

Voices of Christmas: Zacharias

Questions for group or individual reflection

1. Anticipation is a part of Christmas. What are you looking forward to the most this Christmas season?
2. Familiarize yourself with Herod's Temple and the Holy Place in which the events of Luke 1 take place. (You can find the layout of the temple online). This will help you visualize the events that take place.
3. Living lives focused on God, Zechariah and Elizabeth must have prayed for and anticipated a child. Their lack of children had not only been disappointing but was also perceived as a shameful and embarrassing thing in their culture (1.24-25). What might be the connection between not receiving a child and Zechariah's not believing what the angel said? Is it harder to have faith when our prayers are answered with a "no" or don't seem to be answered at all? What do you do when your prayers go unanswered? How is your relationship with God affected?
4. Why do you think God chose to do this the way He did – causing Zechariah to be mute and deaf for nine months? (The word translated *mute* in 1.22, can mean deaf and mute and seems to mean that here in light of 1.62.) What effect do you think it had on his life?
5. Compare and contrast Zechariah's reaction to the angel's announcement to Mary's reaction in Luke 1.34, 38. What is the difference between her question and his? What do you think is the difference between unbelief and asking the hard questions?
6. Pray for one another asking God to help us believe and act on what He has said.