November 26/27, 2022

A Thrill of Hope, The Weary World Rejoices

A Reason to Sing Series

Luke 1:26-56

Pastor Josh Luse

I start with a question this morning that has sparked battles over the centuries. It's driven wedges between families and ruffled feathers, but I'm going to dare to ask it anyways. It's pitted brother against sister and father against friend. The question is, *"When is an appropriate time to start playing Christmas music?"* Now I know in this room, there are those that hold strong opinions. I know that there are some of you that have been curating the perfect playlist for quite some time now; for you, it's just when it feels right and you'll know when that moment is right to spark up that playlist and start playing Christmas music. If that's you, go ahead and raise your hand. It could be November, it could be December. It could be January or July. You don't know. Yeah, there's some of you in the room. Now for others of you, there is a date, and that date is there on purpose—it might as well be a law. And not until after that date should any Christmas music ever be played, and that date is Thanksgiving Day. Anybody in the house here with that? Yeah, there's some in the house. Okay, strong opinion. I think a fight just started up in section eight, up there. Now there are others of you, that Christmas Eve is the time you wait and you hold it all in, and that's when you unleash all the gusto of all that is for Christmas music. Anybody in here with that? Not so much? A couple maybe. All right.

You know, no matter when the appropriate time is sometimes we look at the world around us and we think, "Why would anybody sing right now?" I mean, if we used words to start to describe the world that we live in, we'd use words like *wars*, and *dark*, *chaotic*, and *polarized*, maybe even *weary*. Why would anybody sing in the midst of such a weary, dark world? But if you look back in the early first century, what we're living in now is a cakewalk compared to then. Historians have recorded even more difficulty that they would face each and every year. Women had almost no—or very little—legal or economic rights. A Jewish woman could be brought into a marriage as early as 12 years old. A quarter of all the babies born in the first century did not survive their first year. And up to half of all the children that did survive would die before the age of 10. It was a hard time. In fact, there was one historian that recorded in the Galilean area in that region, there was no middle class. The author said that 9 out of 10 people living in that area lived close to subsistence level or below it. It was a hard time to live. Why would anybody sing in that time? But yet in that time, into that world was a spark into something incredible, something unexpected that happened in an unexpected way to an unexpected person. And how they responded is what we're going to talk about a little bit today.

If you have your Bible you can turn to Luke chapter 1. Over the next couple of weeks we're going to unpack together some Christmas songs that we so often sing throughout this time. As we look at all the Christmas music that's written, there are songs with such deep and rich theology that carry meaning not just for this time of year, but all year long. So today we're gonna start out a little bit different, maybe, look at maybe the first Christmas song ever written. But over the next few weeks, we're excited to dive into that together. Luke chapter 1, and we'll start in verse 26. And it says this:

> **In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.** (*ESV, Luke 1:26-27)

Now, if you've spent any time around church, there's probably some characters that are popping up into this story that maybe you've heard of, or you've been familiar with, or at least you recognize them around the nativity scene at Christmas time. You've got Joseph who follows his line back to David. You've got an angel—Gabriel—sent from God, and you've got this girl named Mary. Now Luke, as he sets up the story, tells us that she was betrothed to be married to Joseph. Now that's just a weird word. I don't even know if I'm saying it right. We don't use that word very often; we say engaged. But one of the things that's really important as we read scripture is not to try to retroject our history back into scripture, but step back into scripture and understand the culture and the times and what they would have been living in, and read it from that lens. So let's talk about this engagement setting for a little bit. Back in the first century, it was common for families to choose together who would be married. Oftentimes, the sons parents would initiate that contact, they would go out and they would start talking with a family and start to work out the details for that marriage. Now, after that was worked out, the couple would go to the priests, and then in the presence of witnesses they would form a covenant for that marriage. Now, this wasn't the actual wedding ceremony; this was the betrothal stage—so the engagement stage—but that covenant would be binding. The only way out of that covenant would be through death or through divorce. That period of engagement would often last for about a year up to that time. And during that time, the woman—the bride-to-be—would go back and live with her family, and the groom-to-be would go back and start preparing a home for his bride. At some point after that engagement process is done, he would go through a parade down the streets to his bride's home, get her, and take her back to his home—a place that he had made and prepared for her. And they would go and consummate the marriage there and afterwards, there would be a feast, a celebration, a wedding feast. And so Luke is telling us very deliberately they were in this engagement period; they had not gotten married yet. They're still waiting for that to occur. Verse 28 picks it up and says (talking about Gabriel the angel):

