

# 'Tis The Season to Be Confident

---

October 27, 2024 ▪ Nick Braitto

**Be confident that God hears our \_\_\_\_\_.** (vv. 5-13)

**Be confident that God's Word can be \_\_\_\_\_.** (vv. 14-23)

**Be confident that God works for our \_\_\_\_\_.** (vv. 24-25; 16-17)

## ***Luke 1:5-25***

---

<sup>5</sup> In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. <sup>7</sup> But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

<sup>8</sup> Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. <sup>11</sup> And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, <sup>17</sup> and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

<sup>18</sup> And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."

<sup>19</sup> And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and

to bring you this good news. <sup>20</sup> And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."

<sup>21</sup> And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. <sup>22</sup> And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. <sup>23</sup> And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

<sup>24</sup> After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, <sup>25</sup> "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people." (ESV)

### ***Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions***

---

**Open:** What are some promises of God that are especially meaningful to you?

**Read & Discuss:** Luke 1:5-25

1. What do we learn about Zechariah and Elizabeth in verses 5-7? Why would these details be important for the account Luke is about to give in the rest of this passage? What might Zechariah and Elizabeth have been thinking and feeling concerning their situation (before the angel's visit)?
2. Now imagine yourself as Zechariah through what he experiences in verses 8-13. What might he have been feeling as he was chosen for this duty? As he entered the temple? As he first saw the angel? As he heard what the angel said to him about his wife bearing him a son? Have you ever had God give what felt like a long-delayed answer to a prayer of yours? What role does patience play in our praying to God?
3. What do Gabriel's words to Zechariah in verses 13-17 reveal about the heart of God? How do you see God's concern for both individuals and nations through the promises the angel gives? What do you find attractive about God in the angel's words and why?
4. How does Zechariah's response to the angel in verse 18 indicate a measure of doubt? How have you experienced feelings of doubt in response to God's guidance or promises? (What are some promises of God that you at times struggle to believe?)
5. How do you think Zechariah might have been shaped by his temporary muteness (vv. 20-23, as well as apparent deafness, according to Luke 1:62)? How might Zechariah's experience have shaped the community? What does Zechariah's temporary experience with muteness teach us about God?
6. It's natural (or at least common) to wonder or question how God might work in any given situation. How do we avoid crossing the line that Zechariah crossed with his questioning of the angel (v. 18)? What can we do to build and maintain trust in God's promises even when they seem impossible?
7. Though we cannot know for sure what Zechariah was able to communicate to Elizabeth about his encounter with Gabriel, what can we learn from Elizabeth's response in verse 25 about recognizing and celebrating God's faithfulness in our own lives (even when it's different from what we had initially hoped)?

**Apply:** In light of Zechariah and Elizabeth's experience in Luke 1:5-25, what do you need to persist in prayer for? What is a promise of His for which you need to trust Him? What's a work of His that you can celebrate?

**Pray:** Pray we'll be people who hold to God's promises, even when we cannot see God at work. Pray that like Elizabeth, we'll recognize and celebrate God's work in our lives, and then testify of God's grace to others.