

Proclaiming the Greatness of the Lord The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Wednesday, May 31, 2017 8:15 AM Rom 12:9-16; **Lk 1:39-56** (It's a choice we all
need to make, to attach our identity and our future to the promises of the Lord.)

“And Mary said: ‘My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.’”

The word “soul” in biblical language refers to what people today call their feelings. Soul is feelings. **The word “heart,”** on the other hand, does not refer to feelings in the Bible. The heart in the Bible **refers to the center of the human awareness, which is basically secret, hidden from others, where a person decides;** whatever it is, a person decides. So we have to keep that in mind. People often confuse these words, thinking heart refers to feelings and soul to something else.

So Mary is now talking about her inner workings, the inner workings of her feeling nature. And she is saying that **her feelings proclaim the greatness of the Lord.** This is very important. **She has attached her sense of awareness and her feeling about who she is, her identity, to the Lord,** to the word of the Lord and to the promises that the Lord made, not only to her, but going all the way back to Abraham. **She lives in the promise.** That is the nature of a hopeful person, and it is extremely healthy. **It is spiritually and mentally healthy to live in a hopeful way.**

Now some people may be hopeful about themselves, which I can't say is necessarily bad. But Mary is not talking about being hopeful about herself. She is attaching herself and her feelings of who she is to something else, something higher, something greater, to the Lord, the source of everything. She is attaching her whole future, and this is a great model of what human happiness is all about: **to attach our sense of identity and our sense of our own future to God's promises, in spite of what goes on around us.**

Now Mary herself was actually in a—or would have been in a very dire state had she been an ordinary person, because here she was pregnant without a husband. At that time that was a crime subject to stoning. So **she could have been overwhelmed with anxiety and fear.** But no, her soul magnifies the Lord. This is a gift, yes, but it's also a choice. And **it's a choice we all need to make, to attach our identity and our future to the promises of the Lord,** and thus to live in hope because without hope life in this world is very dire.