



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
R O C H E S T E R

**Sermon Discussion Guide**  
**December 3, 2023**

**Refresh**

Read Luke 1:5-7 to get the Scripture passage back in your mind.

**Discuss**

In what ways was the first century a dark time, particularly for the Jews? How should this help us better understand the circumstances and lives of Elizabeth and Mary and those close to them?

How might the reality of Jesus entering a dark world give us hope when we see so much darkness around us today? Why is it encouraging to know that God meets us in our darkest moments? How have you personally seen Jesus meet you in your darkest moments?

What does it mean that Zechariah and Elizabeth were “righteous before God”? What must take place for any person to be righteous before God? Why is this important to rightly understand when we look at the lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth?

What is the connection between the righteousness and blamelessness of Zechariah and Elizabeth? How does righteousness lead to blamelessness? How should the example of Zechariah and Elizabeth shape our understanding of justification and sanctification?

While infertility is a profoundly painful experience in any culture, why would it have been especially painful in the culture in which Elizabeth lived? How does this help us better understand the suffering that Zechariah and Elizabeth knew?

We know from Luke 1 that Elizabeth’s infertility was not a result of God punishing her or Zechariah because of their sin (they were righteous and blameless). Why do we often tend to assume that our suffering is a direct result of the sin that we have committed? How does the example of Elizabeth help us understand that our suffering is not simply a mathematical equation that can only be brought about because of our sin?