



TELLING THE STORIES SERIES – ZECHARIAH & ELIZABETH

PASTOR BRIAN FLEWELLING
DECEMBER 7, 2025

WORSHIP

Begin your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group can lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Alternatively, consider using one or more of these songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **Joy To The World** (*Phil Wickham*)
- **Holy Spirit** (*SEU Worship*)
- **I Believe** (*Charity Gayle*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Luke 1:1-55

OPENING PRAYER

Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to His Word.

Ice Breaker (5-10 min)

What's one Christmas tradition in your family that helps you remember the "real" story of Christmas?

KEY TAKEAWAYS (5 mins)

1. Christianity is built on historical facts, not fairy tales—Luke carefully investigated eyewitness accounts
2. God often works through impossible situations (barren wombs, virgin births) so we must acknowledge His power
3. God interrupts our religious routines with His presence and purposes
4. 400 years of silence ended with angelic announcements and the movement of the Holy Spirit
5. Two responses to God's promises: Zechariah's skeptical doubt vs. Mary's worshipful wonder
6. God is faithful to His promises to Abraham, David, and all His people
7. Preparation matters—John's role was to prepare hearts to receive the King

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (35-40 min)

Section 1: The Foundation of Faith (Luke 1:1-4)

1. Why do you think Luke emphasizes that he "carefully investigated everything" before writing his account? How does this strengthen your faith?
2. In a culture that often dismisses Christianity as just another belief system, how does the historical nature of the Gospel accounts matter?

Section 2: Zechariah & Elizabeth's Story (Luke 1:5-25)

3. Zechariah and Elizabeth were "righteous in the sight of God" yet experienced the pain of childlessness. What does this teach us about faithfulness in the midst of unanswered prayers?
4. Compare and contrast: Zechariah asks "How can I be sure?" while Mary asks "How will this be?" What's the difference between these two questions? Which one do you more naturally lean toward?
5. Why do you think God silenced Zechariah? Was this punishment or preparation? What might God be trying to silence in your own life?

Section 3: Mary's Story (Luke 1:26-38)

6. Mary was a young, unmarried woman from an insignificant town. What does God's choice of Mary tell us about who He uses for His purposes?
7. Mary responds with "I am the Lord's servant...may your word to me be fulfilled." What would complete surrender to God's plans look like in your life right now?

Section 4: The Meeting (Luke 1:39-45)

8. When Mary arrived, Elizabeth's baby "leaped for joy" and Elizabeth was "filled with the Holy Spirit." Have you ever experienced a moment where you sensed God's presence so strongly? Share that experience.
9. Elizabeth says, "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" What promises from God are you holding onto right now?

Section 5: Mary's Song (Luke 1:46-55)

10. Read Mary's song aloud together. What themes do you notice? (God's mercy, justice, faithfulness, lifting up the humble, etc.)
11. Mary's song celebrates how God "has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble." How does this challenge our cultural values about power and success?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 Mins)

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. Practice Worshipful Questions

- When faced with difficult circumstances, practice asking "How will You do this, Lord?" instead of "How is this even possible?"

2. Identify Your "Barren Places"

- Journal about one area of your life that feels barren or hopeless
- Ask God to speak His promise over that situation
- Share with one trusted friend for prayer support

3. Create Space for Interruption

- Like Zechariah in the temple, set aside time for prayer this week
- Ask God to interrupt your routine with His presence
- Practice listening rather than just speaking

4. Memorize Mary's Response

- Commit Luke 1:38 to memory: "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled."
- Pray this as a daily declaration of surrender

5. Advent Reflection

- Each day this week, read one section of Luke 1 slowly
- Ask: "What is God preparing in me to receive Jesus more fully?"

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer Prompts:

Thanksgiving: Thank God for His faithfulness to keep His promises, even after long seasons of silence

Confession: Confess areas where we've responded with skeptical doubt rather than faith

Intercession: Pray for "impossible situations" in group members' lives where only God can bring breakthrough

Surrender: Pray Mary's prayer together: "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled."

Preparation: Ask the Holy Spirit to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus afresh this Christmas

Personal Reflection Questions (5-10 minutes of silence)

- Where in my life am I experiencing "400 years of silence" from God?
- Am I responding to God's work with skeptical doubt or worshipful wonder?
- What "impossible situation" might God want to use to display His power in my life?
- How is God asking me to prepare my heart to receive Jesus this Christmas season?