

The Lord Fulfills

2025-12-14 – Luke 1:39-56



The God who redeemed His people from slavery in Egypt has shown Himself to be a God who always fulfills His promises, even when the way He fulfills them seems impossible. Through the first coming of Christ, we see that God will continue to fulfill His promises in ways that seem impossible as He works to redeem His people. This week, we will look at how God's consistent character should draw our hearts to worship and reflect His glory as we await the second coming.

Worship in the lighting of the Advent candle

Morning, everybody. My name is John Braun, and this is my wife Nancy, and this is the reading for today.

From the moment in the garden when the woman and man sinned, the need for redemption became necessary. The problem evident from the fall was that humans could not redeem themselves. As generation after generation came and passed, salvation from sins remained outside our grasp.

But God, being rich in mercy, did not leave us alone. He chose our people and made covenants with them. Even when they inevitably broke their covenant, God did not forsake them. Through the prophets he gave hope.

It was thus he prophesied to Zephaniah:

Sing for joy, daughter Zion! Shout loudly, Israel! Be glad and celebrate with all your heart, daughter Jerusalem! The Lord has removed your punishment. He has turned back your enemy. The king of Israel, the Lord, is among you. You need no longer fear harm. On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord your God is among you, a warrior who saves. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will be quiet in his love. He will delight in you with singing. (Zephaniah 3:14–17)

Worship in the Word

Good morning, everyone. If you've got your Bibles, I want to invite you to open Luke Chapter 1. We're going to start today in verse 39.

And what a wonderful thing to see those kids up here singing. And wonderful to see all of you with how cold it was. I wasn't sure who all would brave the weather. So, but it's good to see you all here this morning.

The kids are doing another thing in second service. So, if you're able to stick around—about three songs—you'll get to see even more of them up here singing.

And thank you, Braun family, for doing the reading.

This morning, we are moving forward in Luke, looking at the first coming of our King as we look forward to his return, because he is coming again. Amen.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems

He Lifts

He Satisfies

And this morning, as we look at Good News of Great Joy, we're going to [See How the Lord Fulfills in His Mercy](#).

We're at a time of year where everything in our lives seeks to manufacture hope. You know, you set up the Christmas tree with all the nostalgia involved in that, thinking, oh, when we get this set up, we'll feel like we felt last year. And then you remember how you felt last year was, oh no, I need to figure out the Christmas meal, and oh no, I need to figure out what we're going to put under that tree, and oh no, my children are going to knock over all the things on the tree.

And maybe you don't decorate. Maybe you're like, I don't like this holiday because I feel lonely. I'd rather have my normal routine. Or you're dealing with travel or whatever it may be. But the reality of this holiday is that we fill this holiday with manufactured hope and manufactured fulfillment. And yet it is only the Lord who fulfills.

And so if we are not careful, we can make this season in our lives a season that does not exalt and glorify God. And if we are not careful in our lives, not just the Christmas season, but this is a reality that we face every day—because hopelessness is at the root of our society today.

If you listen to social media, one of the things you will hear is people talking about doom scrolling. It's where I've just given up on life. I'm going to sit on my phone and scroll and scroll and scroll. The other one I've heard recently is "bed-rotting". The idea is, it doesn't matter what I do, I'm gonna sit in my bed on my phone.

And you hear that, and it's funny, right? It's kind of fun. No, it's not, sorry. But a couple people looked like—but it's the reality of young people, and not just young people, because it's not just young people addicted to their phones. It's the reality that we see is that we live in a time that is hopeless, and we chase after everything.

We live in a time that is like all the concerns and realities of the book of Ecclesiastes. If we chase things down and get them, we don't get them and say, finally, I'm satisfied. We then turn to the next thing and chase the next satisfaction. This is our reality. We never receive a true fulfillment to our hope unless we first turn to the Lord.

And so that is what we are going to do this morning. We are going to look at a story, and I must confess to you, about half of the passage we are reading does not apply to you unless you are pregnant with the Son of God or pregnant with John the Baptist.

And so we're going to read through a portion of this passage and just move quickly, see a few key points, but we're going to center our time on Luke 1:50–55, and on the things that we should see as fulfilled in the Lord, because He Redeems, He Lifts, and He Satisfies. And if we look to him, we will find those three things to be true, now and for all eternity.

