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THE BIRTH OF JOHN

TRUTH ABOUT GOD///

God wants us to trust His plan.

SERIES AIM

God had a plan to save the world, and at times it seemed like He moved heaven and earth to make it a reality. Jesus was coming, and there would be one who would prepare the world for His arrival. Nothing can stand in the way of God's perfect will.

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

Luke 1:5-25; 57-64

LESSON BIG IDEA

I will have faith in God and believe what He says is true.

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?///

God proved to Zacharias and Elisabeth that they could trust His plan. They may have struggled to believe before, but God had proven Himself faithful. Because of the miracle He worked, they bought into His entire plan. Instead of naming the baby after his father, they demonstrated their faith by naming the baby John as the angel instructed. Naming him John was Zacharias and Elisabeth's way of saying, "We believe You, God, when You say this baby will be the forerunner of the Messiah."

We must choose to have faith in God and believe what He says is true! Sometimes what He says will not make much sense to us. Many times what He wants to do in our lives seems impossible. We must take confidence that nothing is impossible to God. He is able to work His will, no matter the obstacle. If we will exercise our faith in Jesus, we can see Him do great things in our lives.



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? ///

The following questions, devotions, and action points can be used any way that you feel comfortable. We suggest that you use a journal, your notes app on your phone, or even the spaces provided in this daily devotional book to take notes, write answers, and make lists. The purpose of this resource is simply to give you a space to interact with the Word of God and reflect on what you learn from that experience.

/// What is the hardest thing about trusting?

/// What makes something trustworthy?

/// What can cause trust to be more difficult?

/// When is trust necessary?

DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE ///

GOD'S TRUTH GIVES ME FAITH

MONDAY, OCTOBER 11

Read Isaiah 40:3.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

This prophecy told of the coming of John the Baptist, the man who would prepare the way for Jesus. It's wild to think about just how important John was and how daunting it must have felt at times knowing he had a singular purpose here on earth: to prepare the world for Jesus. It's scary and overwhelming, but in the end, just like John, we have to commit to this mission with everything we have. We cannot hold back, because Jesus is coming, and if we don't do our part, then there is no telling how many are going to miss out on eternity. We must tell everyone that Jesus is coming soon.

Jr. High /// What are some options in the coming year to do something big for God, either on your own or with the church?

Sr. High /// Talk to your parents and youth pastor about doing something big this year for God like outreach or a missions trip.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12

Read Luke 1:5-7.

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

Elisabeth was desperate. Her one prayer after so many years was simply that she would have a child. It's amazing that after so long this woman never lost hope that God would hear her. We all have things we are desperate for from God—prayers that feel like they have gone unanswered or unheard. But Elisabeth is proof that even when you do not yet have your answer, God sees you. If you are broken and alone, God sees you and your pain. If you are lost in your identity, God sees you. If you are struggling with addiction or feel trapped by the people around you, God sees you. You are not forgotten. God is making a way for you; He is working things out to rescue you from your situation. He will help you, and He will send you the right people to help you through this pain. Trust in Him and His timing.

Jr. High /// Write about some areas in your life where you feel confused and trapped.

Sr. High /// Write about some struggles you have had this year, how God is helping you through those areas, and what you need to do better to connect with Him.

GOD'S TRUTH GIVES ME FAITH

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Read Luke 1:13-17.

But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

“Congratulations, Elisabeth, it’s a boy!” Can you imagine what she felt when she heard the news that she was finally going to have a child? For some of us, it is hard to picture the instant that the prayer we have prayed for so long finally comes true, and in that moment, there is nothing but joy and excitement. How do we respond to something like that? The Bible makes it clear what we should do, but Elisabeth lived it, and her response is all the example we need. When God answers our prayers, no matter how small, we must give Him praise. Yell His name, “Jesus!” Dance around the room, or sing your favorite worship song. Whatever you do, do it for His Name and His glory in faith that your answer is coming. Are you ready to praise?

Jr. High /// Get up and give God praise!

Sr. High /// Take a moment to thank and praise God for all He is and all He has done in your life.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14

Read Luke 1:18.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

Have you ever had a faith problem? Zacharias certainly did. For him, the promise of a child at such an old age seemed impossible to get his head around. Even though he knew the story of Abraham and Sarah, for some reason an angel showing up and telling him incredible news just wasn’t convincing enough. Sometimes we pray and pray for our lives and our situations to change, and when the promise of an answer finally comes, too often we let sin and doubt creep into our minds, causing us to question the promises of God. This is not how children of the King should live. We are chosen and set apart. We belong to Jesus and He cares for us. If He says He is going to do something, you had better believe it is going to happen. Trust the promises of God, and don’t let doubt into your minds. Read God’s Word, and find assurance that everything He has said has always come true.

Jr. High /// Using a note card or bookmark, write down a promise or promises that God has given you, or that you are praying for. Place the note in your Bible as a reminder.

Sr. High /// Make a list of some spiritual and physical promises that God has made to you. Make a point to pray about those things every day this week.

GOD'S TRUTH GIVES ME FAITH

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

Read Luke 1:59–60.

And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

It was a pretty common thing to name your son after the father back in those days. But you see, God and Elisabeth had other plans, and Elisabeth was not going to change her mind just because society thought it was the right thing to do. Too often we care too much about what the world and people around us want. We try to please everyone, and then we are the one who ends up getting hurt. When God makes a plan and tells you what to do, no matter how illogical or unbelievable it may be, that should always be our first priority. God's plan for you might disappoint some people; just look at Joseph's brothers. Zacharias probably had his feelings hurt a little too, but when God is telling you what to do, there should only ever be one option on the table. Don't do it your way or the world's way. Always do it God's way.

Jr. High /// Are you ever afraid of some of the dreams and goals that you have? Why?

Sr. High /// Have you ever been criticized for sharing the things God has spoken to or promised you?

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

Read Luke 1:60–64.

And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marveled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

Zacharias had been taught a lesson by God. He was silenced because he didn't believe what God was going to do. He quickly learned his lesson and was forced to deal with the consequences. In naming that baby boy, God was giving Zacharias a choice: get on board with God's plan or get out of the way and be quiet. We know what he chose, but the question is what are you going to choose? God wants willing people who are passionate about Him and His church. He doesn't make us live or believe anything that we don't want to, but if we are going to live under His name, He does expect us to use that name and power the way He desires. It's a lot of responsibility, but if we are wise with what we are given and quick to obey, then God will do some incredible things. You'll be happy you stuck around to see them happen.

Jr. High /// Talk to your parent or guardian about some ways you can take on some new responsibilities at home.

Sr. High /// Take the initiative and do some chores without being asked today. Write down the reaction that your helpfulness receives.

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