

**Luke 1: 57 – 80**

**The Birth of John the Baptist**  
**Zechariah's prophecy**

# Elizabeth's wait



**After 9 months**



Her neighbours and family heard that the Lord had blessed her, and they shared her joy.

On the eighth day they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, "**No! He's to be called John.**"

They said to her, "**There's no one in your family who has that name.**"

Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child.



He asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, "His name is John." As soon as he had written it, he began to speak again, praising God.

The neighbours were all amazed, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things.

# Children of the Kingdom

**The important background to this story and the confusion the Church has made of it**

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah,  
Luke 1:59



*The ceremony of circumcision was linked to the custom of naming the child at the same time.*



# **The covenant with Abraham**

Genesis 17:4 -14

"As for me, this is my covenant with you:  
You will be the father of many nations.

## **A new name**

No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

## **Promise of descendants**

I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.



# The covenant with Abraham

## The possession of the land of Canaan

The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God." Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come.

## Sign of covenant membership - circumcision

This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.

# The covenant with Abraham



**It included him, his children,**  
**'household'**  
**and future male children**

For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner--those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."





## The importance of a heart experience

*There had to be more than a physical sign.*

The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

Deuteronomy 30:6

Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. .... In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring.

Romans 9:6-8

*Here is the example of Samuel and his mother ...*

## **Hannah's prayer of 'dedication'**



And {Hannah} made a vow, saying, "LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son,

then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head." 1Samuel 1:11

# Samuel's experience



The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. ... Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called Samuel.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. .... Now **Samuel did not yet know the LORD**: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. 1Samuel 3:1 -7

# The false 'connection' that often leads to nominal Christianity

**“Baptism” or “Christening”  
is NOT to the church  
what circumcision was for Israel**

For the Jews, the boy became a member of the nation of Israel by circumcision.  
(but needed an experience of God to be part of believing Israel)

In the New Testament times people became real members of the church through faith in Jesus and professed that faith in believer's baptism

# The Contrast – John's baptism and believer's baptism



Paul ... arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, .....  
“What baptism did you receive?” “John's baptism,” they replied. Paul said, “John's baptism was a baptism of repentance.

He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Act 19:1-5

# “Household”

## The Philippian Jailer



They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds;

then immediately he and all his household were baptized.

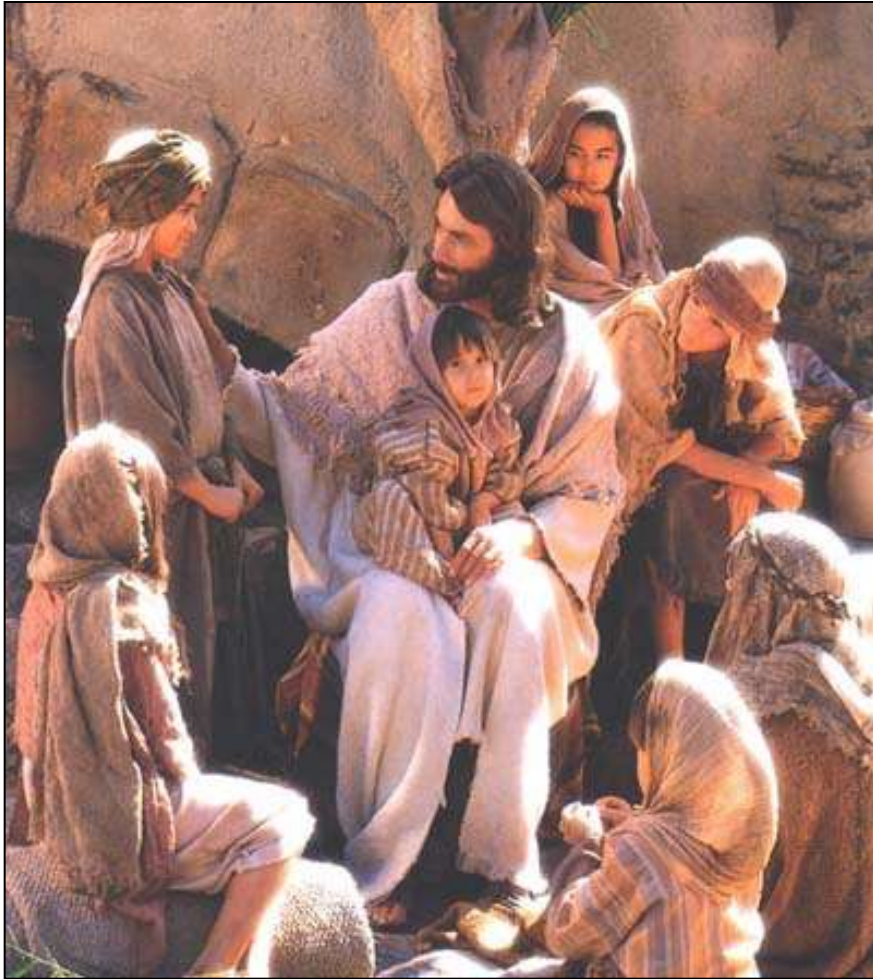
Acts 16:31-33

*This might include children  
that could understand the gospel for themselves*

# So what part have the children in the church?



# They are part of the church congregation



Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:13-14

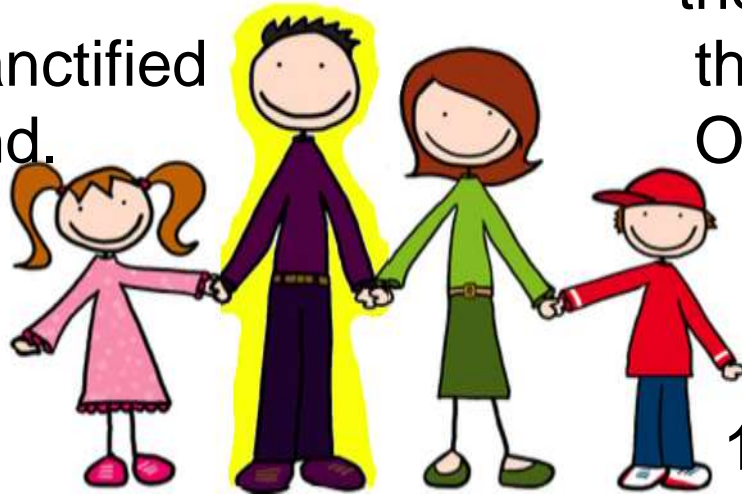
"From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise'?"

Matthew 21:16



# **Children of a believer are in a privileged position**

For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.



the unbelieving through her. Otherwise your children would be unclean,

1Corinthians 7:14

**It does not make them Christians  
but they are closer than outsiders  
to those who are.**

# **A blessing from the Lord cherish them & give thanks**

Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. Psalm 127:3-4

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table.

Psalm 128:3



# **Vulnerable**

## **Love them – provide – protect**

After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. 2 Corinthians 12:14



By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Hebrews 11:23

# Need direction - Give them Loving discipline



Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best;

but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:9- 11

# Need a role model

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.  
Matthew 5:16



## *The Role Model In You*

Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good.

3 John 1:11

# Learn from them

Jesus said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3

Simplicity

Trust

New way of seeing

Enthusiasm

**vs.**

Complications

Unbelief

Seen it all before

Apathy

# **They need to come to Jesus Pray for their salvation**

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Cf Deuteronomy 6:6-7

## **The Essentials !**



**An understanding and belief of these are things each child/ person has to come to for themselves (by the grace of God). We cannot do it for them.**



to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 1:12-13



**Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.**



**“You, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God; for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way for him.”**

**And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel.**

