



***At what do the neighbors marvel, and at what does Spirit-filled Zacharias marvel?*** Pastor leads his family in today’s “Hopewell @Home” passage. Luke 1:57–80 prepares us for the sermon in Morning Public Worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these twenty-four verses, the Holy Spirit teaches us to marvel at our God’s faithfulness in making and keeping promises of salvation, power in reversing all of the work of the enemy, and tender love in saving us by coming Himself and taking us for Himself.

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## Saturday, December 25, 2021 ◻ Read Luke 1:57–80

Questions from the Scripture text: What time came in v57? How did her neighbors and family respond (v58)? What day does v59 describe, and what was happening? What were they going to call him? What did Elizabeth call him instead (v60)? Why was this strange to the guests (v61)? Whom did they expect to overrule (v62)? What name did he choose (v63)? What happened to him at that point (v64)? What was the response of not just the guests but the surrounding region (v65-66)? What happens to Zacharias to shape his words for his first speech since having his voice restored (v67)? For what event is Zacharias praising God (v68-71)? What does he say that God is fulfilling (v72-73)? What is God’s purpose in this salvation (v74-75)? What part will Zacharias’s child have (v76)? What would the Lord do, for Whom John would prepare the way, for His people (v77-79)? What did God do for child John—and where (v80)?

We tend to be amazed by unusual things. It’s the spectacular that impresses us. So, baby John’s family and neighbors were abuzz with the news of his strange name (v61) and his dad’s muteness and prophecy (v64).

That actual prophecy, though, focuses upon Someone Else altogether. Baby John’s significance is as a go-before (v76b). It’s a great honor to be His herald, to give knowledge of what He does (v76a, 77). But it is not John who does it. Jesus is the great One, and someone who responds to John rightly will be impressed rather little with John and rather much with the One whom John proclaims.

John is still teaching this some 30 years later, when his disciples wish people would be more impressed with him, and he is teaching all of us, “[Christ] must increase, and [we] must decrease” (John 3:22-36).

But it is Jesus who saves us from those great enemies who keep us from “serving Him boldly in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life” (v74-75). Jesus atones for our sin, negates death’s and Hell’s claims upon us, and turns all the attacks of the devil upon themselves.

It is Jesus who visits us, in the tender mercy of God, and drives away our darkness and death by His light and life (v78-79).

Like John, we too must desire that it would be Jesus who gets all the glory of our life. And, especially when we desire for others to be guided into the way of peace, it must be Jesus Whom we present and Jesus Whom we praise. Yes, what He has done for us or how He has used us are interesting and notable mercies. But the good news is not news about us. It’s news about Jesus!

What spiritual people/circumstances most easily catch your attention? How can you redirect this attention back to Jesus Himself and what He has done? Whom have you been telling about Christianity? How much has that telling focused upon Jesus?

*Sample prayer: O Lord, we thank You for giving us the privilege and honor of bringing glory to Christ. Truly, His salvation is marvelous. So forgive us when the change in us is small, or when we fail to give Him all the praise for it. Glorify Christ by continuing to conform us to His perfect light, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

Suggested songs: ARP45A “My Heart Is Greatly Stirred” or TPH438 “I Love to Tell the Story”

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

Luke 1 verses 57 through 80. These are God's words Now Elizabeth's full-time came for her to be delivered and she brought forth a son when her neighbors, relatives hurt, how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoice with her.

So, it was on the eggs day that they came to circumcised child and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias His mother answered and said no few shall be called John. But they said to her, There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name, so they made signs to his father.

What he would have him called and he asked for our writing tablet and wrote saying his name is John, so they all marveled immediately. His mouth was opened and his tongue, loosed and he spoke praising God. Then fear came on all the dwelt around them turned. All these things were discussed throughout all the Hill Country of Judea and all those who heard them kept them.

In their hearts say hot kind of child will this be? And the hand of the Lord was with him. Now, his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied. Saying blessed is the Lord God of Israel for. He has visited and redeemed his people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant, David as he spoke by the mouth of his.

Holy Prophets. Who have been since the world began that we should be saved from our enemies. And from the hand of all who hates to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his fully covenant, the earth, which he swore to our father, Abraham to grant us.

That we being delivered from the hand of our enemies. Might serve him without fear and holiness, and righteousness before him, all the days of our life, for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways to give knowledge of salvation to his people, by the remission of their sins through the tender.

Mercy of our God with which the day spring from on high has visited us to give light to those who sit in darkness, shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. So the child grew and became strong and spirit and was in the deserts. Till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent work.

People can be easily impressed and make great big deals out of small. For instance, naming your son a name that doesn't come from your family. When Elizabeth, as you just heard said, his name is John. They were all surprised. They told her as if she didn't know. Well, I guess she's getting on an age, right.

As a miraculous birth because of how old she was, maybe they thought, oh, poor Elizabeth memory is going. She thinks there's somebody in the family named John So they tell her. There's no one in your family named John and they say We can't you know it'd be wrong to have him named John without Zecharias's permission after all.

He's husband, he's the head. He has the last say, in the naming of the children, For instance. You remember, when Rachel was going to name her second child, then on the and her husband overruled her and named him Benjamin. So they asked Zacharias and he doesn't overrule her, He gets the writing tablet, just so he can be as plain as possible.

And he says, his name is, John and they all marveled. Now there is something marvelous about John, but it's not his name, It's the role that he has because God has sent John as the prophet who goes before and says, prepare the way of the Lord Jehovah, who is coming.

