



SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Week of March 20 & 21, 2021

Please use these questions to stay connected as a church to meditate on the same sermon preached from God's Word this week. May this be a fruitful time for the building up of our church and for the spread of the gospel.

Sermon Text

Luke 1:5-17

5 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. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. 8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13 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. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 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. 16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, 17 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."

If you were not able to listen to this week's sermon, then please refer to this link to listen prior to answering these questions, <http://hawaiiikaichurch.org/sermononline>

Summary

In this week's study of the Gospel of Luke, the author begins his narrative of the life of Christ with a description of the birth of John the Baptist. Zechariah and Elizabeth are a godly, elderly, and barren couple living in a dark time. In spite of the darkness, they remain devout before the Lord. When Zechariah is serving in the temple an angel appears and tells Zechariah that he will have a son who will be great before the Lord. In spite of the darkness, God causes His light to shine.

Discussion Questions

1. Zechariah and Elizabeth honored God for who He is, rather than for what He could give to them. Their lack of children did not sour their devotion to the Lord. Every person, including the righteous, will face heartache and difficulty in this life. How do you think Zechariah and Elizabeth were able to maintain their devotion? How can we ensure that trials and difficulty do not hamper or quench our devotion to the Lord?
2. Throughout Scripture, we see that when things seem to be at their darkest, God causes light to shine through. Why is it important for us to remember that God often shows His greatest might when things seem to be at their worst? What are some other Biblical examples of this? Why do we sometimes doubt that God is in control during our dark times?
3. The angel of the Lord appears to Zechariah and tells him ***“Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard”*** How long do you think Zechariah and Elizabeth were praying for a child? What does this tell you about the patience required in prayer? How long *should* you be praying for something? Typically, how long *do* you pray for something?
4. When the angel appears, Zechariah experiences great fear. He is not alone. Throughout Scripture we are shown that when humanity comes into the presence of the Divine, we are made to feel God's greatness and we are made to feel our utter inadequacy, weakness, and sin. How should this inform us about our own interactions with the Divine? Do you approach God as your 'bro' or do you recognize Him truly as God? Why does this matter?

5. The angel tells Zechariah that his son John will be **“great before the Lord.”** John wore camel’s hair, ate locusts and honey, and his life ended when he was thrown in jail and beheaded. How do you think John’s greatness differs from the world’s definition of greatness? Which kind of greatness do you desire for yourself and for your children? How does your life, the way you live, reflect this desire?