

Kev's sermon notes for eGroups

Sunday, Dec. 20, 2020

Elevation Church - Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Holly Furtick

Sermon Title: "Reflect 2020 Part 2 - The Foundation of God's favor - Let Go of What you expect to know about favor – We all want fake favor so we don't have to do anything – 5 Things to receive the favor of God: Awareness, Acceptance, Action, Attachment, and Affirmation.

Elevation Worship:

- Christmas Melody
- Tauren Wells – Oh Come Let Us Adore Him
- Emmanuel – You Are Worthy

Scripture for this week:

- **Jr 17: 7-8:** "But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. 8 They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."
- **Luke 1: 26 to 49:** The Birth of Jesus Foretold - 26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." 29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." 34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" 35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail." 38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her. Mary Visits Elizabeth 39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

Pastor: Holly Furtick - Sermon Title: "The Foundation of God's favor - Let Go of What you expect to know about favor – We all want fake favor so we don't have to do anything – 5 Things to receive the favor of God: Awareness, Acceptance, Action, Attachment, Affirmation.

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- Interested in leading an eGroup? See: [www.elevationchurch.cc](http://www.elevationchurch.cc).
- Important Church events:
  - Christmas at Elevation: <https://elevationchurch.org/christmas/>
  - Lights at Elevation - <https://elevationchurch.org/elevation-lights/>
  - On-line only Praise Party at 10:00 PM on 12/31/2020.
  - This is the year of the Lord's favor – see Luke 4. The make and end of year donation see: [www.elevationchurch.org/favor](http://www.elevationchurch.org/favor)
- **Opening prayer by Pastor Steven Furtick: “We thank you for the fullness of your presence Lord – and we do not want a little – merely goosebumps – and we want a God who is bigger than any feeling – who is greater than our condemnation – who is greater than our sin and shame – and all of that has met it's match in the name of Jesus Christ. We declare what the angel said today – glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth on who his favor rests – we are recipients of a gift – God praise the incarnate Christ – Where God was made in flesh – The son of God born in Bethlehem to save sinners and to bring light every dark situation – and to comfort the weary and seek the lost – We declare the name of Jesus over your depression today – We declare the name of Jesus over your addiction today – We declare the name of Jesus over every lost Lazarus in your life - We seek resurrection power in this Christmas season – Here comes glory – Here comes Heaven – Here comes the provision - so let's give God our best praise as we lift up the mighty hand of Jesus – what does your highest and best praise look like today? – and we thank you for it in Jesus's name amen.”**
- **Prayer #2 by Steven Furtick: Somebody needs your peace today Lord – it has been all turmoil, tempest, dangers, snares, heartbreaks, and setbacks – this year has been one thing after another – and we have been praying for peace – and you already told us how we could receive your peace - and if we give you glory, we receive your grace – glory to God in the highest – in the hospital room – in the apartment – in the dorm room – and on earth. We learned the secret: when we give you all of the glory – all of the weight (the Hebrew word glory = weight) – and we have been carrying things that are too heavy for us – so before we go another step - or you bake another casserole for our family – or before you buy another gift for a person that does not even need it – lay down the weight that we have been carrying – the weight of worry is robbing us of our energy – worry has resulted in the misappropriation of our resources – if we apply the same effort to worry that we do with praising God, we would receive a “gully washing” cleansing Christmas gift.**
- Merry Christmas everyone and thank you for prioritizing the word of God in your home today.
- For many of us this is the most insane week of the year within one of the most insane years – it has been a lot - and my prayer in the mist of all of this that we would stop and realize that it is not about what we give to each other - but rather what we receive from God – Jesus Christ – Emmanuel – God is with us – God stands ready to give us grace and peace – and joy in the middle of our chaos and anxiety – however we have to pause in order to allow our God to do so. Please set aside all of the things that we are thinking about - and focus on what our God has done for us.
- Let God speak to our soul and center our thoughts and attention on Jesus
- God you are water for Thursday souls.

