

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 07.12.25

PREACHER: PS NATHAN BEAN

Advent: Repentance, Faith, and Fulfillment in Luke

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

BEING [HEART], THINKING [MIND] & DOING [BODY]

[A PERSONAL REFLECTION]

Conviction of a Disciple:

A disciple prepares room for Christ through repentance, cultivated faith, and a softened heart that welcomes God's disruptive grace.

OVERVIEW

Advent is not a season of sentimentality—it is a season of preparation. Luke shows us that Jesus is the long-awaited fulfillment of prophecy, the light that breaks 400 years of silence. Through Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, and John, we learn that God still meets His people in ordinary places, inviting us to turn from darkness, embrace faith, and ready our hearts for His transforming presence.

ACTION

Q1. Where is God calling you to repent—to turn from darkness so His light can reach you?

Q2. What fear, doubt, or need for proof must you surrender to choose faith?

Q3. Who is your “Elizabeth”—someone who can hold and strengthen the faith you carry?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:5–25, 39–80

Advent begins with a long silence. Four centuries without a prophet's voice. Four centuries of waiting, longing, wondering whether God still remembers His people. Then suddenly—light pierces the quiet.

Zechariah the priest encounters the angel Gabriel, who announces a child, a forerunner, a new dawn. But instead of faith, Zechariah reaches for certainty: "How can I be sure?" It is the question we all ask when God's word confronts our limitations. We crave proof, control, information—anything easier than trust. But knowledge is the great illusion of faith. It can support belief, but it can never replace true surrender.

Mary, however, responds differently. With far less clarity and far more inconvenience, she whispers, "Let it be." Her faith is expressed as a simple "yes". Elizabeth models the same courage—receiving a promise without an angelic visitation, without explanation, yet embracing it as grace. Her quiet trust anchors the unfolding story.

And Zechariah—silenced—becomes the unexpected symbol of Advent. He isn't being punished, but he is being formed. Hidden from the noise, protected from doubt-filled voices, he is shaped in the stillness until a song finally rises from within him: the Benedictus, a hymn of fulfillment, mercy, and sunrise for those living in darkness. Silence gives birth to worship. Delay deepens faith. God brews something holy in the spaces where we cannot speak.

Advent insists that new life rearranges everything. It disrupts our plans, unsettles our comfort, and exposes our illusions of control. But this disruption is mercy. Light doesn't always come to keep us warm on comfy but to set our hearts on fire—to awaken us to repentance, to call us out of the shadows, and prepare a people who are ready for the Lord.

This season asks us to turn again—to release the need for certainty, to welcome holy inconvenience, to let faith rise where understanding cannot. Advent is not passive waiting; it is active yielding. It is choosing to believe that God still breaks silence, still keeps promises, still brings light to those who sit in darkness, guiding our feet into the path of peace.

DISCUSSION

[A GROUP REFLECTION]

- 1) How does Zechariah's silence challenge your understanding of how God forms us?
- 2) Where do you identify more with Zechariah, Mary, or Elizabeth in this season of faith?
- 3) What would "bearing fruit in keeping with repentance" look like for you this Advent?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

Light of the world, shine into the hidden places of our hearts. Turn us from darkness, free us from the need for proof, and teach us the humble courage of Mary, Elizabeth, and Zechariah. Form in us a repentant, faith-filled expectation as we prepare for Your coming.

Amen