

**"The Word, the Voice and Me"**  
**Luke 1:39-45**

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Emmett, Idaho

20 December Anno Domini 2000  
3rd Wednesday in Advent  
Pastor Michael L. McCoy

*Dear Baptized,*

*In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God (John 1:1).*

Last Wednesday evening we heard the announcement made to Mary that she was the virgin promised in the Prophet Isaiah, that she would carry the Christ of God within her, that she would be the mother of the Messiah. Thus, at the conception of the Son of God within the womb of this Jewish maiden, *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14)*. Included in that Good News told by the Angel Gabriel was more miraculous tidings ... that Elizabeth, Mary's kin, had *conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren (Luke 1:36)*. God had done the impossible with Mary and with Elizabeth. So Mary, handmaid of the LORD and carrying the Word, resolves to visit Elizabeth who has been with child for six months.

Please listen to the sermon text Luke 1:39-45 and consider ...

*The Word, the Voice and Me.*

*Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth. 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. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.*

Thus far the Word of the LORD our God.

The Word, the Voice and Me. Jesus is the Word of God begotten of His Father from eternity, conceived by the Holy Spirit and tabernacling for nine months in the womb of Mary. When Mary visited Elizabeth, it is likely that it was a week or less since Jesus was conceived. Though our Lord may have been only the size of a grain of sand or wheat in Mary's womb, He is the Creating Word,

the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The Word became flesh. Jesus is true God and true man two natures and yet one person. On account of this personal union and communion of the natures, Mary, the most blessed virgin, did not conceive a mere, ordinary human being, but a human being who is truly the Son of the most high God, as the angel testifies. He demonstrated His divine majesty even in His mother's womb in that He was born of a virgin without violating her virginity. ... He had this majesty immediately at His conception even in His mother's womb (FC SD Art. VIII, 'Person of Christ'). Jesus is the Word in the womb of Mary when she *entered the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth*.

The Word, the Voice and Me. John is the Voice of God *the Voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD' (Isaiah 40:3)*. The Voice is the prophet of whom the LORD promised through Malachi, *Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me (Malachi 3:1)*. John is the Voice whose conception also was miraculous the love child of his elderly parents, Zachariah and Elizabeth. Elizabeth had been pregnant for more than six months when Mary came into the house and greeted Elizabeth. Mary carried Jesus the Word and Elizabeth carried John the Voice. The house of Zachariah became a House of God as Mary, Elizabeth and John were blessed to be in the Presence of the LORD God. All were filled with the Holy Spirit. Unborn John, already born from above, even from his mother's womb, leaped for joy; Elizabeth intoned eulogies concerning the mother of her Lord and concerning Jesus; and Mary sang the Magnificat. John is the Voice.

The Word was in the beginning, though He was conceived after the Voice;  
Still the Voice was later, for the Word always precedes the Voice

The Word was God, the Word is God;  
The Voice was not, the Voice is not.

When asked, the Voice says, *I am not (John 1:21)*;  
When asked, the Word says, *I AM (John 8:58)*.

The Word is the only-begotten Son of God the eternal Father;  
The Voice is the unborn son of a mortal man.

The Voice is conceived by the coupling of a one-flesh man-and-woman;  
The Word is conceived by the miraculous overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.

The Word is the High Priest and the Lord of priests;  
The Voice is the Elijah come and the son of a priest.

The Word enters the house and Mary's Word floods Elizabeth's son;  
The Voice perceives the Presence of the Lord and is moved.

The true Word is now present in the house and there is Peace in Jesus;  
The faithful Voice now hears the greeting and John leaps for joy.

*So then faith comes by hearing,  
and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:14).*

The Word of Life has come to the Voice in the womb of Elizabeth;  
The Voice preaches his first sermon to his mother and she declares to Mary,  
*For indeed, as soon the voice of your greeting  
sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb  
for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there  
will be a fulfillment of those things which were told  
her from the Lord.*

The Voice is born three months later  
and in three decades is baptizing  
and preaching in the wilderness;  
The Word is born nine months later  
and in three decades is baptized by John  
and is tempted in the wilderness.

The Voice points people to Jesus and says,  
*Behold! The Lamb of God Who takes  
away the sin of the world (John 1:29).*  
The Word turns His face to the cross and says,  
*Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem,  
and ... the Son of Man ... will be mocked  
and insulted and spit upon. ... And they  
will scourge Him and put Him to death  
(Luke 18:31-33).*

The Word must increase;  
The Voice will decrease.

The Voice is stilled for an instant when John is beheaded;  
he is a martyr on account of his steadfastness in the Word;  
The Word is silent for three days when Jesus is entombed;  
but He is no martyr because He gave His Life and became obedient unto death.

But John is alive in the Paradise of the LORD and under His Altar;  
And Jesus is alive in His Paradise and enthroned at His Ascension.

The Word, the Voice and Me. But you ask, Hey, what about me? You forgot about me. Ahhh, yes. Well, concerning your conception, the Word says of those born of the coupling of man and woman, *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me (Psalm 51:5).* It is also taught among us that since the fall of Adam all men who are born (propagated or conceived) according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. That is, all men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mothers' wombs and are unable by nature to have true fear of God and true faith in God. Moreover, this inborn sickness and hereditary sin is truly sin and condemns to the eternal wrath of God all those who are not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit (AC, Art. II).

But dearly beloved, behold, I bring you Good News of a great joy. You have been born again by water and the Word ... born from above in Holy Baptism. Behold Jesus, the Incarnate Word, the

Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. *Or do you not know that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20).* Jesus paid the price for you and you belong to Him.

The Voice spoke the Word that brought you into the Kingdom of God, I baptize you in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. The Voice speaks the Word that cleanses you and keeps you in the gracious presence of the LORD God Almighty, ...

Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all yours sins in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

The Voice speaks the Word that sustains and feeds you in the Holy Supper, This is My Body; this is My Blood.

If the one who holds the office of the Voice does not proclaim the Word, then he needs to be confronted and told to repent and publicly to confess his sins and be forgiven. If your pastor will not repent then the church needs to drive him out and pelt him with dung on the way. If you, ... whether in a congregation or on the radio or on the television, ... if you continue to listen to a voice who has not the Word, then you will have your reward and sadly, both you and your children will suffer the consequences.

The Voice still cries in the wilderness of this world,

*Prepare the way of the LORD!*

*Behold! The Lamb of God Who takes  
away the sin of the world (John 1:29).*

The Word still accomplishes the His purpose,

*That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,*

*and that believing you may have  
Life in His Name (John 20:31).*

And Me? Well, here we stand and here we sing the Magnificat, hymn #275 doing so this night and in this place ... here in the Presence of the Word made flesh.