Readings

Scripture

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹ And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." ⁶¹ And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." ⁶² And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. ⁶⁴ And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶ and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, ⁶⁸ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people ⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; ⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, ⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us ⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. ⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high ⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

- Luke 1:57-80 (English Standard Version)

Reflection

The promise, made when I am in love and because I am in love, to be true to the beloved as long as I live, commits me to being true even if I cease to be in love. A promise must be about things that I can do, about actions: no one can promise to go on feeling in a certain way. He might as well promise to never have a headache or always to feel hungry.

- C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity (p. 107)

Sermon Outline

The Wait Is Finally Over Luke 1:57-80

Remembering His Promise of Mercy
Brad Anderson

God's promise has brought joy to His people; the wait was finally over... (Luke 1:57a, 66)

t's a time to rejoice (Luke 1:57-66, 80)						
t's a time to	o reflect (Luke 1:67-79)				

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- What is a promise? What do promises do in your heart when you know that you can trust the one making the promise?
- What promises and fulfillments are found in Luke 1:57-80?
- What does waiting do in a person while a promise is being fulfilled? What did silence accomplish in Zechariah's life during Elizabeth's pregnancy?
- What were the last words spoken by Zechariah before he was unable to speak? Go back and look earlier in Luke 1 to give shape to your answer.
- Why do you think Luke finds that these details were so important?