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## LUKE

### Luke 1:57-80

How can we become the Christ-centered church our world so desperately needs? Join us in Luke's gospel, the most expansive biography of Jesus in the Bible. With the beloved physician as our guide, we hope to experience Jesus so we can participate with the new reality God is bringing into our world.

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## The Big Idea

Why did God raise up John the Baptist after 400 years of silence? Because it was finally time to announce the coming of the Messiah!

## Good to Know

- Just as Zechariah's mouth was shut for nine months, God had been silent, refraining to give His word through any prophet for 400 years.
- The last prophet of the Old Testament was Malichi, who spoke for God during the fifth century BC. His last words announced God's promise to raise up a new prophet "in the spirit and power of Elijah" to announce the coming of the Messiah (Malichi 4:5). This passage shows us that John is that prophet!
- "They made signs" (vs 62) - Not only was Zechariah unable to speak, here we find out he was deaf too!
- "They all wondered" (vs. 63) - The word "wondered" is also translated as "amazed," "astonished" and "taken by surprise."
- What was everyone so shocked about when Zechariah wrote the name "John"? Two reasons: 1) They finally had a boy who could carry on the family name, but they defied everyone's expectations, and 2) Zechariah couldn't hear Elizabeth when she said "John," so it was incredible that they BOTH agreed on the same name!
- The name John is written as Ἰωάννης (Iōánnēs) in kione Greek. It is derived from the Hebrew name יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (Yôḥānān), which means, "Yahweh is gracious."
- Zechariah's song (vs. 67-80) is called "the Benedictus," which is Latin for "blessed" (which is the first word of verse 68).
- The first words out of Zechariah's mouth after his healing were astonished gratitude to the miracle-working God.
- Verses 67-75 is one single sentence in greek, focused entirely on Jesus the Messiah.
- Verses 68-79 is "part two" of Zechariah's song and focuses on John, the forerunner of the Messiah.

- John grew up in the wild (vs. 80) leading many scholars to wonder if he might have been part of the “Qumron” community. These were spiritually-hungry separatists who lived in the desert and dedicated themselves to holiness and the study of God’s Word. This is the group that gave us the famous Dead Sea Scrolls.

## Group Guide

### Following the series with your group?

- Start with some [icebreaker questions](#).
- Read the passage together before you dive in.
- Share any insights from the message. Use the questions below to get your conversation started.

## Conversation Starters

1. What is the significance or meaning of your first and middle names?
2. If you lost the ability to speak and hear for nine months, what might be the first words out of your mouth?
3. What was the “great mercy” that God showed to Elizabeth in verse 58? What was the “mercy” Zechariah sang about in verse 72?
4. Verse 65 tells us that the news spread like wildfire and people were filled with “awe” (literally fear, in the greek). What would have to happen in our church for our non-Christian community to all be talking about what God is doing?
5. Who is God’s salvation FROM in Zechariah’s song? Who is it FOR?
6. Verse 77 tells us John’s purpose will be to “give knowledge of salvation.” What would happen if no one knew how to be saved?

## Prayer Prompts

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has not only sent a savior but also made us fully aware of how to find salvation in Him by giving us His word! May we be hearers and proclaimers about Jesus everywhere we go. Amen.

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