

November 27, 2011
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Monday

Luke 1:8 Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division...

It happened where? In church, in the service of worship! What was he doing? He was doing his regular duty! Is there a lesson there? Surely there is! It is a lesson that thousands of Christians miss each week. It is a lesson Christian parents fail to grasp and by their failure curse their children. God shows up and speaks *in church*. Not just on special occasions, but in the normal service. He blesses those with revelation who are consistently in their place. He doesn't stop showing up, but too often we do! This was a normal day. Zach was doing his normal thing. And God!

Tuesday

Luke 1:6 They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.

Salvation is measured in grace; usefulness is measured in righteousness. Look at this couple chosen by God to be the parents of John the Baptist, to receive a vision of God's plan and a prophecy of God's grace. They were characterized by "righteousness". They walked in blamelessness. They were obedient. Surely they were tempted and tried, like everyone else. But they lived out their lives in service to God. They did not see the grand blessing of God's design early in their lives. They found the best of God's blessing at the end of their journey.

Wednesday

Luke 1:7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren...

Often disappointment is the preliminary staging of blessing. Those who learn this vital truth will find strength, endurance, and ultimately, God's blessing. Zacharias and Elizabeth struggled with the disappointment of barrenness. Today couples that cannot have children know of their pain, but perhaps not fully. In their day, such disappointment was accompanied by communal disapproval as well. Children were not merely children, they were a sign, supposedly, of God's favor and in their absence His disfavor. Imagine the heartache of the couple's conversations. But God had a plan, a plan for blessing and honor. He has a plan in your disappointments, too.

Thursday

Luke 1:58 Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her.

It is not those who try to rush the Lord, or those who plead with the Lord, or those who demand from the Lord, or those who blame the Lord! "It is those who wait upon the Lord," these will "gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary." This waiting is hard. It is a trial of faith and it becomes the essence of real faith. Great faith is not shown by a demanding petition, nor is it seen when you get what you want when you want it from God. Faith is trusting God to give you what is right in the right time. Faith does not disappoint; neither does God.

Friday

Luke 1:7 ...And they were both advanced in years.

Age? Moses, Elizabeth, Abraham and Sarah, Noah: they were all too old to do what they ended up doing. David, Solomon: they were too young. Perhaps you are too busy, too poor, too unprepared by lack of education or status. That didn't stop John, Peter, or any of the others. The truth is we all have excuses for not really engaging in the work of the Kingdom. But no one has a good or compelling excuse, because God has gifted you and called you. Your gifts and calling are not mine. Mine are not yours. But both of us are needed and each of us is important. Praying? Giving? Going? Teaching? Sharing? Encouraging? Displaying faith? Showing hospitality? Leading? "But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." (1 Corinthians 12:18)