To that end, let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you for this day. Lord, we thank you that your name is holy. We thank you that as we come here this morning, we know that when we pray to you, when we cry out to you, you hear our prayers, and we know you are at work in this world.

We pray right now, Lord, that your Spirit would be moving in our midst, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what your word has to say. And Father, I pray you would be speaking to me and speaking through me, that these would be your words and not mine.

And we praise you, Lord, that you sent your Son and that he came in the flesh. Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man, and he died with outstretched arms on the cross for our sins. It is in his holy and precious name we pray, amen.

We are in Luke 1, verses 39 through 56. We're looking today at **how the Lord Fulfills in His mercy**. We're going to see He redeems, He lifts, and He satisfies as we come to the end of this passage. But we're going to start today in verse 39.

In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth.

Luke 1:39–40 CSB

In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39–40)

Now, “in those days” is referring to the days immediately following what we saw last week: that God incarnate, Jesus Christ—who is fully God and fully man—He is a king from the line of David, and He is the Son of the Most High God, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. That Jesus was announced to Mary. She was told, you will be pregnant, and your Son, you will name Him Jesus. He will be the Son of the Most High.

Now that announcement came, and now we're just a few days later, and she is traveling to see her relative Elizabeth. Why is she going there? Because when she asked Gabriel, how can I know this will happen? Because I'm a virgin. Gabriel said, see, the one who will be in you, He will be the blessed one, the holy one. And the one—you want proof of that—your relative Elizabeth who was childless is with child, for nothing is impossible with God.

And Gabriel said to her, behold, your relative Elizabeth is with child. So, she travels immediately to behold that. And so that's where she goes. She walks in obedience. Mary's response to Gabriel and her response to the Lord was, “I am the Lord's servant. May it be as you have said.” And so, she is going to behold that Elizabeth is pregnant.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and your child will be blessed! How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside of me. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill what he had spoken to her.”

Luke 1:41–45 CSB

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and your child will be blessed! How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside of me. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill what he had spoken to her.” (Luke 1:41–45)

Now again, you're not pregnant with Jesus or John the Baptist. This little portion of scripture is not for us, but it is for us to rejoice in how God has worked and fulfilled his promises.

But what is important here—there's a few things we can glean from these verses.

First and foremost, whenever someone asks why Christians should be pro-life, well, every life is made in the image of God. And we see in this passage Jesus in Mary's womb—conceived by the Holy Spirit—it's been about five, maybe ten days—and He's recognized. John the Baptist is recognized in Elizabeth's womb. They are recognized separate from their mothers. God values all life, and that's from conception to death.

Not for today but pray for our state as the assisted death bill goes into effect. Pray that the Lord would thwart that, that He would pull down the proud in that. Because as Christians, we should value life from conception to last breath.

So, this is where we go for pro-life. There are other places in scripture, but this passage differentiates mother and child, mother and child.

We also see here that Elizabeth, when Mary comes, she is filled with the Spirit and she exclaims! We see leaping for joy!

And as believers—even though, again, we're not going to be in this exact same situation—when we see the work of the Holy Spirit, when we witness it, we should be rejoicing! We should be leaping with joy for the work that God has done!

If you were here last Sunday, we heard a wonderful testimony. And when you hear that testimony, I hope that you're struggling—like I was up here listening to it before the baptism, and I don't know if you noticed, I start to get kind of excited—because it's just such a wonderful thing when people are sharing how God is transforming their lives.

We as believers should be looking for and anticipating and rejoicing together as we see God move.

These aren't the main points of this passage, but these are important things we can glean.

Lastly, Elizabeth says, ***“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill what he has spoken to her.”***

In this little section, we see fulfillment of things that God, through Gabriel, told both Zechariah and told Mary. And as we keep reading, we're going to see more and more fulfillment.

Because what is at the core of the incarnation of Christ—of God sending his Son into our midst—is that God is bringing about his promises. He is fulfilling his covenants.

And Mary said:

My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
because he has looked with favor
on the humble condition of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed,
because the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and his name is holy.

Luke 1:46–49 CSB

Mary's response to this:

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, because he has looked with favor on the humble condition of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed, because the Mighty One has done great things for me—his name is holy.” (Luke 1:46–49)

Now in these words, when we read them, they should take our minds—if we know the Old Testament well—immediately to 1 Samuel chapter 2. When Hannah prays to God and God gives her Samuel as her child, she gives a prayer in ten verses that very much matches how Mary prays here. She gives glory to God because it is a work that he has done. Mary is doing the same.