> **And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.** (Vs. 28-29)

Now as you're reading through this, it says that she **tried to discern**, and maybe your translation says **she kept pondering.** The original word would mean *to make an audit*. The sense is this accounting term; she's trying to add things up, "What in the world is going on?" Now it's really easy for us to look back and just go, "Yeah, an angel showed up with a message, 'You're gonna have Jesus.'" Right? But step back into her shoes for just a moment. She has just encountered this angel, and it says she's **greatly troubled**. That might be the understatement of the century. She's scared and she's not the first one. We can look back to just the last chapter. There was an angel Gabriel that showed up to another guy, Zechariah. And he had a message as well. In chapter 1, verse 12, it says **Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.** We know when chapter 2 comes around, that the angels will come and share a message to the shepherds and they'll be terrified, right? Fearful. Can you imagine being Gabriel? Every time you walk into a room, people are terrified at your presence. It's kind of like me, I have to always say, "Don't be afraid," whenever I walk into a room, right? I'm intimidating. No not at all, right? But Gabriel, every time he comes in the room, he has to continue to reassure them not to be afraid but think of the magnificence of this moment.

Now, there's one other little clue that he drops in here that I think is important for us to see. Verse 28, the greeting was, **"Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you.**" Remember the time period that we're at right now. Up to this point God's presence has just rested in the temple, in the Holy of Holies. And Mary would know enough that the priests that go and offer sacrifices, if they had not done the ceremonial washings correctly before and went in, they could drop dead instantly in God's presence. There was a fear and an awe and a wonder to the presence of God. For you and I, we say, "Jesus has made a way. He lives within me." Sometimes we forget the fear and awe and wonder in abiding in the presence of God. But imagine what Mary's thinking at this point. "Me? I get to be with God? What does this mean? What's this look like?" She goes on to verse 30,

> **And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."** (Vs. 30)

This is the second time we've seen that word, **favor**. We saw it in verse 28, and now as the favored one; and now **favor with God**. The Greek word for **favor** is *charis*. We use this word often with another word that we use often in our church that we talk about. Grace. Favor, charis, grace is from God. Now just think of this for a second…**you have found** *grace* **with God**. What did Mary do to deserve this? Nothing. In fact, Luke has painted a pretty vivid picture at the beginning, even detailing out her roots where she is from—Nazareth. Now Nazareth is not the place that you put on a t-shirt and you wore around, "I'm from Nazareth." When people left and graduated from Nazareth, they didn't go back to the reunion, you know what I'm saying? It was kind of like the armpit of the area. In fact, later on in scripture, remember that guy saying, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" And yet where are Mary's roots? From Nazareth. Now over the years we've put different emphasis and gotten it wrong in different traditions. You've heard people say, maybe, "Hail, Mary, full of grace," but they're missing Who the grace is from. Mary is not the one dispensing grace. Mary is the one that's a recipient of grace. Mary has found favor with God; God is pouring out His grace. It's as though the author wants us to look at this and say, "What is God doing giving so much grace to a nobody from nowhere?" Because if they would have read this in the first century, that's surely what they would have thought. He goes on to explain what's going to happen, verse 31:

> **"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus**. The literal translation of **Jesus** is the *Lord is salvation*. She's starting to get these glimpses and pieces of what God is up to through sending Jesus. Verse 32: **He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."** (Vs. 31-32)

