

# LUKE 1:67-80

10 DECEMBER 2023

ICE BREAKER: What is one of your favorite things to do during Christmas season?

## LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

As Mary **praised** the Lord for the promised birth of her son (v.46-55), Zechariah also praised the Lord in this passage—a hymn known as the Benedictus, latin for the first two words “Praise be.” The Lord **promised** nine months earlier that Zechariah’s old and barren wife Elizabeth would give birth to a son. The birth of John **fulfilled** God’s promise.

Throughout his song of praise, Zechariah proclaims that God **keeps His promises**. God **keeps His word**. God fulfilled His promise of the coming Messiah, “**as he said** through his holy prophets of long ago” so as “to **remember** his holy covenant, the **oath** he **swore** to our father Abraham.” Zechariah highlights this one characteristic of Almighty God—He **keeps his promises** to us.

1. From the Bible, what is one of **God’s promises** which has become **important** to you?

(Read verses 67-74) Zechariah proclaims God is a **rescuer** of the **oppressed**. God “**redeems** His people.” He brings “**salvation** from our **enemies** and from the hand of all who **hate** us.” God is the One who will “**rescue** us from the hand of our enemies.”

God promises to come to our rescue as we face the **oppression** from our **enemies**. Those oppressing, or coming against us may be organizations or governments. They can be people, strangers or friends, or most painful those within our own families. Enemies can be demonic spirits, past traumatic experiences or memories. We can be our own enemies—the enemy ‘in-a-me’.

2. What **enemies** keep you from fully living out **God’s salvation** and **purpose for you life**?

(Read verses 69-77) God sent the Messiah Jesus to “rescue us” **not** only from **man’s oppression to man**, such as the Roman Empire to Israel, but also from **man’s opposition to God—sin**. The rescue of man, ‘**salvation**’, begins with our **deliverance from the penalty of sin—death**.

But salvation is **not freedom to do whatever we want**. God has a **purpose** for our rescue—“to enable us to **serve Him without fear in holiness** and **righteousness** before him **all our days**.” God rescued us to live out a **freedom** characterized by **obedience** to His Word that produces **joy**, **purity** and a **clear conscience**.

3. What is the difference between **freedom** to do **whatever you want** versus **the freedom God gives you**?

(Read verses 76-80) Repeating the angel Gabriel’s announcement (v.14-17), Zechariah proclaims his **blessing** upon his newborn son John. Throughout the Bible, the **father’s blessing** upon a child directly influenced the life of a child.

Notice immediately after Zechariah’s blessing upon John, a description of John’s life follows. “And the child **grew** and became **strong in spirit**.” As spiritual heads representing the family, fathers **directly influence** the life of a child by **giving** or **withholding** their blessing.

4. How has your **father’s blessing** or **withholding** of that blessing **affected** your life?

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE & USE PRAYER LIST AS BIBLE BOOK MARKER

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## PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to share Jesus with this week or invite to Celebration.)

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