- In this moment we are longing for you Lord – speak to us like you always do – and do what you do.
- Recall Holly Furtick’s analogy of real Christmas trees vs. fake trees.
- **Over the last few weeks we have been learning about God’s favor – and reframing God favor in 2020 – where favor does not come when we expected to come – nor does favor look like we expect it to look. Last week we studied in Luke 1 where Mary found favor with God – where we also learned the true favorite feels like an interruption – and brings on insecurity – and that favor is almost always accompanied by fear.**
- **We all need to let go of what we expect favor to look like – so that we can embrace the amazing things that God is calling us to do.**
- Similar to the fake Christmas tree that doesn’t require any water, this could explain fake favor as well – we all want the kind a favor that looks good and doesn’t require any effort of us – we all want favor that is beautiful and does not make us uncomfortable – fake favor only focuses on the outward appearance – fake favor focuses on other people’s perceptions of us – and fake favor only stays on the surface where things are safe – fake favor also centers around stuff – the stuff that we have is not favor from God – stuff is fun but it has a very short shelf-life when compared to Faith - Yes every good and perfect gift comes from the father above – if we think that favor is in the form of stuff we are very limited view as to the favor of God.
- **We all want to project that we have it all together – because if we project struggle and frustration, this does not look like God projecting favor on our lives. We do not have to share everything with everyone - however we do need to share some things with some people.**
- How did Mary find true favor with God?
- They were something special about her that set her apart from every other woman in her generation – it was not a lottery pick.
- I believe Mary had a foundation for favor.
- See Jr 17:7.
- See the below sermon notes from Reflect 2020.
- This is not a fake tree.
- **Having favor with God does not exempt us from difficulty and struggle – it simply gives us a foundation to draw from when those hard times come – and this enables us to not only survive but to bear fruit during times of struggle – during the most difficult seasons.**
- Fake trees cannot bear fruit.
- We want to be able to all bear fruit during every season of our lives – because our lives are rooted in our relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **We all know people that seem to endure during the most incredible storms. There are two outcomes of a struggle: battered, bruised, and better or battered, bruised, and bitter.**
- And strong people do not happen by accident.
- **Strength is not developed in the dry season – strength reveals itself in the dry season.**
- With weight training, the soreness comes from exertion.
- **As Pastor Furtick said at the beginning of this year (2020), time under tension creates strength.**
- A tree does not grow overnight – it takes time.
- Put down roots – put down a foundation that can sustain you through the struggle.
- The most important part of the tree happens below the surface – in places we can’t see.
- So how exactly did Mary find favor with God?

- See Luke 1: 26 to 49.
- How did God know that Mary was going to be able to thrive when subjected to the weight of disappointment and immense grief?
- **Here are five things about Mary that allowed her to receive the favor of God and receive this massive calling on her life (to raise the Son of God) – so that we can fully realize the blessing (not the stuff) of God:**
  - **Awareness – she was in a position to receive a message from God in her day-to-day activities. Mary had made space for God.** We know very little about Mary before the encounter in Luke 1 – we know that she was a teenage girl – are you aware of God’s presence in your everyday life? Or is your life so loud – so busy - and so crowded that God would have to strike lightning to get your attention? Here’s a suggestion: Have a plan and Look for pockets of time to listen to worship music or read the Bible – during commutes or during pockets of quiet time. **If we spend our day scrolling through our phones, we will finish the day starving – starving for encouragement – starving for purpose – where the presence of God is not a priority in our lives.**
  - **Acceptance: See the MSG version of Luke 1. She accepted the calling that God placed on her. If we do not have the foundation of acceptance in our lives, we will abandon our calling at the first sign of trouble** – and this will adversely impact our ability to live a life of purpose. A calling is a gift that is exclusively yours – you can’t trade it with someone else and you cannot return it. We can either reject or accept our calling. The most common form of rejection is to refuse to do the work required to live up to are our calling. Living the favor of God requires work. Walk confidently in the calling that God is giving you. When things got hard for Mary, she probably had to go back to that encounter and Luke 1 to remember that she was chosen for this. You were chosen for this and you can do hard things.
  - **Action: See Luke 1:38 to 49. Mary was called to action. What do you do when the angle leaves? Mary asked the angle how? And her answer was who – the Holy Spirit. God does not spell everything out for us – God is with us but he’s not going to move our feet for us.** Favor requires action on our part. When God gives you direction, what is your response time? **God uses people that both hear and move.** And every big calling starts with a small step – because if we don’t hear and act on the small things, we won’t be entrusted with the big things. **Why would God give us more direction if we have not acted on the simple things we’ve been asked to do – to forgive someone – to apologize – to release anger – etc. Doing something with your calling starts right now – an action or next step. Make space for Christ in your life and act on the small steps of your calling.**
  - **Attachment: Mary was pointed to Elizabeth to help her with her calling and give her wisdom to help her through the pregnancy – we all need to align ourselves with people who confirm the calling that is placed inside of us. We were never intended to live out our calling alone.** We do have to get the order right – it is not people first – Mary was aware and she excepted the calling that God placed on her life – then Mary acted quickly – and she needed to attach herself to someone that was further down the road from her – this is the body of Christ and we need each other – and it is beautiful. We need each other’s friendship and this is something that 2020 try to steal from us – because when the favor of God is on your life you’re going to need the support of others. And yes there are