Now these words would start to sound familiar as Mary's hearing them. They have a lot of familiarity from the scrolls that would have been opened and had been read from Isaiah, chapter 7, verse 14, where it says: **Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,** which means *God with us.* God is unveiling this incredible story. But again, put yourself in her shoes. There's some very dangerous words in this. It's going to be the greatest king the world has ever seen. His reign is going to go forever. I mean, the Roman Empire has a vast reign, but you're telling me that the end of his kingdom there will **be no end**. Rome's not going to really like to hear about this. Herod's not gonna really like to hear about this. This is significant. It's going to be of a virgin. Luke, as a doctor, is dispelling all these terms. She's still in her engagement period, how can this be? Well, how did she answer in verse 34:

> **And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?**

Now as she's saying this and she's answering this, it's important for us to contrast two stories that are happening. We don't have time this morning, but let me give you a summary. If we were to go back to the beginning of chapter 1, we'd meet another set of people: Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth. Zechariah was an old man. They had gone through the years never able to have children. This old couple and his wife had been barren, kind of remind you of any other Old Testament stories? And he was a priest, a wise man, who had known all these things of God. And Gabriel, too, shows up to Zechariah in the temple and gives him a message that his wife is going to be pregnant—become pregnant—and she too will have a son. Now remember what Sarah back in the Old Testament did when she heard that news? She laughed. Zechariah pretty close to it—in complete unbelief said, "There's no way. Give me some kind of sign." In fact, in his own words in chapter 1, verse 18, he said: **and Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."**

"I don't believe it. Give me some kind of sign." From that point on Zechariah is struck, and he cannot speak. So as he goes out of the temple, he cannot explain what was going to happen. In fact, he's not going to be able to talk until his son finally is born—John the Baptist, who would go preparing the way for the Savior. Now Zechariah has disbelief. He is the one that's sitting there not believing it. But Mary, she's not saying, "I don't believe it." She's saying, "How are you going to do this?" Mary is filled with wonder; she's trying to wrap her mind around what God is doing. And there is such a difference in the response found between these two. She's believing. She could have said a lot of things at this point, couldn't she? "I'm too young. I'm too poor. I don't have the experience. What if I break the baby?" Right? If I'm Gabriel and I'm thinking of God sharing with me what I'm supposed to go tell Mary, I think I would say, "Okay, well, wait, so Your whole plan is to give this baby to a teenage mom who hasn't had a baby yet?" I want to be Gabriel following her around the whole time, like, "Don't drop the baby, don't drop the baby. That's like the whole world right there that you're carrying!" But God has a God sized plan. God is going to continue to work out His plan and He's doing it through this virgin birth.

An old ancient philosopher, Thomas Aquinas, put it this way, "In order that the body of Christ might be shown to be a real body, He was born of a woman. But in order that his Godhead might be clear, he was born of a virgin." God was unfolding this masterful plan but it came as a disruption, didn't it? Have you ever noticed that in order for us to follow God's plan, it often means a disruption in our plans? We don't really like that too much, do we? Imagine at this point, Mary's probably sitting there thinking she had different plans for the week. Different plans for the year, planning a wedding. Different plans for her life. And all of a sudden a disruption comes along. But the beauty of this is it's a God sized disruption; it's a God sized plan. You know what the thing is with God sized plans? They can't be accomplished without God. Do you have any God sized plans in your life? Do you have any plans where there's no way it could happen unless God would work through it and bring about what you cannot do on your own. Do you realize that every single person in this room sitting here right now, God has a plan that He wants to work in and through your life that is a God sized plan. It's going to be *impossible* for you to do it on your own. There's no way it could play out unless you rely on Him and step into faith, into the plan that He is laying out for us. But he goes on to give another gracious piece of information. As Gabriel is talking to Mary in verse 35, he gives her one more piece of info:

> **And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy– the Son of God. 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. For nothing will be impossible with God." (Vs. 35-37)

