**Luke 1:39-56**

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, [40] and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. [41] And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, [42] and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! [43] And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? [44] For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. [45] And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

**“True Bond Of Love”**

 We pray, “Thanks be to you, O Lord, that You have sent us the Word of Your salvation. Preserve it with us pure and unadulterated, and whenever we hear or read it, reveal Yourself to us as the Savior of our souls. Amen.” Our nation celebrates its birthday this week and the Declaration of Independence set the tone for what freedom meant. However, like the birth of anything, it is only the result of what was already conceived. In our day and age, we forget and even devalue what happens beneath the surface of things. In other words, July 4th is more than a day! “Much happened between the years of 1763 and 1776. The colonists felt unfairly taxed, watched over like children, and ignored in their attempts to address grievances. Religious issues rose to the surface, political ideals crystallized, and, as always, economics were the essence of many debates.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

 What formed in terms of freedom for this country, also turn us as Christians to consider a much grander freedom beneath the surface of the Church. July 2nd marks the minor festival called, “The Visitation.” It is about Mary visiting her relative Elizabeth. One bore the newly conceived Christ and the other six-month pregnant with John. Since praying to saints insulted the Gospel, Luther cleared up this story by saying, “Therefore, we do not commemorate this festival because of the mothers, but because of their offspring, on account of whom we should thank God.”[[2]](#footnote-2) The point is simple. What seems small is not so much when the magnitude of God’s love comes to us.

* **God gives proof that His Love tends to move in the most common way.**
1. Why is there this need to go from big to small?
* We hit the bullseye with Mary going to Judah, to a town, to a house, and finally to Elizabeth.
* She went because the angel had recently told her, “And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren” (Luke 1:36).
* This was more than a nice family visit, Mary’s greeting came with the greatness of God who was so small.
* It was a miracle for Elizabeth to see and say, “And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”
1. Like Elizabeth, we need to see the big deal that seems so small.
* The act of a sin or as we declare, “we are poor miserable sinners,” only scratches the surface to Jobs question, “Who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous?” (Job 15:14)
* Elizabeth reacted not to Mary being a mother, but the presence of the Lord who dared in His holiness to dwell as Savior among sinners.
* In other words, God became flesh to deal with what we share as our corrupted DNA code with a label of death that reads, “original sin.”
* Humanity cannot change our unholy basis, but God came in the womb knowing our need of salvation was big enough for Him to be small.
* **The Lord loves to reveal Himself as that new creation for us to leap over with joy.**
1. Here is joy the world has never copied, produced, or ever desired to celebrate.
* Yet, the Apostle John later proclaims, “we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).
* Of course, since God likes to humble the strong by the weak, is it a surprise to find John leaping over Christ in the womb?
* No social science at work only the Holy Spirit using Mary’s word to invoke joy from John and give faith to Elizabeth over the embryo of Jesus.
* What was small and insignificant held the glory of God fully able to forgive sins, overcome death, and defeat the devil.
1. Jesus the sinless Son of God has broken the mold of our fallen flesh to give true salvation.
* We like our options and freedom to choose, but John only had joy to say, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)
* Death proves none controls life, but Christ keeps turning to us confessing, “For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again” (John 10:17).
* The Devil wants despair over this old creation, while Jesus traveled our road from womb to the tomb promising He is the new creation standing in our place.
* Hearts are restless over life and so the Holy Spirit calls you, like Elizabeth, to see the smallness of God brings greater love that saves.
* **This love of Christ draws out of us a true confession and so you are blessed.**
1. There is always room to boast in the Lord for He has not forgotten us.
* Over all the generations and changes in time, God was mindful to keep His promise to redeem humanity and such grace has been given in Jesus Christ.
* Elizabeth could not keep silent but had to proclaim such Good News, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!”
* Mary was that woman who bore the Savior into the world just as Jesus bore the gift to be that Savior fruitful to God and man.
* Whether it was His conception, life, death, or resurrection Mary clung to Jesus for, “Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."
1. Boasting is all over the place today, but the smallness of God is the best thing to boast about.
* In the church, like Mary, there God is present in Christ making Himself known by the Word greeting the poor and despised so we can boast in Him.
* Boast over baptism for God has drawn you out from death and given you life, written your Name in heaven so we now rightly confess Him on earth.
* Boast over how Christ keeps speaking forgiveness to take all the bigness of our sin and cast it away by a simple Word heard from Him.
* Boast that by the Lord’s Supper, God dwells with us to forgive, strengthen, and go with us so that you are blessed all your days.

 We love big things as Americans, but that can also be a danger to freedom. The small sacrifices and struggles conceived from previous years is what made freedom ring true on July 4th, 1776. How does freedom look and hold up today in small ways? God has already proven the point. It was freeing for Him to be small. Rather than jumping right to the cross, He first cherished our humanity in the womb. The visitation of Mary reminds us not to constantly check on greatness. Certainly, a great day is coming when Christ will judge the living and the dead, but for today, God still visits us in small ways that are big. What seems small is not so much when the magnitude of God’s love comes to us. Amen. Now the peace of Christ that passes all understanding be with your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting. Amen.

1. http://www.ushistory.org/us/9.asp [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. House Postils, Vol. 7 360 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)