

July 22, 2012
Fellowship that Fires-up Faith
Luke 1:39-46

I. *It is worth the flight (travel) even without the airplane –*

Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, (Luke 1:39 NKJ)

1. *From Nazareth to the City of Judah (in the Hill country) where Elizabeth was, was a sixty mile trip!*
2. *Mary made haste to get there-*
3. *It was an unusual trip for any woman, especially one as young as Mary was, John MacArthur says this would have been a three or four day trip.*
4. *She was obviously inspired to make this trip by the words of Gabriel spoken in Luke 1:36.*

II. *It is empowered and inspired by God's Holy Spirit –*

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. (Luke 1:41 NKJ)

1. *Note the activity and presence of God's Spirit in this context:*
 - A. *Elizabeth is expressly said to be filled with God's Spirit*
 - B. *John, the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaps at a greeting, why?*

Remember what Gabriel told Zacharias –

He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. (Luke 1:15 NKJ)

- C. *Of course Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, His title "Christ" implied an anointing with the Holy Spirit and as He was and is God's eternal Son, as God He is One with God the Father and Holy Spirit –*

³⁵ **And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35 NKJ)**

- D. *Mary definitely seems to have the Holy Spirit –*
 - *The Holy Spirit was said by Gabriel "will come upon you"*
 - *Had He come upon her by this time? We assume He did, that*

Mary was already a few days pregnant while she is greeting Elizabeth!

2. *The Holy Spirit's presence is the best part of any truly God-glorifying fellowship, He is truly the LIFE of any God glorifying party –*

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:31 NKJ)

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 13:52 NKJ)

III. *It is especially sweet for those who know, share and communicate God's purposes –*

⁴¹ **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.**

⁴² **Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"** ⁴³ **"But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"** ⁴⁴ **"For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.**

⁴⁵ **"Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."** ⁴⁶ **And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, (Luke 1:41-46 NKJ)**

1. *Ancient Near East (Biblical) Greetings were very different than our modern "hi" "how are you(s)"*
 - A. *The person who said the greeting first was assuming a humble position, Mary was respecting Elizabeth as her elder –*
 - B. *Such greetings involved details, news, Mary almost certainly told Elizabeth everything the Angel Gabriel had told her*
 - C. *This greeting seems to be the immediate cause of John's leaping, and is immediately before Elizabeth's filling with the Holy Spirit!*
 - D. *It was almost certainly about Jesus!*
2. *Elizabeth's response is full of Blessing! - :42 & :45*
 - A. *It is also humble - :43*
 - B. *It seeks to encourage faith - :45*
 - C. *It communicated the baby prophet's involvement*
3. *Mary breaks into PRAISE of God - :46-55*

IV. *It is not hindered by any supposed age barrier –*

1. Elizabeth was definitely older –

¹⁸ And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." (Luke 1:18 NKJ)

³⁶ "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. (Luk 1:36 NKJ)

2. Mary was likely a teenager

3. John had been in Elizabeth's womb six months

4. Jesus in Mary's womb less than a week as a Man, but as the

Son of God He was older than all of them as He is ETERNAL!

⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isa 9:6 NKJ)

What a shame it would have been if they were funneled as many churches do into different groups: Keenagers – 56 and over, teenagers / youth group for most churches 13-19 the nursery, etc...

V. This spirit-filled fellowship was not hindered by the lack of participation of the priest / pastor –

⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

1. Remember Zacharias had been silenced –

²⁰ "But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time." (Luke 1:20 NKJ)

2. Application:

A. Great spiritual fellowship does not require a pastor

B. Note, it does not need a church, either or a large gathering, a meeting on a weekday can still be blessed by God

C. I am not saying we should neglect church –

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25 NKJ)

VI. Spirit-filled fellowship is often loud with praise –

⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said

⁴⁶ And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, (Luke 1:46 NKJ)

Both with a loud voice, and yet coming from the soul!

VII. This Fellowship that Fires up Faith is centered upon and includes Christ –

1. Here I believe Christ is already present in Mary's womb –

³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35 NKJ)

2. He is definitely spiritually present with His true church –

²⁰ "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (Mat 28:20 NKJ)

3. He was definitely the focus of conversation between Mary & Elizabeth –

⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! (Luke 1:42 NKJ)

4. Christ was the reason for wonder and humility –

⁴³ "But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43 NKJ)

²⁷ "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." (John 1:27 NKJ) John the Baptist, about thirty years later

5. He is the Reason for womb leaping excitement, and mind boggling JOY –

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. (Luke 1:41 NKJ)

"For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. (Luke 1:44 NKJ)

¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. (John 15:11 NKJ)

... Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith-- the salvation of your souls. (1Peter 1:7-9 NKJ)

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