Nothing is impossible with God, even the God sized tasks that He asks us to step into. God is gracious as Mary is trusting and believing and taking steps forward to show her that He will lead the way and reminding her that nothing is impossible for Him. In fact, He's going to give her another point of encouragement; that her relative Elizabeth, who it seems to be impossible that she could get pregnant is going to have a son. What a gift as she walks through this pregnancy, as well. What a gracious God. Now she could have responded in a lot of ways at this point, couldn't she? What's she going to say to the angel? What's she going to say to God? "Hey, I'm out of here. I kind of had my own plans. I don't want to follow your plan. God, sorry, we're kind of breaking up. Gotta go." What's she gonna answer? Verse 38,

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Vs. 38)

Now grasp the impact of the word **servant.** She's not just saying, "Hey, I'll help out. I'll come clear some things off the table for you." Now the word is *bond slave*. It's saying, "I am relinquishing all of my rights. God, all that I am and all that I have is Yours. You are my master. Whatever You ask, I'll surrender to you*."* Do you realize to follow a God sized plan and step into God sized tasks, it's going to continue to require surrender in our lives? Are you ready to surrender? So it goes on. Soon as Mary hears that news in verse 39:

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." (Vs. 39-45)

Mary heads out 80 to 100 miles to go see her relative; probably a three days journey. And as she gets there, she's trusting in God's plan and ready to act. And what's she shared from Elizabeth, **blessed are you**. Now over the years, we've gotten two extremes with Mary: we've tried to make her a deity and put her on this pedestal she should never be on, or we've tried to dismiss her altogether. But Church, I think it's important for us to be reminded and see the faith and trust and belief of this young teenage girl and the powerful way that God can work through that. It's the same faith, trust and belief that He's asking for us to follow Him. And as she does that, she trusts and believes, she joins into an incredible blessing to join God on this mission. She's not expecting praise for herself. In fact, what's she do? She erupts in praise for her God as Mary continues to see what God's doing. Now you think of this, this is a moment when Mary could have sung all sorts of different songs. She could have sung the blues for sure, right? This had been a dark, hard time and what she's stepping into is going to be a difficult challenge. For 400 years, they'd been sitting waiting in silence, waiting for God to speak. And for 1000's of years before that, that led to a promise God had given Abraham, that they're waiting for it to continue to be fulfilled. If ever there was a point where we could read the lyrics and understand this would be that point: "*Long lay the world in sin and error pining till He appeared and the soul felt it's worth*." As she erupts into this song, it's not a song of blues, it's a song of praise. But for a minute, put yourself in her shoes and remember what she's leaning into. She's a woman in the first

century. She's pregnant, outside of marriage, her life is already hard enough, but it's gonna get way harder. You know how word spreads in small towns, let alone gossip like this, it's gonna go all over and preceed the way.

How many days will she wake up and just get dirty looks from the people she passes by? How many unwanted pregnancies were there at that time? Very, very few pregnant teenage girls outside of marriage in that Nazareth area. She's gonna walk a hard road. And not only that, she doesn't know what Joseph's going to say. What's Joseph gonna do? Is he going to bail? What about her life, is she going to get killed? Being pregnant outside of marriage according to the law, she can be stoned to death. Not only that, remember what Gabriel talked about? She could be in incredible danger having a child that would be a king. In fact, King Herod down the road would come and try and kill all the boys to get to this one baby. How does an unwed young mother survive in the first century? Will anybody ever understand what she's going to walk through? How in the world do you raise a baby, let alone a boy, let alone the Son of God? She could get paralyzed in all these thoughts but what instead does she do? She looks at the bigness and the magnificence of her God and she starts out to sing in verse 46,

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,"

