

Summary

This sermon explores how God plants dreams in our hearts and calls us to pursue them in community, using the story of Mary and Elizabeth from Luke 1. Pastor Nithin emphasizes that when Mary received the overwhelming news of carrying the Messiah, she didn't isolate herself but sought out Elizabeth for support and encouragement. Elizabeth's response demonstrates how we should call out the gifts and dreams we see in others, which gave Mary the confidence to sing the Magnificat - a song of God's justice and mercy. The message challenges us to both share our own dreams with trusted community members (the Mary Challenge) and to speak life into others by naming what we see stirring in them (the Elizabeth Challenge). The sermon concludes with the powerful reminder that our dreams should not be self-centered but should align with God's mission to bless others and bring justice to the world. Just as Mary's dream was about bringing the Savior to humanity, our dreams should contribute to making the world better and helping others flourish. The service ended with baptisms, celebrating those who have found new life in Christ and are publicly declaring their faith.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want to speak to us. Help us to be receptive to Your voice and Your leading in our lives. Lord, we know that You have dreams and purposes for each of us, and we pray that You would give us the courage to both pursue the dreams You've placed in our hearts and to encourage others in theirs. Holy Spirit, move among us today and help us to see ourselves and others through Your eyes. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What did you want to be when you grew up as a child? Share your childhood dream with the group.

Key Verses

- Luke 1:39-45
- Luke 1:46-55
- Isaiah 35:1-10
- John 10:10

Questions

- What stood out to you most about Mary's response to receiving such an overwhelming calling from God?
- Why do you think Mary chose to go to Elizabeth rather than handle this situation alone? What does this teach us about community?
- How did Elizabeth's response to Mary demonstrate what it means to 'make room' for someone else's dreams and calling?
- The Magnificat (Mary's song) focuses on God's justice and care for the poor and oppressed. How should our dreams align with God's heart for justice?
- Pastor Nithin mentioned that the best dreams intersect with God's mission for our world. What's the difference between selfish ambition and God-honoring dreams?
- Who has been an 'Elizabeth' in your life - someone who called out gifts or potential they saw in you? How did that impact you?
- What dreams or stirrings do you sense God placing in your heart, even if they seem overwhelming or unclear right now?
- How can we create environments in our relationships and community where people feel safe to share their dreams and receive encouragement?

Life Application

This week, take the Mary and Elizabeth Challenge. First, identify what dream or calling God is stirring in your heart and share it with someone you trust who can encourage and support you. Second, reach out to someone in your life and speak life into them by naming a gift, talent, or potential you see in them that they may not fully recognize themselves.

Key Takeaways

- When God gives us dreams or callings, we're not meant to carry them alone - we need community for support and encouragement.
- Like Elizabeth, we should celebrate and call out the gifts we see in others rather than being threatened or competitive.
- Our dreams should align with God's mission for justice, mercy, and blessing others, not just personal advancement.
- God-honoring dreams often seem overwhelming, but God provides the community and confirmation we need to pursue them.
- Speaking life into others by naming what we see in them can be the catalyst that helps them step into their calling.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the example of Mary and Elizabeth and how they supported each other in pursuing Your purposes. Help us to be people who both courageously share our dreams with trusted community and who speak life into others by calling out the gifts and potential we see in them. Give us wisdom to discern the dreams You've placed in our hearts and the boldness to pursue them for Your glory and the blessing of others. May we be a community that makes room for each other's callings and celebrates what You're doing in and through each person. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.