

**THE BIG IDEA:** Our lives need to point toward Jesus, not just be periodically for Jesus.

### The Take-Off

Musicals. People either love them or hate them, right? And maybe we hate them because they're just not all that good anymore, or at least according to International Music Database which ranks the top 5 musicals of all time as:

- Singing in the Rain
- West Side Story
- The Wizard of Oz
- The Sound of Music, and
- An American in Paris

I know what you're thinking: where's High School Musical 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6...? Nowhere! Not on the list anywhere.

Sometimes if I'm watching a musical - and that's big "if" - I start thinking about what life would be like as a musical

A soundtrack would start playing at unexpected times and people would get all serious faced and look off in the distant third and start singing.

Eventually the person they were talking to would join them in a perfect duet even though they never practiced and before long the streets would be closed down because hundreds of strangers would be dancing, perfectly choreographed.

If it's a Disney musical, there'd also be a band playing without any instruments actually plugged into any equipment.

Life as a musical would be epic ... ly awkward!!

What makes the best musicals so good is that the music seems to fit the movie. Bad musicals get awkward because the music kind of seems to come out of nowhere, and it leaves people looking at each other awkwardly, wondering when it'll be over.

I say all of that because we're going to encounter a musical moment in our passage today.

It's not an awkward musical moment, and I'll do my best to help you see why it isn't.

But first, let's set the stage by taking the time to read Luke 1:39-80.

It's long, so get comfortable and follow along with me as I read.

If you ever wonder where to tackle a large portion of scripture, let me suggest - at the beginning!

Let's walk back through and see how today's Big Idea is played out in the key people's words and responses.

Our Big Idea says that **our lives need to point toward Jesus, not just be periodically for Jesus.**

The reason why Mary's musical moment wasn't awkward is because God was a normal part of her life.

Sometimes, we're guilty of periodically breaking our in Jesus moments that don't seem to fit with the rest of our lives, but not Mary, and not Elizabeth, and not Zechariah. Their lives were squarely pointed toward Jesus - he was the true north on their compass.

Jesus wasn't just a song on Sunday; he was their Lord on the other six days, too.

How about you? How about me? Let me give you 7 marks that are in the lives of people who are pointing toward Jesus.

I'm sure there's more, but these are 7 that I see here in these 41 verses.

You may find that you are further down the road on some of these than others, but the point is that these 7 characteristic should be evident in increasing measure in our lives is we're truly following Jesus.

### 1. The Holy Spirit

- a. This visit between Mary and Elizabeth had quite a start, didn't it?
- b. Mary says hey and Elizabeth's baby leaps in her womb.
- c. Wendy and I (like all expecting parents) watched a lot of alien arm and leg movements with our kids, but backflips at the sound of someone's voice? Nope. Never experienced that.
- d. But Elizabeth did, and not only did John jump, but she was filled with the Holy Spirit.
- e. It's impossible to be full of the HS and not live lives pointing toward Jesus, because that's what the HS does
- f. John 15:26

### 2. The Lordship of Christ

- a. A lot of people get jazzed about Jesus when they get the feels in church or can see his activity in their lives
- b. But not Elizabeth! She expressed the Lordship of Jesus without even seeing Jesus! (v. 43)

### 3. Honor

- a. Obviously, Elizabeth honored Jesus by calling him her Lord
- b. But that wasn't all. She honored Mary, too, and called her "blessed" (v. 45)
- c. If you live a life pointing toward Jesus, you'll find yourself honoring others who carry Jesus
- d. Pastors, leaders, others who don't even go to The Gathering
- e. It's impossible to point toward Jesus and not have honor for others

### 4. Praise

- a. What did Mary do with the honor that Elizabeth showed her? Gave it right to God!
- b. How? A musical broke out!!
- c. She glorified him, rejoiced in him, recognized his mercy, power and graciousness
- d. Our praise is directly related to our awareness of what God has done, and seeing what God has done requires a life pointing toward him. We praise where we gaze.
- e. What are you looking at? Over time, that's where your praise will go.

### 5. Humility

- a. This is pretty closely tied to our willingness to praise, but what we do with praise shows if our lives are pointing toward Jesus or just periodically for him
- b. Mary knew that any good she had done paled in comparison to the goodness of God
- c. She knew that any recognition of her was just a reflection of God
- d. Verse 48b - "generations will call me blessed" - pride would stop there with a chest bump
- e. Not Mary. She recognized that was only the result of God's greater acts - verse 49 - "for he has done great things for me - holy is his name"
- f. The key to remaining humble is in weighing ourselves against God's holiness, not our own worthiness

### 6. Courage

- a. The 6th mark of a life pointed toward Jesus is seen in Zechariah at John's circumcision
- b. The mark is courage, and let me tell you why
- c. When we're pointed toward Jesus, we've got the courage to live lives of no compromise
- d. Many who are periodically for Jesus have moments when they feel him and promise to him, but once that moment is gone, so is the conviction of the promise
- e. Not Zechariah. Months removed from the command to name his child John, Zechariah kept the command
- f. He had the courage to do something new, to move in a different direction than what he'd known (v. 61)
- g. People committed to lives pointed toward Jesus have courage, because they know that intimidation will always lead to compromise

### 7. Redemption

- a. What happened after the circumcision? Another song! When you're singing at a circumcision, it's a musical!
- b. Zechariah sang a prophetic song about redemption, and that's the 7th mark: lives committed to the redemptive plan of God in the world.
- c. God came to redeem (v. 68), he saves (v. 69), he rescues and restores (vv. 74-75)
- d. Living lives pointed toward Jesus means we're marked as people of redemption, and just like John, we're willing to be used to shine light on those living in darkness (v. 79)

### The Landing

It's easy to have moments for God - to be periodically a fan of Jesus - but if we're followers - pointed toward Jesus and pointing toward Jesus - then our lives are marked by these 7: full of the Spirit, convinced of the Lordship of Jesus, full of honor, praise, humility, courage and the redemptive message of the gospel

**How is your life against those 7 marks? How do you measure up?**

If these are missing more than evident, could it be that you are more fan than follower? That you are periodically for Jesus more than pointed toward him?

I want to invite you to remedy that. To make Jesus the true north of your life. To point toward him so that you can lead others to do the same.

Let's pray.