

Luke 1:5-25

13 August 2023

ICE BREAKER: Describe a good habit you keep regularly.

LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

The **good news** is Zechariah and Elizabeth were a godly couple. They “were **upright** in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commandments and regulations **blamelessly**.” The **sad news** is they were a **disgrace** in their community. Why? Because “they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.”

Despite **faithful obedience** to the Lord, Zechariah and Elizabeth **suffered** disgrace and ridicule from fellow Jews. Elizabeth herself described her childlessness as “**my disgrace** among the people” (25).

1. Describe a time you were **obedient to do the right thing in God’s eyes yet suffered disgrace or hardship.**

(Read verses 6-7) Jews considered **childlessness** a **curse** from God, a **withholding** of **His blessing**. The Rabbis said that seven people were **excommunicated** from God and the list began with, “A Jew who has no wife, or a Jew who has a wife and who has no child.” Childlessness was a valid ground for **divorce**.

The Bible repeatedly emphasizes that God delights to **reward obedience**. Elizabeth was obedient and faithful, yet she was **barren**. She could easily name many other Jewish women who were not faithful, yet they were blessed with children.

2. How do you handle seeing God **withhold blessings** from the **faithful**, yet give them to the **unfaithful**?

(Read verses 11-15) For years, Zechariah and Elizabeth hoped for a **miracle, an answer to their prayers**. They hoped for the **impossible** to be made **possible**—that **old** and **barren** Elizabeth would bear a child. Finally, God answered in a spectacular way. An angel named Gabriel visited Zechariah proclaiming, “Zechariah, your **prayer** has been heard! Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son.”

3. What have you seen **moves** the hand of God to make the **impossible possible** in our lives?

(Read verses 18-20) When a messenger from God, an angel no doubt, proclaimed the coming birth of his new son John, Zechariah was **not** filled with **faith**, but with **doubt**. Immediately, Zechariah recounted Elizabeth’s and his own **physical limitations**, “How can I be sure of this? I am an **old** man and my wife is **well along in years**.”

4. Why do people still **doubt God** even after witnessing a **miracle** or **answered prayer**?

Cut along Dotted Line & use Notes as Book Marker

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those, in your group, plan to witness Christ to this week.)
