



Messengers
Derrick Shields
“Straight Out of Heaven”
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Key Verses: Luke 1:5-25, 57-79

Key Thought: The story of Zechariah encourages us to trust in the good news that we hear from God's messengers— and to even become one of those messengers ourselves!

Points to Consider:

- “Advent” is derived from a Latin word for “coming,” referring to God's coming to humanity in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.
- Advent Resources:
 - i. *Living the Christian Year* (Bobby Gross)
 - ii. *The Angels of Christmas* (Susan Robb) *The book inspired the sermon series. “Angel” is simply a transliteration of the Greek word for “messenger.”
- Zechariah and Elizabeth had not been able to have children, but a messenger of God informs them of the good news that God would give them a son with a calling. ← John was prophesied in Malachi 4:5-6. (See Luke 1:16-17.)
- Rather than trust in the reliability of the message, Zechariah doubts— trusting instead that he and Elizabeth would not be able to have children.
- Zechariah is then struck with dumbness as a sign of the reliability of the message, which seems to have helped him to trust God. → “Silence” (figuratively, simple acceptance) can help us not to “talk ourselves out” of trusting in a message that we hear from God.
- Once Zechariah trusts, which is expressed in his obediently naming the child John, Zechariah sings God's praises in front of others, becoming— himself— a messenger!

Discussion Prompts:

- Can you share about when you've heard good news from a “messenger” of God?
- Where do you still long for God to share good news with you?
- Why can it be easier to trust in your circumstances than a message from God?
- Have you heard some good news from God in which you need to trust?
- Discuss our privilege in serving as a messenger of God for others.
- To whom could you serve as a messenger of God in this season?