Mary is worthy of saying she is exemplary among people. But notice that Mary also says here, ***“My spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.”***

Where some get the Bible wrong is they elevate Mary beyond a sinner in need of a Savior, because that is who she is—that is who she recognizes she is. Scripture never claims more about her. All of the claims that elevate her higher than that are from at least 200 AD.

In scripture, when we read it faithfully, Mary is not to be belittled, but she is also not to be elevated beyond sinner in need of a Savior who walked humbly before the Lord. We should admire what she has done, but we should not elevate her beyond.

Look, it says, ***“Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed.”*** She's absolutely right.

If you've got a nativity in your house, you've got a little image of her in your house, and it's not to worship her, but it's to remind us that God chose to work in this incredibly unlikely way: the 12- to 15-year-old virgin that bore the Son of God. It's amazing.

And the way God works is worthy of being blessed and it's worthy of being praised, and that is what she is doing and that is what we should do as well.

So now from this point forward the passage shifts to something that really truly applies to us. The song goes on:

His mercy is from generation to generation
on those who fear him.
He has done a mighty deed with his arm;
he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts;
he has toppled the mighty from their thrones
and exalted the lowly.
He has satisfied the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering his mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he spoke to our ancestors.

Luke 1:50–55 CSB

“His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him. He has done a mighty deed with his arm; he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts. He has toppled the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he spoke to our ancestors.” Luke 1:50–55

Now with these words, the shift in the song goes from talking about Mary's unique point to what is true of all believers, Old Testament and New Testament.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems

He Lifts

He Satisfies

And we're going to see in this passage a big idea and then three ways that God reinforces it. And here we are going to [see how the Lord fulfills in His mercy](#). We're going to see that He redeems, He lifts, and He satisfies.

[His mercy is from generation to generation
on those who fear him.](#)

He has done a mighty deed with his arm;
he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts;
he has toppled the mighty from their thrones

and exalted the lowly.
He has satisfied the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering [his mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever](#),
just as he spoke to our ancestors.

Luke 1:50–55 CSB

First and foremost, look at the beginning and look at the end.

“His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him.”

Now, if you're a believer—if you fear God—this means you have a reverent awe of God. You recognize that He is the Most High above all. He is the judge. He is over every throne, dominion, ruler, and authority in this world, in the heavenly realms. He is above all. He is before all. He is the creator of all.

If you believe that, you have a reverent awe of him—you have a fear of him, as it were.

And if you fear God, you are one of the generations being spoken about in this passage. ***His mercy is from generation to generation.*** It's referring to those in the past who believed, those in the present who believe, and those in the future who will believe. And so that's for us today, if we believe.

At the end, it says, ***“He has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever.”***

And by the end of Luke and into the book of Acts, what we will see is the descendants of Abraham: there's the biological descendants and there are also the descendants spiritually—the stars in the heavens that God spoke of when he promised Abraham, your descendants will be like them. God is referring to his children. It will be too numerous to count.

So if you are here, this mercy is for all who believe today. It is for us if we believe.

And when we talk about mercy, we're talking about God's compassion towards us. We're talking about God's love towards us, though we do not deserve it. We are sinners deserving punishment for our sin, and yet God in his mercy sent his Son. And yet God in his mercy made covenants and promises to his people, and he has carried them out, and he is still carrying them out, and he will carry them out to the end of days.

So, his mercy is at the heart of everything we are going to see.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems - The Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or sin

He Lifts

He Satisfies

[See how the Lord fulfills in his mercy.](#)

As we move forward, we're going to see that He Redeems. And the key point here is: the Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or sin. He redeems.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy - He Redeems

He has done a mighty deed with **his arm**;
he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts

- Psalm 89: A display of the Lord's power to redeem His people with his mighty arm, for He is over all of creation

In the passage it says, ***"He has done a mighty deed with his arm; he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts."***

Now for a first-century Jew—as Mary is—if they were walking faithfully and if they were fearing the Lord, the language of the arm of the Lord would be tied to a few key passages. The quote that Mary is making here is from Psalm 89, which is ***a display of the Lord's power to redeem his people with his mighty arm, for he is over all of creation.***

And if you read carefully through the Old Testament, you will see references to the right hand of God and to his mighty arm over and over and over. And if you trace all of them, what you will find is they all go back to a specific moment.

