

Mary's Treasure

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual friends and the consequences of not seeking God, using Mary's experience with Gabriel as a turning point in her life.

Duration: 30:43

Scripture: Luke 1:26, Acts 5:1

Topics: "Mary"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the visitation of Mary by the angel Gabriel. Mary, a young woman, was visited by the chief angel because this was an important message from God. She was so overwhelmed by the experience that she immediately wanted to share it with her older friend, Elizabeth. The speaker emphasizes the importance of seeking the things of God and warns against being foolish and only interested in worldly pursuits. He also highlights the responsibility of women in embracing the gospel and condemns those who do not seek God, stating that they belong to the devil and will go to him in death.

Transcript

Thank you, Lord, that we can meet here once again. Lord, we want to sit at your feet just like Mary did. Please quieten our hearts and our minds.

Lord Jesus, that we'll forget everything else and just cling on to what is from above. Amen. Amen.

Our text we find in Luke chapter 1, verse 26. Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth. To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David.

The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women.

But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive a new woman, bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus.

He will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. Then Mary said to the angel, How can this be, since I do not know a man? And the angel answered

and said to her, Therefore the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you, and therefore also the Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

Now indeed, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible. Then Mary said, Behold the maidservant of the Lord, let it be to me according to your word.

And the angel departed from her. Now Mary arose in those days, and went into the whole country with haste to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias, and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.

We'll read so far. Fred, many verses, and this portion contains so much. But I would like to put this all under the heading of the visitation of Mary.

Mary was still young. Elizabeth, her relative and friend, was already old. Mary was very unexpectedly visited by Gabriel, that angel of the Lord.

God sent him to her, to speak to her. This was a great experience for Mary. It was something marvelous to her.

It was so wonderful that she immediately wanted to share this experience with her friend up there in the mountains. She couldn't wait for that opportunity to share what she had experienced with her friend. It's interesting that Mary, while she was still young, had this old friend.

I remember once when I was in Europe, I heard about a youth conference that was being held in a certain congregation. The youth of that church said that they only wanted young people at that conference. No old people were allowed to attend.

They asked me what I thought about that. I said, well I think such a thing is rotten. Those young people are probably just living their own lives according to their own lusts.

They are in the world. Mary was still very young. Some people say she was probably not even 20, maybe only 18.

Or even younger. Elizabeth was old already and she was barren at that time. But Mary, this young girl, had this friend who was old already.

Do you take note of that? In the gospel age it doesn't mean anything. What counts is your spiritual state. Mary loved Elizabeth because she knew in her she had someone who she could speak about spiritual things with.

They could share things. Things of deeper value which were deep in their hearts. Mary was fortunate to find such a friend.

One who was faithful and upright, serving the Lord faithfully. Blessed is the person who has a friend who walks with God. Yet they are scarce.

But blessed is such a person. People who are united because of the things of God. Mary didn't have it in her heart just to be with other girls of her age and to speak about the things of the world or about boys and about worthless things.

No, she was concerned about the things of God. She wasn't drawn to other people her age. She was drawn to that old lady living in the hills who she knew she could open her heart to.

And I say again, such a person is blessed who has such a friend. Who has such a relative and friend. So when Mary had this experience, she couldn't contain herself.

She had this longing to go and be with her friend, to be able to share this experience with her. A person who is going through a difficult time, who has just experienced something which is heavy to carry, it's a great relief and a blessing to be able to go and share it with someone else. And that person can give counsel and advice.

And the person who was carrying the burden before can feel relieved of that burden and be free and happy after that. That's why the Bible says, carry each other's burdens so that you may fulfill the law of Christ. All that the Lord offers us is grace.

But He's got one law. And that is that we share each other's burdens, carry each other's burdens. Troubled and to be pitied is the person who's carrying a burden and he doesn't have a friend to share it with, to help carry that load.

But you don't find such people everywhere. They are scarce, even in the Bible. In the Old Testament we read about David and Jonathan.

In the New Testament we read about Peter and John. And here in this portion we read about Mary and Elizabeth. People who help each other along spiritually, not dragging each other down into what is wrong.

Now who's your friend? You are troubled if you have a friend that is not right with God and doesn't walk with God. One can only feel sorry for you if you have a friend that doesn't lift you up spiritually but who drags you down. Reminds us of Ananias and Sapphira.

Why is it that you became one with your husband in something which is wrong? Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said, Sapphira, why is it that you became one with your husband in something which is wrong? He said, the feet of those that carried out your husband to bury him are at the door to carry you out as well. Why together? That is the end of friends that are one in the wrong thing. If you have a friend that doesn't walk with God, part with him today.

Because you can never be a help to one another. So Mary was blessed to have this old friend who she could share spiritual things with. The New Testament speaks about this.

It's the fellowship of the saints. That's something wonderful. Before I continue, Are you women and you young ladies and girls taking note? Are you women and you young ladies and young girls taking note? Now here you find this young girl interested in seeking the things of heaven, interested in the things of God.

But you also find this older woman also interested in seeking the things of God. It's wonderful to find such women of different ages interested in seeking the things of God. But women who don't seek the things of God are really fools.

God isn't just God has entrusted the gospel to women. He's given it to you to make it your own. But if you don't, really then you are of the devil.

You belong to him and you'll go to him when you die. And you girls, if you are longing after the things of this world, not interested in the things of God, on Judgment Day, Mary will condemn you. And you will go to that place where the one is whom you've been living for.

And that's no easy place. Someone just told me this last week. He was relating about a certain minister.

Now, as you know, the evolutionists, they tell us that how many millions of years old everything is. And this minister said, well, just imagine what it will be like if you've been burning in hell for 350 million years. Just think about it.

And you won't burn 350 million. It will be forever and ever. Think about it.

Maybe you'll be sober-minded afterwards. And you won't think like a fool. If you see it in that light, then really no one should leave this auditorium without having made right his life with God.

Everybody should repent and turn from his wicked ways. Even a few, a wild animal in sheep's clothing. There are many of those.

So here are these two women, this young woman and this older woman, Elizabeth, seeking the things of God, interested in the things of God, not like many young people today who are just interested in the things of the world. Now, when Mary had experienced this, where the angel had visited her to tell her what God was planning with her. She saw Gabriel.

She saw the angel and heard exactly what he said. She experienced this personally. And God didn't just send any angel to Mary.

He sent to her the chief of the angels because this was such an important message. And when she heard this message and experienced it, her heart was so full, she said she can't keep quiet with this. She said she had to go to her old friend.

She said because her eyes have seen Gabriel, her ears have heard the message. But more important, far more important, a thousand times more important than seeing Gabriel was the message that she heard him bring her. The angel said, you will be with child and give birth to a son.

His name will be Jesus. You will be called the Son of God. And she responded by saying, but how is such a thing possible? For I have known no man.

And Gabriel said, it will be by the power of the Holy Spirit. The power of God will overshadow you. It will be no natural thing.

God will do this. Mary was poor, very poor. She was from a lowly family.

Perhaps there were not many families as despised as hers. And even the one she was engaged to, Joseph, was also not a prominent person. He was just a carpenter.

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