

Sermon Notes for December 17, 2006 A.M.

Morning: "The Prayers and Praises of Christmas" Luke 2:46-55; I John 5:14-15

Christmas is a time to praise God and to pray to God. The characters of Christmas were filled with prayer and praises. As our Church begins an expanded Prayer Room Ministry the study of believing prayer can inspire us!

- I. The **Confidence** supporting believing prayer— "And this is the confidence (joyful boldness) that we have in Him." I John 5:14
 - We are confident in His **grace**— I John 5:14
 - We are confident when we are **obedient**— Isaiah 59:1-2 "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear." John 14:13-15 "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. If you love Me, keep My commandments." I John 3:22 (1083) "And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."
- II. The **Content** inhabiting believing prayer— I John 5:14 "That if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."
 - Prayer is, first of all, for the **glory** of God
 - Prayer will change **you** before prayer changes your circumstances.

The Magnificat of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) is a beautiful, perhaps the most beautiful, expression of prayer and praise at Christmas. Here is Mary's praise to God at being chosen to bear the Son of God. It is a perfect example of humility and a model for believing prayer.

- The **Loftiness** of God's **Magnificence**— Luke 1:46-47
- The **Lowliness** of Man's **Significance**— Luke 1:48-53
- The **Lordship** of Christ's **Appearance**— Luke 1:54-55

"God humbles the proud, but He lifts up the humble."

- III. The **Comfort** growing out of believing prayer— "And if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions desired of Him." I John 5:15
 - ❖ I am changed into Christ's likeness when I pray.
 - ❖ God always hears my prayers in Christ.
 - ❖ Prayer is always the will of God in every circumstance.
 - ❖ Peace comes when I say, "Not my will but Thine be done."
 - ❖ Prayer strengthens me for the tasks of today.