

ADVENT: HOPE

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Sermon Date: Sunday, November 30, 2025

Sermon Passage: Luke 1:1-25; 57-66

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This Week's Main Takeaway

Luke opens his gospel by reminding us that the story of Jesus is not a myth or wishful thinking, but a carefully investigated account of God's faithfulness breaking into human history. And right in the opening scene, we meet an elderly couple—Zechariah and Elizabeth—faithful, righteous, and prayerful, yet carrying decades of disappointment. Their barrenness was not just a private sorrow. In their culture, it was a public stigma. Their story seemed finished, and their identity seemed settled. But then God speaks.

This Week's Memory Verse

Isaiah 40:3 (NIV), "A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Five Inductive Questions

Luke 1:1-4 (CSB Study Bible Notes)

- Verse 1: "Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things" means that a number of others had previously written about the life and works of Jesus. This may include the Gospels of Mark and Matthew since they preceded Luke's writing.
- Verse 2: "Original eyewitnesses:" Original "eyewitnesses" included Mary, the mother of Jesus, whom may have still been alive when Luke wrote his Gospel. "Servants of the word" refers to the apostles of Jesus but may also include his brothers, James and Jude.
- Verse 3: "Carefully investigated" means Luke studied the life and ministry of Jesus in meticulous detail ("carefully") and with comprehensive scope ("everything"), including many aspects related to the births of John the Baptist and Jesus ("from the very first") that are not found in the other Gospels. Orderly sequence does not mean strict chronological sequence, but in an orderly manner.
- Verse 4: Luke's stated purpose in writing his Gospel was to provide historical certainty and theological clarity for Theophilus regarding what he had been taught (instructed) about Jesus.

1. GOD :: What does this passage imply about God?

God speaks and will accomplish His purposes.

Luke opens his gospel by reminding us that the story of Jesus is not a myth or wishful thinking, but a carefully investigated account of God's faithfulness breaking into human history (vs.1-4).

In this passage, we see God perform a miracle with a faithful, elderly, priestly couple (v. 5) as He moves and speaks. Often, God speaks in a whisper. God was, is, and will be. This passage reminds us that God does not forget us and will do what He says (vs. 24-25). If God says it, He will do it (vs. 65-66).

2. MAN :: What does this passage imply about man?

Faithfulness amid disappointment; Disbelief into a song.

In Luke 1:5, we are introduced to a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah, and his wife, Elizabeth, was also a descendant of Aaron. Verse six tells us they were "righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly," which refers to consistent obedience to God's commands and requirements, but more foundationally to living by faith. May the same be said of us. Verse seven tells us they were old and childless. They may even have wondered why they were childless, since they had been faithful. Yet, verses 11-13 tell us that an angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah and told him, "Their prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John."

Verse 18 tells us that Zechariah questioned how this could be. Often, we lose sight of what God can do when we are disappointed. As a result, God makes him mute (vs. 20, 22) for his questioning but later makes it an incredible testimony of God's power and belief in what God did (vs. 57-66).

We can trust that the God who is moving in Luke 1 is the same God who is acting on our behalf today. It might be delayed, but we can have confidence that God is not absent. One commentator says it this way: "Our disappointments will either make us bitter or make us better."

Why do we tend to struggle with belief in times of disappointment? Will we serve God in the midst of our disappointments?

3. PROMISE :: Is there a *promise* to claim in this passage?

God keeps His promises.

This passage helps us see that hope lives in the reality that your identity is more about God's fulfilled promises (v. 57-58) than about our flawed past (v. 18). God not only changes our circumstances, but He also reshapes our identities.

In this passage, a barren couple would bear a child, turning silence into a song (v. 64). Furthermore, verse 13 reminds us that "Do not be afraid" comforts the Lord's people—the assurance that the Lord is on their side. What does God say when he begins speaking again? One commentator puts it this way: "He picks up where he left off, with the last words spoken four hundred years ago in Malachi 4:5–6. God made promises in the Old Testament that he now begins to fulfill in the New Testament."

Who is God shaping you to be?

4. COMMAND :: Is there a *command* to obey in this passage?

We must listen to the lips of our Heavenly Father, not the lies of the enemy.

The Lie: Luke 1:18, "Zechariah asked the angel, 'How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife is well along in years.'"

The Truth: Luke 1:24-25, "After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. "The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

Luke 1:57a, "When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son..."

5. REPENT :: Reflecting on this portion of God's Word, what can I *repent* of this week?

Where in your life do you need to stop defining yourself by your past and start believing in how God is forming you through His promises?

Sources:

CSB Study Bible Notes (B&H Publishing)

Exalting Jesus in Luke (Holman Publishers)