While our sense of time is shaped by our limited life spans, our impatience, our plans and agendas, our biological clocks, and the schedules imposed on us by others, God’s sense of time is impeccable. Sometimes we wish he’d hurry up, and other times we think he’s already too late. But God knows when the harvest is ripe and ready, and because our faith harvests more than we think—it involves other people, occasions for testimony, and ongoing ripple effects in peripheral facets of our lives—he waits until it has the maximum fruit for the greatest number of people. For us, that’s hard to handle. For him, it’s the fullness of time.

The long-awaited Messiah is the prime example. God’s people surely thought many earlier moments would have been perfect for the deliverer to come, but God worked for centuries for the intersection of cultures, the expectations of his people, and the religious climate of an empire to come together in just the right way. In the minds of his people, this was long overdue. In the mind of God, the timing was perfect.

There are hints of pregnancy and labor in today’s verse—an appropriate metaphor for the seeds of faith that have been planted within us. God puts a promise deep within the soil of our hearts, and we wait until the time of labor for its birth to come. That wait can seem uncomfortably and even painfully long. So can the labor pains we experience at the time of fulfillment; his promises often come forth with a bit of trauma. But while we wait, we nourish those seeds, watch over them, and create the right climate for them to grow. We are pregnant with the promises he has given.

God is teaching us the way of faith, so we rarely experience immediate answers to our asking. But that doesn’t mean nothing is happening. Seasons shift, plans develop, conditions ripen, and the harvest is never late. God—the master gardener, the fulfiller of divine purposes, the giver of life—is at work. And when the time is right, life comes forth. And it is always worth the wait.

***The birth of Jesus is the sunrise in the Bible.***

If you have not been to church lately, come back! I was reading from Today in the Word, many have gotten out of the habit of attending church and think that they can get the same experience watching or listening to a service. Church is not about only the sermon, music, and prayer—it is about meeting together with a community of believers who encourage each other in love, prayer and fellowship. That to me is what lifts me and sets the tone for my week.