

SONGS OF ADVENT // ZECHARIAH'S JOY

TEXT: Luke 1:67-80

Zechariah the priest and his wife Elizabeth were righteous servants of God. For many years they suffered; longing for a child to no avail. When God spoke to Zechariah and promised a son, Zechariah did not believe. God lovingly disciplined Zechariah by making him mute until the birth of his son, John the Baptist. Once he regained the ability to speak, out poured a hymn of praise to the God who redeems and keeps his promises. Zechariah's story shows us the importance of faith in the word of God and the joyful response to his promises.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **HEAD:** Questions aimed at our minds to help us *understand* God's word.
 - What are some key themes that you notice in Zechariah's hymn of praise?
 - According to Zechariah, how does God show his mercy to the world? What purpose does God have in mind for his people?
2. **HEART:** Questions aimed at our affections to help us *love* God.
 - Zechariah's silence was discipline for not believing God's word to him. What makes it so difficult for us to believe the promises of God? What are some examples of ways God had moved you from unbelief to belief?
 - Consider the context of God's promise to Zechariah (Years of being unable to have children). How do you handle suffering? Does it tend to produce thoughts of God's goodness or hard thoughts toward God?
3. **HANDS:** Questions aimed at our hands to help us *live for* God (Personally, Communally, and Missionally).
 - A recurring theme in our advent series is how God's servants declare the grace and mercy of God that comes to us in Christ. Who in your life needs to hear the Gospel message of grace? How will you share it with them?

Develop an intentional plan.

- Here's a homework exercise for each of us. Over the next few days, take some time to compose a hymn of praise in response to what God has done for you. Use the songs of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) and Zechariah (Luke 1:67-79) as a guide as you praise God for his past, present, and future work in the world and in your life.

DIG DEEPER

- Salvation from The Old Evils (Article)
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/salvation-from-the-old-evils/>