

BROKEN LONGING FOR JESUS



Share how this fourth week of working through the Advent Guide has gone at your house.

What are some plans/things you're doing in order to make the most of this Advent season?

Discuss some opportunities that may exist for you as a Life Group this Advent (pp.4-5 of the Guide).

**Feel free to discuss questions from Week 3 of the Advent Guide in addition to or in place of this Sermon Study Guide*

OPENING COMMENT

For some of us, Christmas is a hard time of year. Instead of glad tidings of great joy coming to the forefront of our minds and hearts, our difficult circumstances do. The story of Zechariah speaks into that. Over and over again God presses the hard, frustrated, hurt places in our hearts so that we can come out the other side, like Zechariah, with far greater depth, redemption, salvation, and rejoicing. (Zechariah goes from doubting the promises of God that came through an angel, to singing praise and blessing God.)

What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon?

READ THE TEXT: Luke 1:5-25, 57-59

1. Grace Where it Hurts the Most (1:5-25)

Do you base God's goodness on His Word or in the circumstances of your life?

Why is it so hard for us to see the 10,000 things God is doing around us when 1 thing is going against us? How do we (*as individuals and in community*) remember the testimony of who God is and what He has done?



What do the stories of King David (**2 Sam 11-12**), the Apostle Paul (**2 Cor 12**), the Woman at the Well (**Jn 4**), the Rich Young Ruler (**Mk10/Mt19/Lk18**) and

Zechariah teach us about our pain?

How do these (and so many other Biblical texts) refute the common assumption that if we suffer God must not love us?

2. Raising A Hymn of Praise (57-59)

At first glance it looks as though the angel Gabriel only keeps Zechariah from being able to speak (**v20**). But **verse 62** indicates that he was unable to hear as well. When Gabriel tells him he will be *silent* be literally meant that Zechariah would experience *silence* for 9 months. What would you do with nearly a year of silence?

His final words to God were those of doubt and disbelief. His first words upon receiving his voice back are those of praise. What has that time seemed to do in the life of Zechariah? Is it possible that *silence* and *time* are two means of grace that God might use in your life as well?

3. Dawning Of Light From On High (67-79)

What does the fact that Zechariah speaks about Jesus coming in the past tense say about the transformational work of God in his life? Compare the earlier section of chapter one with the latter.

Verse 76 and 77 are about Zechariah's son, John. The rest is about the Messiah who will be born to Mary, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Discuss these descriptions of our Saviour (**vv67-79**) and encourage one another by reading other Scripture texts that come to mind and sharing how Jesus has done these things in your life.

SHARE & PRAY

- Take some time to thank God for firmly establishing His rule & reign in the perfect person of Jesus. Pray in ways that you intentionally "long for Jesus".
- Thank God for sending His Son Jesus and for the joy that the gospel brings to your life.
- Pray *big* prayers, asking God to work in mighty, redemptive, gospel-advancing ways this Advent season.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another and the needs among you.