dramatic and crazy people out there – and as I told our youth, mean girls don't go away when you graduate from high school. If you are surrounded by mean people, you might not be using the right support system – instead surround yourself with people that are further down the road and are more mature than you – **surround yourself with someone that you admire based on how they treat their wife – someone that has walked where you are presently walking – and help you prepare for some of the twists and turns that might knock you off course** – we all need people that will confirm what God has placed on us – the fruit that is not even there yet - like what Elizabeth did with Mary in Luke 1. When Mary had to deliver a child alone and in a barn she had the experience from Elizabeth to help her through this process. **The favor of God is ultimately built on both our relationships and our relationship with God. Who has fought with you and grieve with you?** Those are the people that God has placed in our lives – continue to build on this because you will need them when you're in a difficult season. It is also a privilege to be a support system for someone else going through a difficult season – to experience a unique type of friendship that is only found within the struggle.

- **Affirmation: See Luke 1: 38 to 45: It was good for Mary to receive confirmation from Elizabeth as what Mary was called to do. However there are times when the affirmation that you need must come from within ourselves** – with your own mouth, you must begin to worship.
- Long before Mary was called upon the lord to raise the son of God, she was building a foundation of favor – she was focused on who God is and who she is.
- And these are things that we have to put into action during our own lives.
- These are the roots that we should draw from when we feel weak – during days when you feel that you do not have what it takes.
- **During those difficult days where we challenge ourselves by saying “Yes, I can do this.” So what can we do? See Phil 4:13: “We can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” You can do this – all of it – all that you were called to do – You do not have to let fear and anxiety occupy this space in your soul – that was meant for Christ.**
- You are a chosen child of God – and you are not operating solely under your own power – The holy spirit is with you – you do not need to manipulate this – you already have a strong foundation of favor that God has put inside of you – and you are never alone.
- Closing prayer: Jesus – Emmanuel – we come to you in this moment – for the person that is overwhelmed by everything that they have to get done – Lord we ask that you stop to whisper peace into our lives – we pray for the person that is lonely during this holiday season – God please whisper to them – We are not alone – thank you God for being with us and for showing us the way – thank you for the people that you have placed in our lives – Lord we are so grateful for you so that we never have to walk alone – God make us strong and be aware of your presence – so that we can see that you are there with us – thank you for these words spoken over our lives in this time. We are ready for whatever you have for us – we accept the calling that You have placed over our lives – in this moment – and we thank you for picking us – In Jesus mighty name. Amen.

Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 – Reflect 2020 Event  
Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Holly Furtick

Sermon Title: “Check Your Roots - You Can Do This – How to have roots that never fail to bear fruit – We need to have the root of acceptance in our lives otherwise we will abandon our calling at the first sign of trouble – You are enough to do what God called you to - But it will not be easy – Repetition and tension over time creates strength - act on things in the simplest and smallest ways – understand that power of attachment to confirm what is already is already known - Elephants are a matriarchal society and they protect each other by circling up to protect their own – affirmation comes from your own mouth”

Elevation Worship:

- “Walk on Water”
- “Graves to Gardens”
- “Man of Your Word”
- “God Job” (Dang!!! – Awesome solo performance) – Also see the song by Alicia Keys - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkDNp4ATCso>
- Lyrics for God Job: Good Job – by Alicia Keys - You're the engine that makes all things go - And you're always in disguise, my hero - I see your light in the dark - Smile in my face when we all know it's hard - There's no way to ever pay you back - Bless your heart, know I love you for that - Honest and selfless - I don't know if this helps it but - Good Job - You're doing a good job, a good job - You're doing a good job – *“Don't get too down - The world needs you now - Know that you matter - Matter, matter yeah - You're doing a good job, a good job - You're doing a good job Don't get too down - The world needs you now - Know that you matter - Matter, matter yeah - Six in the morning - As soon as you walk through that door - Everyone needs you again The world's out of order - It's not as sound - When you're not around - All day on your feet, hard to - Keep that energy, I know - When it feels like the end of the road - You don't let go You just press forward - You're the engine that makes all things go - Always in disguise, my hero I see a light in the dark - Smile in my face - When we all know it's hard - There's no way to ever pay you back - Bless your heart - Know I love you for that - Honest and selfless - I don't know if this helps it but - Good Job - You're doing a good job, a good job - Good job - You're doing a good job - Don't get too down - The world needs you now - Know that you matter - Matter, matter yeah - It's a good job - You're doing a good job, a good job - Good job - You're doing a good job - Don't get too down - The world needs you now - Know that you matter - Matter, matter yeah - The mothers, the fathers - The teachers that reach us - Strangers to friends - That show up in the end - From the bottom to the top - The listeners that hear us - This is for you - You make me fearless - You're doing a good job, a good job - You're doing a good job - Don't get too down - The world needs you now - Know that you matter - Matter, matter yeah”*
- “Promises”
- “Jireh”

Scripture for this week:

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heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

- **Luke 1: 26 to 49:** The Birth of Jesus Foretold - 26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” 29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” 34 “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” 35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail.” 38 “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her. Mary Visits Elizabeth 39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”
- **Phil 4: 13:** 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.
- **Mathew 26:** 26 to 30: 26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” 27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the [b] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” 30 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

Holly Furtick - Sermon Title: “Check Your Roots - You Can Do This – How to have roots that never fail to bear fruit – We need to have the root of acceptance in our lives otherwise we will abandon our calling at the first sign of trouble – You are enough to do what God called you to - But it will not be easy – Repetition and tension over time creates strength - act on things in the simplest and smallest ways – understand that power of attachment to confirm what is already is already known - Elephants are a matriarchal society and they protect each other by circling up to protect their own – affirmation comes from your own mouth”

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- Interested in leading an eGroup? See: [www.elevationchurch.cc](http://www.elevationchurch.cc).
- Opening prayer by Pastor Steven Furtick: “Clap your hands and say that I am enough – I am enough – the love of God is here and we do not have to earn it – we do not have to achieve it - all we need

to do is to receive it right now – it is more than enough to cover our sin or take our shame away – it is more than enough for the challenges that we face today – you are enough Lord - therefore I am enough – You are not alone and you are never alone – Jehovah Jireh – the Lord will provide – we thank you for the provision of your body and blood as forgiveness for our sins – I thank you Lord that you break the power of sin – and free us from the things that bind us – I speak over every sister in Christ that is gathered with us this evening (during Reflect 2020) – we declare You are enough – and You’ll always be enough – and we thank that Your love for us is greater than we will ever know – and we do not have to study about it - or theorize about it – you demonstrated your love for us while we were still sinners – thank you God for the gift of Jesus Christ – our Lord, our Savior, our example – it is in His name - that we pray - amen.”

