

The First Glimmer

- After 400 years of spiritual silence, what was the _____ glimmer that God was making good on his promises?

Background & Tension

- Luke 1:5-7
- Both Zechariah and Elizabeth had _____ spiritual credentials.
- Barrenness was seen as a _____ from God.
- Their people had experienced 400 years of silence, and this was their _____ experience of God’s silence.

The Beginning of the Fulfillment

- Luke 1:8-10
- “Only once in his life would a priest receive the special _____ of offering incense in the Holy Place as part of the preparation for the sacrificial offering” (Darrell Bock, Luke: Vol. 1, p.79).
- Luke 1:13-17

- The name, John, means “Yahweh has been _____.”

The Predawn Light

- Isaiah 9:1-2
- John 1:1, 6-9, 14
- Psalm 46:1-3
- Psalm 37:18-19
- The gifts of joy and delight in Christ are not meant to be hoarded but _____, distributed, publicized, and discussed.

“Lord, as I lay down in sleep last night and rose this morning only by your grace, so keep me in a joyful, lively remembrance that whatever happens, I will someday know my final rising – the resurrection – because Jesus Christ lay down in death for me and rose for my justification. Amen” (Tim & Kathy Keller, The Songs of Jesus, p.23).

How will you respond to God’s word today?

Reflection Questions

1. Zechariah & Elizabeth experienced tension between their faith and what was happening in their life. Where do you experience that kind of tension?
2. How has God been gracious to you amid that tension?
3. Psalm 37 speaks of a kind of faith that does not wither in times of disaster and enjoys plenty in times of famine. Understanding we’re all frail people, do you feel your faith in Jesus has reached this level? If not, what do you feel stands in the way of trusting God in difficult times?
4. What captured your attention in this message? How might you respond to that thought or idea?
5. What might God be saying to you?
6. What are you going to do about it?