

The Past Tense Future of the People of God

Sermon Series: Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 1:67-80

→ “Blessed be 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” (vv. 68-69).



Big Idea

Though much of Christ’s victory over Satan, sin, and death is still to be applied to us, it is so certain a future for us that we are called to change the future tense to past tense by faith.

(1) Our Future and Past Tense Redemption (vv. 67-69)

In this prophetic hymn, Zechariah begins by describing God’s gracious activity, highlighting 3 actions in particular: (1) God has “visited” His people; (2) “redeemed” His people; (3) and “raised up a horn of salvation” for His people. These 3 things describe something that God is going to do in the future, and yet they are spoken of here as if they’ve already happened in the past?! This highlights a precious truth for the children of God: what God plans to do, what God promises to do...is already done! The future tense is made past tense because of the unshakeable stability of God’s plan and promise, His will and word.

(2) Its Historical Basis (vv. 70-73a)

The language of vv. 73-74 connects us back to a specific context in God’s dealings with Abraham (Gen 22:16-17). The oath God makes there represents the climax of God’s dealings with Abraham. It advances every previous promise and covenant to a place of irreversible assurance. But note the context in which this oath is made: the almost sacrifice of a beloved only son, and the sacrifice of a substitute in his place. The sworn oath of blessing and deliverance alluded to in v. 73 of our text, is made in the context of and only son sacrifice and a substitutionary sacrifice—both of which are brought together and fulfilled in the Messiah’s person and work on the cross.

(3) Its Eternal Goal (vv. 73b-79)

Disguised a bit beneath some of the nationalistic, earthy language of these vv. is an indication that this Messiah has come to enter into combat with the 3 most basic, ancient opponents of the people of God: Satan, sin, and death. Christ would deal with all 3 of these ancient foes at one and the same time, on the cross. On the cross this beloved only Son, the promised offspring of Abraham, has wood bound to His back by His Father, He walks up Calvary’s hill, and when the knife is raised over His head, God is silent, there is no voice halting the sacrifice, the blade falls, and He dies as a substitute in our place! God has finally provided the Lamb, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world!



Critical Action

Labor by the Spirit of the risen Christ over God’s promises until the future tense is turned to past tense by faith and you find yourself walking in His power and peace in the present.

Reflection Questions

- Read Heb 11. How did the saints of old turn the future tense to past tense. How did this affect their lives in the present? Are you doing this? How does it affect you when you are?
- Read Zech 3:1-5. How does this scene relate to the sermon? To your life?
- How is Jesus prefigured in the story of Gen 22? Why would God do this? How does this encourage your faith?