- 2020 has been a year of trying new things – thank you for so many of you that are gathered together remotely in watch parties while being a part of Reflect 2020.
- Opening Prayer from Holly Furtick: “God we thank you so much – We come here together tonight – it certainly looks different this year – but it is still beautiful because You are here – we are coming together across our world and across our screens – God, we unite our hearts together – we unite our faith together – we open up our minds and our ears because we want to hear from you Lord – speak to us now in Jesus’ name we pray amen.
- We have all learned new skills this year during the pandemic – like learning how to cook, teach kindergarten and work full time – all at the same time.
- Men have no idea how hard it was on women during this pandemic – just think about hair roots and removing nail polish - and stuff like that.
- Tonight it’s time for a root check (think hair roots at a salon).
- Say this to everyone: Let me check your roots!
- Jeremiah 17:7 to 8.
- **See Jer 17: 7-8: “But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. 8 They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”**
- **This passage of scripture presents a picture of a person that is like a tree – we want to be a tree that has roots that go deep – no matter what the world throws at us– no matter what happens to us – we can still operate from a place of strength.**
- Are you like me – where you tell yourself “by God I’m going to finish this year strong” - despite all of the hysteria and toil?
- Tonight we are going to talk about how we can have roots that never fail to bear fruit.
- It’s great to be a woman that can handle things – where she always seems to come out on the other side bearing fruit.
- Let’s look at Mary in Luke 1: 26 to 49.
- **Strong women do not happen by accident – anybody with killer abs doesn’t eat French fries every day – it’s all about the work they put in. Strength does not happen overnight - it happens over time – staying present – staying faithful – day in and day out – working on becoming the best version of yourself – and this is hard work – a tree does not grow overnight it takes time to put down roots – if you want to be strong and fight for the things that are important to you – you are going to have to have some roots – time under tension creates strength – the most important**



**part about the tree happens below the surface – in places where people can't see – can we say at the end of 2020 that a lot of things got thrown at me - but I got through it - and I'm stronger for it?**

- The easiest thing to do is to blame others and be easily offended by everything that does not come our way – it's also really easy to try very hard for one day – I'm gonna wake up at five - I'm going to read my Bible and I'm gonna to fast as well – and eight hours later we're screaming at customer service on the phone – while going through a drive-through at McDonald's looking for another serving of fries.
- **We have got to check our roots.**
- And Luke 1, we read learn about Mary that had to weather it's some droughts and storms.
- She can teach us about having deep roots.
- Mary had a massive calling on her life – she was going to raise a son of God.
- I don't know what it's like to raise the son of God but I do know what it's like to attempt to raise children.
- We know nothing about Mary before the scripture.
- **Regardless of what Mary was doing when the angel spoke to her (that bible does not say), she was ready, willing, and able to do what God called her to do. Is your day so crowded and so noisy that God would need to strike lightning to get your attention? Self-care is important – however what if self-care also means that your calendar is not so full that you are overwhelmed all of the time? Like saying no to some things and taking a break from social media.**
- **Do you have any pockets of time where you can reflect, pray, and think about God – during a commute perhaps? What is the last thing you do before you go to bed? We have some vast treasure of on-line worship and bible resources – we can fill the spaces in our lives with some amazing things – however if you don't have a plan, we end up scrolling every second of the day. Make space in your life - Mary had space in her day for God. And let me say one thing when it comes to making space in our lives – some of us are letting church slip thru our fingers – nine months into the pandemic – church on Sunday morning with the family might have started to slip – and if we let these important things slip through your fingers – we might find ourselves in a very difficult storm - and without the root system to make it through – because we have not made God present in our lives.**
- Be in a position so that God can speak to us.
- Are you aware? Mary was aware – and she proclaimed herself as a servant to God.
- She probably had many questions -
- **We need to have the root of acceptance in our lives otherwise we will abandon our calling at the first sign of trouble – and our calling is unique – we can either reject it or accept it.**
- Sometimes we reject our calling in subtle way – by letting ourselves get stuck – and I have a confession – I can be kind of lazy on occasion – where I am unwilling to put in the work to accomplish what God wants me to do.
- **Sometimes we hide behind the idea of “I'm not good enough” or “I don't have what it takes” rather than just putting in the work – to live out what God called you to do. You are enough to do what God called you to – but it will not be easy – repetition over time creates strength.**
- **You're called to do whatever God has placed in your life right now – not “one day” when you have more money - not one day when you have your own house.**

