



SMALL GROUP GUIDE

HOW DID IT GO? {10 MINUTES}

Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

Did you...

- identify a source of fear in your life and, when it arose, practice entrusting it to God through prayer?
- ask the Holy Spirit to instill a genuine joy in you this season of Advent?
- listen to some Christ-focused Christmas songs?

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

Did you...

- look for a way to share the joy of Advent with someone by providing them a needed, but undeserved, gift?
- pray that the Holy Spirit would provide you an opportunity to share with someone the “great things” that God has done for you?
- invite friends to join you for the Family Advent Christmas Celebration on December 5th immediately following the services (11:45 AM–2 PM)?

DECEMBER 5

SERMON TITLE

Zechariah’s Song

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:68-79

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Luke 1:68-79 68 “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.
69 He has raised up a horn[a] of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
70 (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
71 salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—
72 to show mercy to our ancestors
and to remember his holy covenant,
73 the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
74 to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
76 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
77 to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
78 because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
79 to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

HEAD {15-20 MINUTES}

Read aloud the passages for this week.

1. Based on this passage of Scripture, what has God done for His people? Hint: look for the action words: almost all are attributed to God.
2. Reread verses 78-79. What event(s) do they foreshadow and who do they foreshadow?
3. Zechariah spent Elizabeth's entire pregnancy in silence, unable to talk. What was his response as soon as his voice returned? (v.64). Why do you think this was his response? (consider the text for today as you answer this question)

HEART {15-20 MINUTES}

1. Have there been seasons in your life where the Lord has humbled you, silenced you, or asked you to wait, and at the end of these seasons, were you closer to God or more fully able to praise Him? If your answer is yes, share about this time. What did praise look like and why was this your response? If you are currently in this season, does this text give you hope or encouragement? Explain.
2. The promises and fulfillment of these promises in Zechariah's hymn are communal. There is no "me" or "I" but instead "His people", "us", and "our fathers". Why is this? What can we, as a culture obsessed with individualism and autonomy (which also creeps into the church), learn from this prayer of praise? How can we let it influence our own worship?

HANDS {10 MINUTES}

Reaching Upward: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- Read Zechariah's Hymn five days this week and pause after each verse that contains a promise God has fulfilled to His people, inserting the ways you have seen this promise fulfilled in your own life and the lives of your brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Is there an area in your life where God is either disciplining you (like Zechariah) or asking you to wait on him? Use Zechariah's song of praise to direct your thoughts and worship as you sit before the Lord.

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Consider reading Zechariah's Hymn a few nights this week at the dinner table with your family, friends, roommates, etc. Read it in a different translation (consider NLT, NIV, The Message, ESV, etc.) and invite those with you to discuss how God has fulfilled these promises in His people's lives and in their own lives.
- As ambassadors of Christ and recipients of the promises of redemption, salvation, mercy, rescue, etc., we now can share this beautiful hope with those around us. Is there someone in your life who needs to hear the good news that Jesus has come to be their merciful healer, rescuer, and restorer?

Reaching Beyond

- Any other way God is stirring you to put this passage into practice?

Head

Observe the text and the author's main points.

Heart

Envision how the text—when applied—might transform your inner life in terms of your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

Hands

Apply the text by moving from inward reflection to outward action looking for practical ways to live the text out in our lives to serve others.

Neighbor

Anyone in your life—whether a friend, colleague, family member, classmate, or literal neighbor—to whom you can show God's love.

