For most of his life, he lived perfectly as the son of a carpenter obedient to his heavenly Father and also perfectly honouring his physical stepfather, Joseph and biological mother, Mary.

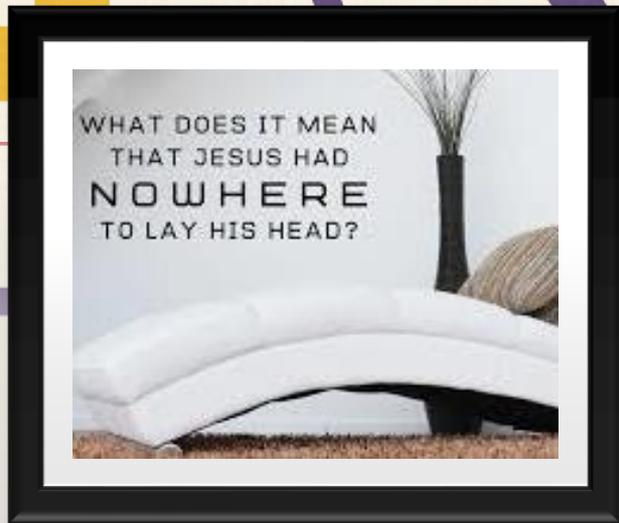
While on earth, it was not believed that he was the elect of God representing all of humanity. There is much evidence of this continued low estate in Scripture.

When he began his ministry, he did not even have a place to lay his head.

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“And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”” (Mt 8:20 ESV)



(From: Godquestions.org)

He was not well respected at all by those close to him. **“And Jesus said to them, ‘A prophet is not without honour, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.’ (Mr 6:4 ESV)**

The prophet Isaiah tells us that even physically, he did not attract particular attention. The prophet Isaiah described Jesus well in his prophecy found in chapter 53.

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HE DID NOT ATTRACT ATTENTION

Isaiah 53:2-3

²For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

-- NRSV

This describes Jesus very well, doesn't it? He had no stately form or majesty. His appearance was not particularly attractive. He would not have made the front page of some magazine because of his looks.

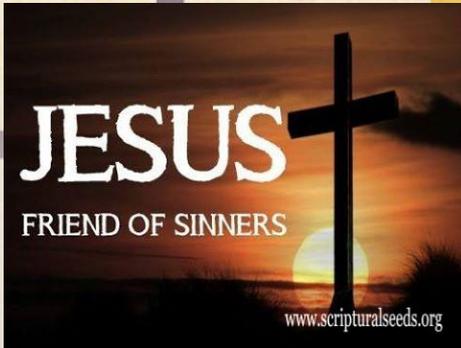
His birth as the Son of God was similar to his entire life on earth. It was held of no account.

Members of his own family thought that he was out of his mind, beside himself (Mark 13:21).

He was even accused of being in cahoots with Satan. **("And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, 'He is possessed by Beelzebul,' and 'by the prince of demons he casts out the demons'. (Mr 3:22 ESV).**

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**“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.””
(Mt 11:19 ESV)**

As we look at all these Scriptures, it is evident that Jesus came in shame. He was accused of all sorts of things. When he was condemned and judged by human standards. People accused him of being a blasphemer because he called God the Father his Father. He basically said that he was God.

He was betrayed. His disciples with whom he had lived and trained for 3 1/2 years deserted him when he faced the greatest trial of his life.

On the cross, others mocked him and taunted him.

They twisted God’s word to condemn Him.

On the cross, carrying the weight of sin, he felt the total separation from God as a man when he cried, **“My God, my God why have you forsaken me?”**

You might ask, “what does have to do with us?”

Let us now go back to Mary and think of her life experience. She felt blessed by God. She realized that from generations to come that people would see Mary and count her as blessed. From the heart, she said, **“For the Mighty One has done great things**

for me and holy is his name.”

Mary lived her life in an ordinary way. She was the wife of Joseph. Including Jesus, God incarnate, she raised at least six other children, four boys and at least two sisters.

She suffered greatly because of her perfect son. **“34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, ‘Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.’ (Lu 2:34-35 ESV)**

Like all the other mothers, she had to cook meals, wash clothing and loved her husband Joseph and her family. She kept hidden in her heart that Jesus was very special.

As disciples of Jesus, our life is also hidden in Christ. Our life is Christ which the Bible tells us is mystery. **“26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col 1:26-27 ESV)**

When we look at the world, just like Mary, Christians live ordinary lives. They are a source of many blessings to the poor, the sick and the destitute, as we see by the various organizations whose root is belief in Christ. Christians live ordinary lives either as single people, married, having children and all that entails, going to work each day.

However, society does not recognize us as adopted children of God. In many places the followers of Christ are actively persecuted. In other societies like ours, Christians experience some rejection. People, even those close to us, are not sure what to make of us as we follow Christ being united to him.

In centuries past and even now, the disciples of Jesus are being killed because of their faith. Some cannot get work. Some face strife in their family.

Choosing to follow Jesus brings conflict with the people we are the closest to. People in our own families can become our enemies, as we read in Matthew 11:36.

Because of our biblical beliefs, the church as a whole is ridiculed for following Jesus and his teachings to live as children of God because we do not hold the same values as a society around us.

Yet like Mary, even if she was unknown as the bearer of the Saviour of the world, we can rejoice. We generally unknown. **“26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful,**

not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” (1Co 1:26-30 ESV)

Like Mary, we are privileged!

We know with assurance who the pearl of great price is.

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This pearl of great price we know is Jesus. There is nothing in this world who and that is more valuable than he is. He is to be first in our lives when he reveals himself to be who he is.

Our responsibility as his disciples is to point people to Jesus, to this pearl of great price and then teaching them everything that Jesus is teaching us. We are to pass it on to others who come to believe in Jesus. **(Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.)" Matt 28:19).**

Although we do not physically carry the Son of Man like Mary did, he lives in us. We can rejoice and say with her. (next slide)



Let us pray!