- You are called to the place you are right now – others need to see you walking confidently in the calling that God has given you – in your high school – at your home – at your work – others will see your strength and resilience.
- There will always be challenges – think about all of the challenges that Mary had to deal with – giving birth in a barn and watching her son experience pain, rejection, and a painful death.
- We can do hard things.
- Phil 4: 13: 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.
- No calling is easy.
- When God gives you a direction what is your response time? God uses people who hear his word and then move. After Mary received a revelation from an angel, she immediately went to see Elizabeth.
- And It starts with the small things – which is practice for bigger things – to apologize for something you did or to start the process of forgiving someone – act on things in the simplest and smallest ways – put down your phone – spend time with your kids – better is “right here” and “right now” – what can you right now?
- Understand that power of attachment to confirm what is already is already known – just like Mary reached out to Elizabeth.
- Recall the fictional book by Jody Caccione (sp?) regarding the elephants – who’s intelligence allows them to do remarkable things – even communicate six miles apart.
- Elephants are also a matriarchal society and kick the boys out – and even protect each other by circling up to protect their most vulnerable – see:  
[https://www.google.com/search?hl=en&tbm=isch&sxsrf=ALeKk01mvmWLbozgUEqLK0bnREH-1zOQ%3A1605357932511&source=hp&biw=550&bih=586&ei=bNGvX6LvHIHu\\_Qb8il6ICg&q=elephants+circling+up+to+protect+the+vulnerable&oq=elephants+circling+up+to+protect+the+vulnerable&gs\\_lcp=CgNpbWcQDDoHCCMQ6glQzoECCMQJzoCCAA6BQgAELEDOggIABCxAXCDAToGCAAQBR AeOgYIABAIEB46BAgAEBhQuCFYvrUBYOgGAWglcAB4BoABwQWIAAd1RkgEOMjguOS45LjMuMi40LjG YAQCGAQGqAQtdn3Mtd2l6LWltZ7ABCg&scient=img&ved=0ahUKEwii1bWqiLLtAhUBd98KHXYEA6EQ4dUDCAc#imgsrc=PY1GTWNomWCAyM](https://www.google.com/search?hl=en&tbm=isch&sxsrf=ALeKk01mvmWLbozgUEqLK0bnREH-1zOQ%3A1605357932511&source=hp&biw=550&bih=586&ei=bNGvX6LvHIHu_Qb8il6ICg&q=elephants+circling+up+to+protect+the+vulnerable&oq=elephants+circling+up+to+protect+the+vulnerable&gs_lcp=CgNpbWcQDDoHCCMQ6glQzoECCMQJzoCCAA6BQgAELEDOggIABCxAXCDAToGCAAQBR AeOgYIABAIEB46BAgAEBhQuCFYvrUBYOgGAWglcAB4BoABwQWIAAd1RkgEOMjguOS45LjMuMi40LjG YAQCGAQGqAQtdn3Mtd2l6LWltZ7ABCg&scient=img&ved=0ahUKEwii1bWqiLLtAhUBd98KHXYEA6EQ4dUDCAc#imgsrc=PY1GTWNomWCAyM)
- It is a beautiful thing when others come around and surround someone with love and grace during a time of need – yes having roots does require to do somethings on our own – and you are going to need others to support you when things don’t go your way.
- Pain is hard and some elect to go-it alone.
- Surround yourself with a few people that are further along in their journey and can help you – and when Mary was in a barn giving birth to Jesus, she probably recalled the encouraging words of Elizabeth. Check your roots this evening. Who is cheering you on? Who has fought for you? Who has grieved for you? Take some time to dig into the roots of friendship tonight. Build this now and before the storm or the drought comes.
- It is also a privilege to do things for someone else.
- Affirmation comes from your own mouth – this is good root building – Mary is a great example of this in Luke 1. Tap the roots that you cultivate – so the root system is available to you when then you need them.