First, when Moses is standing before a burning bush. And God says, "With a mighty arm, I will lead my people out of Egypt. I will redeem them."

And then when they get to the Red Sea, and when God has brought them out of Egypt but Pharaoh and his chariots and horsemen are coming to overtake them, God tells Moses, "Lift your right arm." And it's, of course, it's God's right arm—parts the sea, and the Israelites walk through on dry land. They are redeemed by God in that moment.

And to the proud that chase after them—the Egyptians—God scatters them and crushes them.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy - He Redeems

He has done a mighty deed with **his arm**;
he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts

- Psalm 89: A display of the Lord's power to redeem His people with his mighty arm, for He is over all of creation
- Exodus 15:13-17: The powerful arm of the Lord led the people out of Egypt when God and went before them in the promised land

What we see when we read carefully through the Old Testament is that the imagery of God redeeming his people is at the heart of the matter again and again.

Read your Old Testament carefully, and what you're going to hear is:

- "I am the God who brought you out of Egypt."
- "I am the God who brought you out of Egypt and brought you into the promised land."
- "I am the God who brought you out of Egypt with a mighty right arm."
- "I am the God who brought you out of Egypt, brought you into the promised land with my mighty arm."

This imagery comes again and again to the people of God in the Old Testament. And why? Because every time God brings it up, what is he saying? He's saying, "I bought you at a price to make you my people, and I am your God. Remember, I have redeemed you."

In the Old Testament, the imagery is the mighty arm of God.

In the New Testament, how did God redeem you? Mighty arms—the imagery we have in the New Testament is Christ nailed to the cross.

If you are a believer, the blood of Christ has redeemed you. If you are a believer, you know—or you should know—and you should rest in that truth. You don't need to go back and say, God, you're the God who brought the Israelites out of Egypt. You should do that—you should rejoice in that—but that's not where you should center your hope.

Your hope should be centered in the death and resurrection of Jesus. By his blood shed, you have been redeemed. You have been bought with a price. You are not the one who determines your value. He has paid the ultimate price for you.

What a wonderful promise.

When we read this passage, we know what they were anchored in their hope from the Old Testament. And our anchor is fully secure in Christ.

We know from John chapter 10, Jesus says, ***“All of my sheep know my voice, and I hold them in my hand, and I will not let anything snatch them away.”*** If God has bought you at a price, he will not refund you. He will not say, oh, they didn't measure up.

In this passage, when we read, ***“He has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts”***—well, I want to ask you, are you walking in pride in your faith?

And you could do that in two ways.

One, you could think that you are worthy of the redemption you have received. Because if you think you are worthy of what Christ has done because of the works you have done, I promise—if you could be worthy, Christ would not have been nailed to that tree.

In the garden, he prayed, ***“Father, not my will, but yours be done. If there's any way, let this cup pass from me.”*** And of course there was not. Otherwise he would not have died.

And so don't think that your works can save you. And do not walk thinking your works can save you. But also—and believers, hear me well—sometimes, sometimes we walk in pride in our unworthiness.

And give me a second to unpack this, because sometimes we think, even though Christ died for me, even though I've been redeemed, I'm unworthy of it. Therefore, I need to chase after earning back what he's already given.

Sometimes we hear that we're redeemed, we know we're redeemed, we know we're unworthy of it, and then we think, I'm going to measure up to what he has already done. And if we do that with the mindset of we could truly earn what he has done, it's us saying that we could balance scales that could never be balanced.

This is Ephesians 4. We talked about Paul urges the believers, because Christ has made you this, I urge you to walk worthy. But it's not that you walk worthy by earning your salvation. It's walking in the truth that you are redeemed.

Sin in scripture—the starting point of sin—is when we redefine good and evil on our own terms. When we say what God has said is good, no, we don't agree with that. It was the man and the woman in the garden when they ate from the tree. They say, God's made this all very good for us. We want something different. And they rejected what he said was good.

Let us not think of our redemption as something in our terms, but in his. Because if you are a believer, you have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. He will not change that it's happened.