I'm just Isaiah prophesied. And so once Zecharias writes out, his name is John He finally gets to talk for the first time in months And what's the first thing he does? When you opens his mouth? What is the most important thing for you to do with your mouth? And one of the reasons why when you're not doing it, you still take good care of your mouth.

And your words, first thing he does most important thing you do with your mouth ever is worship and so you're careful not to that blasphemy come out of your mouth. That's why you're careful. Never to use your mouth for filthy joking. That's why you're careful not to curse your brother or sister to open your mouth.

Always with love with grace with wisdom, not with idle or wasted words. But words, that honor God words that do good to others because very soon, if we are living well and we're worshiping God as a family as a household. A couple of times a day, and we're worshiping God in the public assembly.

Every Lord's Day morning and evening. If we're living in a biblical manner very soon. We'll be using

that mouth to praise God to worship. God must not defile. That mouth make it unclean since we are about two years, it for the worship of God. So he has mouth is up and his tongue does loose to can finally speak again.

And of course, the Holy Spirit fills him and a gives him a song of praise to God. That he's singing over his eight-day-old son. And he blesses God in verses 68 through 75. And he praises God by a prophecy and blessing upon his son specifically in verses 76 through 79.

Now, he blesses God because God is about to destroy the work of the devil. The seed that was promised that would cross the serpent's head was about to come into the world, that is Jesus. In fact, he had been and his mother's womb about six months. Mary's wound at this time, The seed that would crush the serpent's head.

This coming. The offspring of Abraham, the one in, whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. Is coming the Son of David. The great king of promise was was about to come into the world was already in the womb of his mother, Mary, And so Zacharias, praises God, for salvation that has been planned from before the beginning of the world and promised.

Since the beginning of the world. Notice he says verse 70 as he spoke by the mouth of his holy Prophet's who have been since the world began. There's a good argument against millions of years. You can't add millions of years between the beginning of the cosmos and the beginning of prophesying.

If Luke 1 verse 70 says at the beginning of the cosmos they were prophesying salvation. That means not just creation takes their place very quickly but the fall comes upon the heels of creation very quickly which of course dead because Adam and his wife did not have any children yet but the time of fall.

So he said God has been promising salvation. Since the world began, but he's been sending prophets to tell more. And more about the Savior who would come and now the Lord God is coming, and He is visiting His people. Now when God did a great work among his people or sent a great prophet among his people, that could rightly be described in Scripture as the Lord visiting his people even just has saving them For instance, from Exodus or bringing them back from the exile.

The Lord visiting his people But here it is the Lord himself who has become a man who is in Mary's womb and so that the Lord has visited and redeemed. His people as is all the more literal even in that way, Note that he uses the past tense. He has visited and redeemed his people.

That is how sure the fulfillment of the word of the Lord is and how sure Jesus has completion of His mission is and so the Lord saves us from what our enemies and the hand of all who hate us, especially the great enemy the devil. And what had the devil done?

The devil had killed all humanity and Adam by causing us to spiritually die. So that we would not be righteous before God but guilty, so that we would not live. Holy lives, but profane and wicked lives, but God comes by Christ. Not only that, our sins would be forgiven, that we would have the remission of sins for 77, but that being, forgiven, through Jesus and being joined to Jesus, we would be able to verse 74 and 75 serve him without fear.

We worship him knowing that we are accepted because of Christ in holiness, will be able to live lives by that faith by which it is possible to please God growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ walking in. Good works that God has prepared for us and created us new in Christ Jesus that we might do serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

So, as we live, We want to live holy lives. We want to live righteous lives. Why? Because this is what God has sent Jesus for. Yes, so that we might have our sins forgiven. Let's verse 77 says but also so that we might serve him without fear and holiness.

And righteousness before him. All the days of our life Zecharias is rejoicing over, his son is prophesying over his son But what he says over his son is really much more about Jesus. Isn't it than it is about John. John himself later in life would recognize. This is how it should be for us.

What he says I must decrease, but he must increase and I think of your children when you think of yourselves, You should think of how Christ is honored in your life, how the power of Christ is employed in your life. The good that Christ does through your life. When you come to think of your own children, You must think of Christ as primary and rejoice over the way your children relate to Him, even as Zechariah's by the Holy Spirit, does with his son, We know.

God not only to be a powerful Savior by saving us from the devil and doing both the guilt and the corruption in which the devil brought us. We know him not only to be powerful but kind or 78 through the tender mercy of our God. It is the great display of his love particularly knowing that Christ would die for us.

Sinners and that God had given his son to do that and his love. So let's pray and ask the Lord that he

would make us to praise Him. Most of all for what he has done in Christ and that he would form our lives around the display of the Lord Jesus, and the work of the Lord Jesus.

And that he would make us to note Him as a kind tender loving God spring.

Thank you Lord for this fortune of your word. Help us not to be so impressed with unusual, oddities in everyday life to be impressed with you, to be impressed with your promises to be impressed, with your faithfulness, to keep them to be impressed with Christ to salvation to be impressed, with your forgiveness, to be impressed, by your power to make us live.

Holy and write just lives before you make us to be impressed with. You make our hearts to be full of praise to. You make us to think of our lives, in terms of how they honor, you glorify you, and our children and our future. Children's lives about how you may, be honored and glorified, and then grant that we would know you and make you known as faithful and powerful righteous.

And tender the kind loving, yes. These things through Christ. Amen.