A song that we refer to as the magnificent. It's a Latin word that's used to describe *magnify*. It's the word that starts out this whole song in that Latin translation. So what in the world does it mean to magnify God? Do I need to somehow make God bigger? I don't think so. I can't even understand the grandeur of God on my own right now where I'm at. So magnify couldn't mean that. Magnification of God means *to magnify and enlarge our vision of God*. God does not change, but the closer we draw to, and the more we understand about the truth of who He is, the bigger we can expound on our praises to Him because the more and more we understand how magnificent He truly is. So I wonder, do you have a big view of God? Have you put Him in a box? Have you diminished the size and the greatness of this incredible God? Verse 48 she goes on:

"…for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;"

He's changed her life, not her status but the fullness; her soul has felt it's worth. The God of the universe, has given her grace. Her life is forever changed. How many in this room could sing that same song, My soul found what it was longing for, the God of the universe gave me grace and I was able to join with Him, join into His family. Now this is hard for me to understand how she would have grasped this already. She's the first person that understands who Jesus is and what He's come on earth to do. The Pharisees can never grasp that it seemed. The disciples, it took them walking with Jesus and they still had questions all along the way. But this young teenage girl grasps the bigness of who God is and started to sing even more of Him. Verse 49,

"…for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name."

It's the second time we've seen **holy** used in this passage. Someone wrote, "When he says holy, it means that God is opposed to sin, He will never get used to it. We look at the darkness of this world and say, "That's just the way it is." But God will never get used to sin." *God will never get used to sin.* But in the darkness of the brokenness of this world, He sent His son to rescue us, to bring about a restoration and to give us a sacrifice, to pay for that sin. She speaks to that in verse 50:

> **"His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.** A God who pours out His mercy to those that are ready to turn to Him. Do you understand what God has done for you? Verse 51, **He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts**; the NIV puts it this way: **He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.** Those that think they can do it on their own, they can build it on their own, they're going to be scattered. They're building on sand; it will not last; it's going to crumble. It's what he speaks of in verse 52: **He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate."** (Vs. 50-52)

Later on Mary will go on to have this baby, she will name him Jesus, she will take Jesus to the temple to dedicate him. There'll be an old man there. Simeon has waited all his life to see the Messiah. And as they get there, he will look at Mary and he will say words that will echo the same truth that she's just sung about. Chapter 2, verse 34, it says this, "**Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel."** Jesus is flipping the world on its head. The proud will fall, and the humble will be exalted as they lean in to trust in Jesus for what they cannot do on their own. Verse 35, chapter 2: **and for a sign that is opposed, so that the thoughts from many hearts may be revealed**. Jesus is going to be able to be the One that reveals the thoughts and hearts, whether they will turn to Him as a Savior or not, but it's going to come with a price. Simeon also snuck this other little phrase to Mary in there, **and a sword will pierce through your own soul also.** This is not going to be an easy task. You're going to watch your son that you love be hung on a cross, ridiculed, beaten, and put to death. But in and through it, He's changing the world, and you have been invited into a God sized task. Verse 53 goes on to say:

> **"…he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever." And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.** (Vs. 53-56)

This promise that was given to Abraham is now becoming true because God is a God that keeps His promises. When we speak of hope, we often tie hope to uncertainty, don't we? "I hope that this happens, but there's a chance it might not." "I hope to see them, but there's a possibility we're not gonna see each other." "I hope that we win the game, but you know what the odds are, right?" Our hope is tied to uncertainty. But when the Bible speaks of hope, it is never tied to uncertainty. When the Bible speaks of hope, it's tied to *surety*. Because the God that gives us hope has kept His promises, and He is the God that will continue to keep His promises. That's why Hebrews chapter 10, verse 23, says our hope is built with a certainty—it is rooted in God's faithfulness. **For He who promised is faithful.** We can look forward knowing God will continue to be faithful, and we have hope at what He will do because we can look back and know He has been faithful, He has kept every promise, and He will continue to keep His promises. Church, are you hearing me? That kind of hope does something in and through our lives as we step into God size tasks. Piper put it this way: Hope is faith in a future tense.