If we're going to be transactional, the transaction's paid. Do not think for a moment that you earn it, or he's up in heaven—he's not Santa Claus deciding naughty or nice. If you are saved, it's because he has put you in the book of life.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems - The Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or sin

He Lifts - The Lord does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden

He Satisfies

He redeems. The Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or to sin. What a wonderful promise for us today.

And as we look at how the Lord fulfills in his mercy, the next thing we see is that:

He lifts - The Lord does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy - He Lifts

he has toppled the mighty from their thrones
and exalted the lowly.

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10: Hannah's prayer of how God opposes the "strong" and lifts the humble

"He has toppled the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly."

Those are the next words of the passage. And these words, of course, are from 1 Samuel 2:1–10. The whole theme of Samuel and Kings is that the Lord opposes the proud and lifts up the humble. Throughout the Old Testament, we see this principle again and again. We see that when people cry out to the Lord in humility, He does not leave them low. But we see when people walk in pride, they are brought low again and again.

Read carefully through scripture and you will see that anytime someone walks in pride, ultimately they are brought low. And when people humble themselves, the Lord lifts them up.

The beauty of reading through like Israel in the wilderness and in the promised land is that time and time again, Israel falls short. And why do they fall short? Well, they think they can do it in their own strength. They pursue other gods. They do all of these things that ultimately lead to the

Lord humbling them. He uses the nations around them. He uses all of these different things to humble them, famine and drought and all of these things—because he is trying to point them back to him.

But over and over in scripture, what we see is that when the people turn to him and when they cry out to him, he responds. That is a consistent theme. I mean, even the Israelites in Egypt—when they cry out in slavery, their cry reaches the Lord in heaven.

The Lord opposes the proud and he lifts the humble. That is a key theme of the Old Testament—and of course it is a key theme throughout the New.

Jesus, when he came—*he who was equal to God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped but instead he humbled himself and took on the form of a servant. And being made in the form of a servant, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.* And of course, the Lord lifted him up and exalted him so that at his name every knee would bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

When you read carefully through scripture, you see again and again that the Lord opposes the proud and he lifts the humble.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy - He Lifts

he has toppled the mighty from their thrones
and exalted the lowly.

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10: Hannah's prayer of how God opposes the "strong" and lifts the humble
- Ephesians 2:1-10: You were dead and now you are raised and lifted because of God's mercy and grace

And believers—believers—we should take this passage right to Ephesians chapter 2. You are dead in your sins. You are dead in your sins. You are a walking corpse, unable to do anything to change your status before God. **Yet God**, because he is rich in mercy and because of his great love, he has made us alive. He's raised us.

And then if you read Ephesians 2—if you remember—he doesn't just raise us, but he raises us to seat us in the heavenly realms beside Christ, where someday we will reign with him forever. We who were dead in our sin are made alive and are not just brought into the kingdom as servants, but as children of God.

The Lord lifts the humble.

We need to have this mindset among ourselves. We need to walk in humility before the Lord.

Our best example of this, of course, is Jesus Christ himself, who walked humbly on this earth. I mean, every action he did was in obedience to the Father. And because of what he has done, we are able to stand before the Father as well. He lifts because **the Lord fulfills in his mercy.**

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems - The Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or sin

He Lifts - The Lord does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden

He Satisfies

The Lord does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden.

If you're struggling today—if you're a believer and there is sin in your life that you just can't seem to overcome—I want to encourage you: humble your heart. Humble your heart and cry out to the Lord.

And I want to encourage you, when you fall to that sin the next time—I don't say this prophetically, I hope you don't fall again, but I know human nature, I know myself. I know we're all sinners.

But the next time you fall, cry out to Him right away. Cry out in humility. Say, “Lord, I'm glad I'm not a slave to this, but it sure seems like I am.”

When you cry out to him, you are saying, “Lord, I believe that you're the one who could lift me, and you are the one who does lift me.” You are acknowledging that it is not in your strength that you grow. It is not in our strength—it's the work of the Spirit in us and through us that transforms us to look more and more like Christ.

In those moments where we are at our lowest, what the enemy wants to do is the enemy wants to say, see, you are worthless. See, you're not worthy of the gospel. You're not worthy of the blood that was shed for you.

And that's like the one time the enemy speaks truth—but truth incomplete—because if we look to the gospel, of course we are unworthy.

And yet he died.

