



The Wonder of Christmas

Better For It

Week 3

Day 1: When Wonder Fades

Reading: Luke 1:5-7

Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous before God, yet childless. Their names together meant "God remembers His oath," but their reality seemed to contradict this daily reminder. Sometimes our faithfulness doesn't shield us from disappointment. Like locals who stop noticing mountain views, we can become so familiar with God's promises that they fade into the background. The wonder dims when years of unanswered prayers accumulate. But God's silence isn't God's absence. Your past pain doesn't disqualify you from future promises. Today, acknowledge where wonder has faded in your life. Ask God to help you see beyond your disappointments to His faithfulness that remains constant, even when circumstances suggest otherwise.

Reflection Question: What promise of God has become background noise in your life because of past disappointment?

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Day 2: The God Who Shows Up

Reading: Luke 1:8-13

Zechariah entered the temple for a once-in-a-lifetime privilege, carrying not just incense but the weight of decades of disappointment. In that sacred space, God interrupted the ordinary with the extraordinary. Gabriel's appearance terrified him, yet brought the message he'd waited for: "Your prayer has been heard." God often answers in unexpected moments, through unexpected means. The very prayer Zechariah may have stopped praying with hope was the one God chose to answer. Your unanswered prayers aren't forgotten; they're awaiting God's perfect timing. Sometimes God is working most powerfully in the seasons that feel most silent. The God of wonder still shows up in temple moments and ordinary days alike.

Reflection Question: Where might God be preparing to answer a prayer you've almost given up on?

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Day 3: Doubts Don't Disqualify

Reading: Luke 1:18-20

"How can I be sure?" Zechariah asked an angel standing before him. His doubt seems absurd until we remember our own. Even devoted followers wrestle with unbelief. Zechariah's response wasn't rooted in lack of knowledge or weak theology—he knew Scripture, he served faithfully. His doubt came from painful experience. Past disappointments colored his ability to receive present promises. God's response wasn't rejection but redirection: "Be silent and watch me work." Your doubts don't disqualify you from God's plan. Faith isn't the absence of questions; it's choosing to trust God's character despite unanswered questions. When belief feels impossible, sometimes God simply asks us to be still and witness His faithfulness unfold.

Reflection Question: What doubt are you carrying that needs to be surrendered to God's proven faithfulness?

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Day 4: Purpose in the Pain

Reading: John 9:1-3

The disciples assumed suffering indicated sin. Jesus corrected them: this happened "so that the works of God might be displayed." Not all pain is punishment; sometimes it's preparation for God's greater purpose. Zechariah and Elizabeth's years of barrenness became the backdrop for a miracle that would prepare the way for the Messiah. Their well-known struggle made God's faithfulness undeniable to their community. Your pain isn't wasted in God's economy. The very experiences you wish you could erase may become your most powerful testimony. God specializes in redeeming what seems irredeemable, using what we consider disqualifying as the very thing that qualifies us to encourage others. Your story of struggle can become someone else's source of hope.

Reflection Question: How might God want to use your past pain for His present purpose?

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Day 5: Watching God Work

Reading: Luke 1:24-25, 57-66

Elizabeth's seclusion wasn't shame; it was sacred processing. After years of disappointment, she needed time to hold this fragile promise carefully. When John was born, Zechariah's voice returned with praise. Nine months of silence taught him to watch God work rather than demand explanations. The couple whose names meant "God remembers His oath" became living proof of that truth. Wonder returns when we stop demanding immediate understanding and start watching expectantly for God's movement. Your season of waiting isn't wasted—it's where faith deepens and testimony forms. God is still a God of wonder, working in chaos, confusion, and ordinary moments to bring extraordinary miracles. Keep watching. Keep believing. Your story isn't finished.

Reflection Question: What is one way you can actively watch for God's faithfulness this week, even while waiting?