I wonder what God has continued to ask you to step into. No matter the circumstance, this kind of hope gives us a chance to worship, a chance to praise. And when we worship, it's not just worship that we muster up; you can't muster up worship. Worship comes from surrender. Worship is a byproduct of a life surrendered in every way. "God, whatever You want, whatever situation I sit in, wherever I find myself, I will follow Your plan; I will give you praise. You are my God." I had a youth pastor that used to say, "Worship is an appropriate response to any situation."

I remember a guy that was in our church. We were starting to transition to a worship band and we needed different instruments and he played guitar, and his fingers would just fly on that guitar. It was like they were dancing, and you could barely see them on that thing. And he loved playing, just loved it. He would get up and he would play on that team, he'd go home and practice and play, and he loved singing. He was like a walking song for Jesus. There was one day that he got a diagnosis that wouldn't be a song that you would want to sing about. But there's a vivid image of him in my mind from a video his son took the last few days of his life here on this earth. He's sitting in this hospital room on pain meds, very, very frail—a different looking body than you would have known him before. But in that little lap with his hands is a guitar and he's singing out these songs as the family joins in to praise this God who is worthy. If you would have been walking down the halls of that hospital that day, you would have heard a faint guitar playing real fast and voices pouring in to exalt this God.

Any situation is an appropriate opportunity to worship God. Let me just tell you this, if you don't live a life of worship now, when that difficult, hard situation comes down the road, when that God size task that seems impossible comes down the road, you're not going to worship then. Worship is an opportunity for us to surrender right now in the midst of good things, in the midst of difficult things, to point to the One who is worthy. We see this all around the world. I read a story from the Voice of the Martyrs. They shared about these Christians who are in a prison because it was a communist country that they were living in, and because of their faith, they had been thrown into prison. Listen to the words that they shared. "Why is it that so many Christians sing only once a week? Why only once? If it's right to sing, sing every day. If it's wrong to sing, don't sing on Sunday." They went on to share a story of their time in prison. "When we were in prison. We sang almost every day because Christ was alive in us. They put chains on our hands and feet and they chained us to add to our grief. Yet, we discovered that chains are splendid musical instruments. When we clanked them together in rhythm we could sing 'This is the day- clink clink- this is the day- clank clank- that the Lord has made- clink clink- that the Lord has made- clank clank,' in the middle of a dark, dingy prison. Worship and magnification of this amazing, holy, faithful, grace-filled, loving, grand, big God gives them a chance to sing.

So why in the world would we sing now at Christmas, in the midst of the dark world that we find ourselves in? Why? We're not warming up for an audition to sing before 1000's. We already have the audience captive of the One who is worthy. The One who created all that we know, all the world. The One that holds it together in His hands and sustains it. The One who is worthy of all of our praise sits and longs to hear songs from us, no matter how out of tune they might be. He loves to hear a joyful noise. I guess if there were no reason to sing, we would not sing. But Christmas reminds us that in Jesus, we have every reason to sing. So Church, may we be a people that are known for our singing. May you be a person that hums throughout the day because you have a song in your heart. Maybe you've stopped whistling; maybe it's time to start back up. May you are a person that sings at the top of your lungs in the car, because of the God that you love so much. May you be a person that sings at home in the shower, wherever, lift your voices in praise to the God that is worthy; maybe even pull out that old instrument from high school and dust it off. Because, Church, in Jesus and because of Jesus, we have every reason to sing.

> *God, thank you so much for the reminder of the truth of who You are. You are magnificent. Thank you that You don't choose teams based on the world's standards, based on our status, or wealth, or intelligence, or the list goes on and on. You look for the humble that realize they can be used by You and You invite them into incredible things. God sized things. God may we be a people that step into those tasks ready to sing at the top of our lungs to a God that is worthy. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

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Lincoln Berean Church, 6400 S. 70th, Lincoln, NE 68516 (402) 483-6512
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