Of course we are unworthy, but he came—conceived, born of a virgin, lived a perfect life, died for our sins—though we are unworthy—rose and ascended into heaven where he reigns. And for all who believe—for all who fear—he has extended his mercy to us. He lifts us up. And so in your

sin, in your struggles, in your trials—don't look at those and say, they define me. Instead, look to him and say, "Lord, I am so glad that you are greater than this."

If we believe in him—if we look to him—He does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems - The Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or sin

He Lifts - The Lord does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden

He Satisfies - The Lord does not leave his children hungry and thirsty

And the last thing: He Satisfies.

The Lord does not leave his children hungry and thirsty.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy – He Satisfies

He has satisfied the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

- Psalm 34: Those who seek the Lord will be satisfied with what they find, while those that trust in their own strength will go hungry

In this passage, we see, "***He has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.***"

And the imagery here is not just about food. In the Old Testament—kind of the key theme from the Old Testament—one of the places you would go for this would be Psalm 34.

Psalm 34 is where it says, "***Taste and see that the Lord is good.***" Those who seek the Lord will be satisfied. Those who seek satisfaction through their own strength will be like young, hungry lions who walk away empty-stomached. It's kind of a weird image to us today, but that's what's there. That's Psalm 34.

And this isn't just a moment of Psalm 34 or one place. Look in the garden. The woman and the man are in a garden full of trees where every single tree has fruit pleasing to the eye. And yet the serpent says, what about that one? And it's the one God said no to. And they say, we want that one.

God, who made them rule over all of earthly creation, put them in charge of all of it—they said, that's not good enough.

Cain and Abel: God to Cain goes, he gives Abel favor because Abel offers a wholehearted sacrifice. Cain doesn't. And God says, why are you mad at your brother? Like, if you do what is right, I have enough favor for both of you.

And so, Cain kills his brother instead of doing right before the Lord.

Our eyes are not satisfied. The eyes of man are never satisfied. This is a reality.

My son, Levi, got him a Lego set a few weeks ago. I'm thinking I'm being dad of the year here. And he opens his Lego set and we build it. It's a Lego motorcycle and a little robber stealing from an ATM. And we put it together, and Levi—we get done with all the pieces, and he's got the—and he's flipping through the back of the instructions, and he sees a list of sets of other Legos.

And so he spends the whole time telling me about, Dad, what I really need is this helicopter. Dad, what I really need is this boat. Dad, I don't have a steamroller. How am I going to build a road? And thing after thing, he just starts talking. And it's not just this Lego moment. We got a magazine this week that had toys in the back of it. And he opened it, and all of a sudden he's like walking around the house saying, Dad, I need a crane. I needed this. I needed that. And I keep telling him, bud, but I love you—but even if you had all that, you're not going to be happy. And he's like, I will.

But you—if we got him everything, if we like sold our house and bought a warehouse and filled it with every toy that he wants—because it would take that much—to give you the extent of his eyes being unsatisfied right now—on Tuesday, as we were getting ready to go to school, I had to scrape ice off the front of the car. He saw the ice scraper. And he said, Dad, I want a toy version of that for Christmas. And I was just like, young man, what on earth are you thinking?

But I can joke about my wonderful son and his four-year-old eyes never being satisfied, but we are the same. We are the same. If we get something, we always think, I just need a little bit more.

If you have a perfect holiday, you're not going to get to the end of the holiday and say, now it is all good. Everything is wonderful. You know, like—and let's not be too optimistic. But I think that one of the realities is that we seek things that will not satisfy.

Read the book of Ecclesiastes. Solomon, who had all money and wealth—he had all the women a man could ever need and want, and no man needs that many. But the point here is he had everything he could have. He pursued everything. He had all wisdom and intellect. He pursued everything to its logical end.

And the key theme of the book of Ecclesiastes is when he got to the end, it was all vapor. He could see it, but when he grabbed it, wasn't there.

That is not just for King Solomon in the Old Testament. That is true for each and every one of us when we pursue the things of this world.

I wonder what you pursue that you think would satisfy you. When we do this—when we pursue these other things—we lose sight of what we already have, because if our focus is right, we have been redeemed by the blood of God. We have far more than we could ever ask or imagine because of what he has done.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy – He Satisfies

He has satisfied the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

- Psalm 34: Those who seek the Lord will be satisfied with what they find, while those that trust in their own strength will go hungry
- Luke 6:21, 24-25: The hungry will be satisfied and the rich will go hungry

In the New Testament, this idea of satisfaction—there are promises many places.

