

SERMON

LUKE - ACTS

SERIES



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LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

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HEAD

- ✚ In the same passage, sin was and was not the cause of disability and impairment. Let us sit in the tension of that spiritual & biblical reality without running away from it because it hard to hear.
- ✚ May our quarter-sized problems never eclipse our sun-sized God.
- ✚ God's Plan with accompanying miracles and messages, wonderment and words will be fulfilled whether we believe it or not – let's take God and His angels at their word.

– Luke 1:5-25 –



HEART

- ✚ Why do you think Zechariah, a priest who knew the story of Abraham and Sarah, still struggled to believe Gabriel's message about Elizabeth's pregnancy?
- ✚ In what areas of your life might you be going through the motions of spiritual worship while harboring sneaky unbelief in your heart?

– Luke 1:5-25 –



HEART

- ✚ What does it mean that God's plans will be fulfilled whether we believe them or not, and how should this reality shape our faith and prayers?
- ✚ The text says Zechariah and Elizabeth were "righteous and blameless" yet childless. How does this challenge the common assumption that blessing equals getting what we want?

– Luke 1:5-25 –



HEART

- ✚ The pastor used the quarter-and-sun illustration to show how small problems can eclipse our big God. What "quarter-sized problems" are currently eclipsing your view of God's magnitude?
- ✚ This passage presents a difficult truth: sometimes (not always) disability results from sin. How do we hold this biblical reality in tension without causing harm to those with disabilities?

– Luke 1:5-25 –



HANDS

- ✚ Identify your "quarter": Write down one problem that's currently eclipsing your view of God. Commit to viewing it in light of God's magnitude rather than your limitations.
- ✚ Practice believing prayer: Choose one Scripture promise that's hard for you to believe. Pray it daily this week, asking God to help your unbelief.
- ✚ Serve with a broken heart: If you're disappointed with God about something, commit to continue serving Him faithfully like Zechariah and Elizabeth did.
- ✚ Gratitude like Elizabeth: Write down one area where God has "removed your disgrace" or answered a long-held prayer. Share it with someone this week.

– Luke 1:5-25 –



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FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL

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Day 1: Serving with a Broken Heart

Reading: 1 Samuel 1:1-20 (Hannah's story)

- ✚ Devotional: Zechariah and Elizabeth served God faithfully despite decades of unanswered prayers. Like Hannah before them, they continued their ministry even when their greatest longing remained unfulfilled. This challenges us profoundly: Can we serve God when He disappoints us? Will we grow bitter or better? Their righteousness wasn't measured by answered prayers but by continued faithfulness. Perhaps you're serving with a broken heart today—a lost loved one, financial collapse, wayward children, or chronic illness. God sees your faithfulness. He hasn't forgotten you. The answer may not come in this life, but your perseverance honors Him deeply. Keep serving. Keep believing. Your story isn't over.
- ✚ Reflection: What unfulfilled longing tempts you to walk away from God? How can you choose faithfulness today despite disappointment?



Day 2: When Small Problems Eclipse Our Great God

Reading: Genesis 18:1-15 (Abraham and Sarah)

- ✚ Devotional: Zechariah's response to Gabriel reveals a universal struggle: allowing our circumstances to eclipse God's magnitude. Like a quarter held close to your eye can block out the sun, our "impossible" situations can blind us to God's limitless power. Zechariah knew the story of Abraham and Sarah—how God gave them Isaac at ages 99 and 90. Yet when faced with his own impossibility, he forgot God's track record. What quarter-sized problem are you holding too close? Is it financial pressure, relationship breakdown, health concerns, or career setbacks? Step back. Remember who God is. He specializes in impossibilities. The same God who opened Sarah's womb, parted the Red Sea, and raised Jesus from death is actively working in your situation right now.
- ✚ Reflection: What "impossibility" are you facing? How does remembering God's past faithfulness change your perspective today?



Day 3: The Danger of Unbelief in Holy Places

Reading: Hebrews 11:1-12

- ✚ Devotional: The most sobering truth from Zechariah's story is this: you can be in the holiest place, performing the holiest acts, and still not believe God. Unbelief is sneaky—it slithers into our worship, our prayers, our ministry. We can preach salvation without believing anyone will be saved. We can pray for healing while doubting God will answer. We can serve in church while questioning God's goodness. Zechariah was righteous, blameless, and serving in the temple when unbelief gripped his heart. His mouth asked for proof rather than trusting the promise. Where has unbelief infiltrated your spiritual life? Are you going through religious motions without genuine faith? God desires wholehearted trust, not just outward obedience.
- ✚ Reflection: In what area of your spiritual life has unbelief taken root? What would radical faith look like in that area?



Day 4: God Fulfills His Plans With or Without Our Faith

Reading: 2 Timothy 2:8-13

- ✚ Devotional: Here's a liberating yet convicting truth: God's purposes will be accomplished whether we believe them or not. Zechariah's unbelief didn't stop Elizabeth's conception. His doubt didn't derail God's redemptive plan. God is sovereign over human history, and His plans prevail despite our wavering faith. This should humble us—we're not indispensable to God's mission. Yet it should also comfort us—our weak faith doesn't disqualify us from God's grace. Paul writes, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself." God's character doesn't change based on our belief. However, our unbelief does affect our experience of God's blessing. Zechariah missed nine months of speaking about God's miracle because he doubted. What blessings are we missing through unbelief?
- ✚ Reflection: How does knowing God's faithfulness despite your doubt both humble and encourage you? What step of faith is God calling you to take?



Day 5: From Disgrace to Grace – God Removes Our Shame

Reading: Psalm 113

- ✚ Devotional: Elizabeth's response to her miraculous pregnancy echoes throughout Scripture: "The Lord has done this for me. He has looked with favor on me and taken away my disgrace." Like Rachel, Hannah, and countless others, Elizabeth experienced the shame of unfulfilled expectations. Yet God, in His perfect timing, removed her reproach. Whatever disgrace you carry—past failures, present struggles, social stigma, personal shame—God sees you with favor. He specializes in redeeming what seems irredeemable. The God who opened Elizabeth's womb at an impossible age can open doors you thought were permanently closed. He can restore what you thought was forever lost. He can heal what you believed was incurable. Elizabeth waited decades, but when God moved, He moved powerfully. Your waiting isn't wasted. God is preparing something beautiful.
- ✚ Reflection: What shame or disgrace are you carrying? How might God be preparing to turn your mourning into dancing, your shame into honor?



Closing Prayer

Closing Prayer: Lord, help our unbelief. When we face impossible situations, remind us that You specialize in the impossible. When we're tempted to let our problems eclipse Your greatness, give us perspective. Help us serve You faithfully even when our hearts are breaking. May we trust Your promises, believe Your messengers, and wait expectantly for Your perfect timing. Like Elizabeth, may we one day declare, "The Lord has done this for me!" In Jesus' name, Amen.



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