

SERMON OUTLINE Luke 1:46-55

Mary's Song: Lessons in Anticipation

THE NATURE OF ANTICIPATION

Anticipation Is a Longing for Something We Expect

Anticipation Is from God

Not All Anticipation Is Good

Anticipation Exists Because of God's Promises

We Need Help to Anticipate Well

MARY'S ANTICIPATION BEGAN AT THE GIVING OF PROMISES (1:26-38)

God's Christmas Promises to Mary

God's Christmas Promises to Us

MARY'S ANTICIPATION WAS GREAT BECAUSE SHE LOVED AND BELIEVED THE PROMISES (1:46-55)

God's Infinite Glory

God's Near and Far Promises

God's Past, Present, and Eternal Future Promises

OUR ANTICIPATION IS MEANT TO FIND ITS MARK (2:15-20; JOHN 1:14; ACTS 1:9-11; REV. 22:20)

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

The big ideas of this sermon are that (1) God's great promises require great anticipation and (2) great anticipation regarding God's promises requires God's great help. The main takeaway, therefore, is to prayerfully consider Mary's song and turn it into greater trust in and celebration of Jesus' birth and return.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. How do you define anticipation? Where does it come from? What determines its level of intensity?
3. What kinds of things did you most anticipate as a kid? Why is it often easier for kids to anticipate than adults?
4. What kinds of things do you most anticipate now? Why?
5. Which aspect of anticipation's nature stands out to you the most and why?
6. Which of God's promises to Mary most causes your soul to magnify God? Which of His promises to you does?
7. Is there an attribute of God in Mary's song that you would like to grow in appreciation for?
8. Are you usually more encouraged by God's kindness to those closest to you or those furthest away? Past, present, or future?
9. Do you struggle more with God-honoring anticipation because you undervalue His promises or undertrust their fulfillment?
10. Is it convicting that Mary was more certain of God's Christmas promises to come than we often are now that it has?
11. What is one thing you should stop doing and one thing you should start doing for a more God-honoring Christmas celebration?
12. In what way/s did the sermon help you see the greatness of God?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

13. Create a children's book, telling the story of Christmas from Genesis to Revelation (bonus for coloring pages and poetry).
14. Read the different songs in Luke's Gospel in preparation for the sermons to come (1:46-56; 1:67-79; 2:25-35)
15. Make a list of three people you'd like to share the Christmas story with. Pray for them every day. Share as the Lord allows.
16. Pick up [Leland Ryken's Journey to Bethlehem](#) or some other guide for Christmas poetry and add it to your devotions.
17. Create and share a playlist of the best Christmas songs—doctrinally and musically rich.
18. Stop one thing and start one thing to make your Christmas anticipation and celebration more honoring to God.
19. Ask two different people in your family or DG (1) One thing they got from this sermon, and (2) How you can pray for them.
20. Pick one specific thing you mean to do differently, with the Spirit's help, as a result of the things you heard in this text/sermon.

PRAYER POINTS

21. Adoration. Praise God that He is salvation, omniscient, mighty, great, holy, merciful, eternal, omnipotent, kind, just, helping, and imminent. Praise God that He is triune, sovereign, wise, and good. Praise God that He is perfect in every way.
22. Confess. Confess a failure to seek out God's promises, a lack of belief in them, a lack of love for them, and a lack of expectation for their fulfillment. Confess any worldly aspects of your celebration of Jesus' birth. Confess any indifference to others hearing and receiving God's Christmas promises. Confess numbness to the glory of God and failure to magnify Him.
23. Thanksgiving. Thank God for sending His only Son in love to save the world. Thank Him for looking upon your humble estate and calling you blessed and exalting you in Jesus. Thank God for His mercy and help in your life.
24. Supplication. Ask God to increasingly make us a church that knows His promises, loves His promises, and lives entirely in light of His promises. Ask God to make us a church that can't not share the good news of Christmas. Ask God to use us as a means of feeding the hungry and helping the lowly. Ask God to fill us with love for Him, one another, and all our neighbors.