In Luke 6, Jesus talks about, "***Blessed are those who are hungry, for they will be satisfied.***" And the warning to the rich is that they will grow hungry—to those who think they have what they need in this life.

We know from John 17, Jesus says, "***I am not of this world and those who are mine are not of this world.***"

We know from 1 John ***that the things of this world are passing away.***

We know from Revelation that everything in this world will ultimately be destroyed when the new heaven and new earth come.

And so if we for a second pursue the things of this life thinking they will lead to satisfaction—if we find our identity in the things of this life—we will ultimately be disappointed.

Parents, if your identity is in your children and in the way you raise them, there's a point where—if you're raising them well—in most cases, they need to move on. And if your identity is in how you raise them, when they move on—if you did a good job but you're still focused on them—you're going to fall short.

If your identity is in your job—well, hopefully you get to retire someday, right? And when you retire, I see many Christian men—they hit that retirement age and then they don't know what to do with their time. And it can become a very disappointing thing to watch people not know how to follow the Lord because their identity was in their job.

If our purpose is found in the things of this world, we're ultimately going to fall short. We will not be satisfied.

But when Christ came—the story of the Samaritan woman at the well—to her he said, for all who I am the living water, all who drink from me will be satisfied.

The promise is for all who hunger and thirst for righteousness—who seek the Lord—ultimately we will find satisfaction in him.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy – He Satisfies

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- Psalm 34: Those who seek the Lord will be satisfied with what they find, while those that trust in their own strength will go hungry
- Luke 6:21, 24-25: The hungry will be satisfied and the rich will go hungry
- Revelation 21:6-7: Those who thirst are invited to drink freely from the spring of the water of life.

That imagery extends to Revelation 21, *when God is proclaiming for all who follow him—for all who overcome—those who thirst are invited to drink freely from the spring of the water of life.*

Our God blesses in abundance those who seek him. The promise is for those who hunger and thirst for righteousness—we will be satisfied.

That may not happen in this life, but we can walk in this life in satisfaction knowing that God gives us what we truly need.

If we think the things of this life are where our happiness and purpose and satisfaction lies, we will always find ourselves disappointed.

If you are rich in this life and the things of this world, you have shifted away from the promises of the gospel.

If you're focused on him, you will be satisfied in this life—not again, I'm not promising a prosperity of you'll get everything you want—but when our focus is on him and his redemption and the way he lifts and the way he satisfies, we will find we have far more than we need in him.

This is why in the early church as they were being persecuted they were rejoicing in the work of God.

This is why as they were being whipped they said we are experiencing the same thing as our Lord and Savior and praise God for that.

This is why we see throughout the history of the church those who face persecution feel blessed—because their satisfaction isn't in their security in this life but in the Savior who has saved them and who has given them security for the life to come.

See How The Lord Fulfills in His Mercy

He Redeems - The Lord does not leave his children in slavery to sinners or sin

He Lifts - The Lord does not leave his children defeated and downtrodden

He Satisfies - The Lord does not leave his children hungry and thirsty

We need to [see how the Lord fulfills in His mercy](#). We need to see that He satisfies.

As we come to the end of this passage, I want to encourage you. I want to encourage you that here on Sunday morning, I hope this all makes sense.

When I know that this doesn't always make sense is in the middle of the day on Tuesday—or maybe Wednesday. Maybe it's Thursday morning when you're trying to get your kids ready for school and you woke up late and they're waking up late. And so now everything's behind. So you wanted to spend time in the word and you didn't. And now you're yelling at your kids: “Get your shoes on, Lucy!” And as you're doing that, you're thinking, I wasn't going to yell. I was going to spend time in the word. And you feel worthless.

And the whole drive, you're grumpy—both because you're late and because of everything else. And then you get in and all of a sudden you've got all the things of your day in front of you. And it's not until the middle of the day that you realize, I know my satisfaction comes from the Lord and I haven't even talked to him today.

And then you feel worthless, right? I'm sure you guys have these moments if you're a believer.

And then when you feel worthless, the enemy's like, you are worthless. And then it gets worse and worse. And if you don't turn to the Lord—if you don't turn and humble your heart and look to him—you chase and you chase and you never return. And that's what we do in our own strength.

