



1. Zechariah faithfully served his generation (v. 5-10).
2. Zechariah served the Lord sacrificially (v. 11-17).
3. Zechariah served imperfectly (v. 18-23).
4. Zechariah served to bless the next generation (v. 57-67).



QUESTIONS

ICEBREAKER: Would you rather spend time with other people, or at home alone?

1. In what sense were Zechariah and Elizabeth “righteous in the sight of God” [Luke 1:6]? What are some clues in the passage that explain their exemplary character? How does their example encourage you to live similarly [Genesis 5:21-24; Deuteronomy 28:9; and Daniel 6:4, 22]?
2. What was the specific disappointment Zechariah and Elizabeth faced in Luke 1:7? How might they have been perceived by others? How might they have felt about themselves? What does the way they handled their hurt indicate about their character [cf. Genesis 15:1-6; Genesis 25:21-26; and 1 Samuel 1:1-20]?
3. Why do you think Luke included all these details in the birth announcement to John’s father [Luke 1:13-17]? Why was John the Baptist so significant [cf. Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1; and Malachi 4:5-6]?
4. Why do people find it difficult to believe the Word of the Lord [Luke 1:18]? Also consult Luke 24:25; John 20:27-29; and James 1:6-8.
5. In essence, Zechariah asked for a sign that the angel’s word would come true [Luke 1:18]. What do you make of Gabriel’s response in Luke 1:19-20, and what was the sign [cf. Judges 6:36-40; Isaiah 7:10-17; and 1 Corinthians 1:22]?
6. What do Elizabeth’s actions and words reveal about the burden she had borne all her married life [Luke 1:24-25]? How does this encourage you to persevere through the burdens you are bearing today [cf. Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4; and 1 Peter 1:6-7]?
7. What did you find helpful or challenging about this Sunday’s message?

“Nowhere has God promised anyone, even His children, immunity from sorrow, suffering, and pain. This world is a ‘vale of tears’, and disappointment and heartache are as inevitable as clouds and shadows. Suffering is often the crucible in which our faith is tested. Those who successfully come through the ‘furnace of affliction’ are the ones who emerge ‘like gold tried in the fire.’” (Billy Graham)