

A Foundation of Love – Luke 1:5-25, 39-45, 57-79

God's love in the revelation vs. 11

“An angel of the Lord appeared to him”

“*See, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me.* Then the Lord you seek will suddenly come to his temple, the Messenger of the covenant you delight in—see, he is coming,” says the Lord of Armies.” Malachi 3:1 (italics added)

God's love in the gift vs. 14

to Zechariah and to the many

“In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!” For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said: A voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight!” Matthew 3:1-3

He was terrified (turmoil, confusion, fright, terror) and asked for a sign.
He lacked faith.

“A sign capable of removing all doubt may remove faith itself.” - James R. Edwards

“Disbelief is not the result of Zechariah's feelings, doubts, temperament, or circumstances, but of personal choice. The divine word is given as an invitation to choose faith, and the choice of faith awakens further faith... The purpose of Gabriel's judgment is not to annul the choice of Zechariah, nor does it result in his fall from grace or halt the fulfillment of God's promise. It is a remedial work of the Spirit—a severe mercy—that will enable faith.” - Edwards

Faith begets faith which begets obedience which begets obedience – which begets more faith.

But sometimes we don't have faith. But please remember: we don't fall out of God's grace; we don't stop the promises of God; he meets us in every low place with his good, life-changing, loving discipline.

God's love in the silence vs 19

“It is a remedial work of the Spirit—a severe mercy—that will enable faith.”

God's kindness leads us to repentance. Romans 2:4

What could God reveal to us if we would just be quiet for a little while?

God's love in the gift to Elizabeth vs 24-25

“The Lord has done this for me.”

Vs 39-45 God shows his love to Elizabeth again through her cousin Mary.

As he was saying these things, a woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you and the one who nursed you!” He said, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.” Luke 11:27-28

Encountering God's love leads to obedience and worship. vs 64 and vs 67-79

Elizabeth knew her son's name would be John, meaning “God is gracious.”

“His name is John.”

Obedience → “his mouth was opened and his tongue was set free” → Worship

He offered the love he had *received from* God as love offering *back to* God.

For this is what love for God is: to keep his commands. And his commands are not a burden. 1 John 5:3

I bow before your holy temple as I worship. I praise your name for your unfailing love and faithfulness; for your promises are backed by all the honor of your name. Psalm 138:2

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they will see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the world’s foundation. Righteous Father, the world has not known you. However, I have known you, and they have known that you sent me. I made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love you have loved me with may be in them and I may be in them.” John 17:24-26

For I will pour water on the thirsty land
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants
and my blessing on your offspring.

They will sprout among the grass
like poplars by flowing streams.

This one will say, ‘I am the Lord’s’;
another will use the name of Jacob;
still another will write on his hand, ‘The Lord’s,’
and take on the name of Israel.” Isaiah 44:5

Practice believing and receiving God’s love

This week:

- Write on your hand “The Lord’s” – “I belong to the Lord”
- Be silent with God every day this week.
- Choose a passage about the love of God you heard today or another one and read it every day.
- Ask God to help you believe and receive his love.

This month:

- Every time you read a passage of Scripture, look for God’s love. Write it in a journal. Share what you find with a friend.
- As you gather with people, talk about the love of God.
- Ask God to help you believe and receive his love.

This coming year:

- Read *Delighting in the Trinity* by Michael Reeves
- Find, meditate on, and memorize one passage about God’s love that stirs your heart and mind.
- Ask God to help you believe and receive his love.