But the goodness of this passage is that it's not about our strength. It's not about our works. It's about **the Lord who fulfills in his mercy.**

He has redeemed us. There is nothing you can do as a believer that will cause you to lose the redemption you have because of the blood of Christ.

And when you turn to him in humility, you can trust with confidence that he will lift you up.

And we know that he satisfies—and his satisfaction and what he offers in this life and the next is the only thing that will not leave us wanting more.

So I want to encourage you—if you are a believer—to take heart in these words.

The promises they had in the Old Testament as they waited on the first coming of the Messiah—we, because we have seen God in the flesh, we have a deeper understanding of his redemption and the way he lifts and satisfies those who follow.

And if you're here today and you are not a believer, I want to encourage you. The God who offers and extends salvation to you—he is a merciful God. If you think that there is something you need to do in order to earn that salvation, the promise of the gospel is that there's nothing we could ever do, and yet he has done everything.

The God who redeems has redeemed all who fear him, and he has done it by dying on the cross in our place.

I would encourage you—if you are a non-believer—to cry out to him even now, that he would open your eyes to that truth.

To that end, let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you that you hear our prayers, that you act in your mercy, that you fulfill every promise you have made, and that you walk before us.

We thank you, Lord, that for all who trust in you, we can trust in your redemption. It is fully assured by the blood of your Son.

And we thank you, Lord, that when we walk humbly before you, we can walk in confidence in the way you will use us and lift us up.

And we thank you, Lord, that you offer that which truly satisfies us.

We pray, Lord, that we would look only to you for that satisfaction—that in this day and age of hopelessness, in this time of brokenness, and a time when we chase anything and everything to find purpose and value, we pray that we would see that you are the only one who provides hope. You are the only one who provides truth and peace for your people.

We praise you, Lord, and we praise you that we can pray all of this in the name of your Son, Jesus.

Amen.

Worship in Benediction

The Bible, in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, it says, ***For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shower, with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. And then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.***

It's a comfort—a great comfort—to know as a Christian that our Lord is coming, that we're going to all be together with Him for all eternity. He's going to take away all sadness, all pain. He'll wipe every tear from our eyes for the believer.

But for the unbeliever, the return of Christ won't be so gentle as His first coming. The great and terrible day of the Lord will be wonderful for believers and terrible for unbelievers. Are you ready? Have you repented of your sin? Have you turned to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation by faith? There is no other way, and when He comes, we must be ready.

Let's pray.

Lord, I thank you for the gospel—the good news that you came once like a lamb, and you're coming again like a lion. You came as a baby, fully God, fully man. You lived the perfect life, and you died on the cross for our sins. You are righteous and were righteous and went to the cross for our sin. We are ruined sinners, dead, enemies of God. But Lord, by your grace, you raised us to new life through faith.

Lord, we thank you for dying, for being buried, for rising again, for returning to the throne of heaven. You stand at the right hand of the majesty on high. And Lord, we declare by faith that Jesus, you are Lord. We believe that you were resurrected and we believe that you are coming again. And we comfort one another with these words.

And Lord, to any man or woman in this room who has never put their faith in you, now is the time—today is the day. Do not harden your heart. Pray from your heart: Lord, I admit that I'm a sinner. I believe that you are Lord, Jesus. I believe that you rose from the dead and I confess that I need you. Please forgive me for my sins. I repent of my sins and I thank you, Lord. I pray that when you return, I will forever be with you and your people. In Jesus' name, amen.

And even as we behold and reflect on the babe in the manger, we really, by faith, look forward to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Let's go in peace.



Digging Deeper – **The Lord Fulfills** – Luke 1:39-56

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?

Read Luke 1:38-56

2. What stands out to you as you read through the passage?
3. What do we learn about Mary and Elizabeth in this passage?
4. How do we see the Holy Spirit work in this passage?

In Mary's praise to the Lord, we see echoes of many key Old Testament passages. Below are listed five of the passages. This is not a complete list of passages that are being echoed, but in reading this passage you will see the character of God on display and the key promises concerning the coming king who would fulfill them. Take some time as a group to read each passage and consider the following:

Read 1 Samuel 2:1-10

Read Zephaniah 3

Read Psalm 103

Read Psalm 89

Read Isaiah 41-42

- What does this passage tell us about the character of God?
 - How do we see its fulfillment in Christ?
 - How should we respond to what we are reading today?
5. Take some time to end in prayer by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.