

# **SERIES:** the *Word* is with us.

**DATE:** Saturday - Sunday, November 25-26, 2023

**SERMON:** God Had a Plan

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 1:5-23 NIV

[1:5] In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

[6] Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly.

[7] But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

[8] Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,

[9] he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

[10] And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

[11] Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

[12] When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

[13] But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

[14] He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,

[15] for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.

[16] He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

[17] And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

[18] Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

[19] The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.

[20] And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

[21] Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

[22] When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

[23] When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

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**Galatians 4:4-5** *But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.*

*What was the fullness of time?*

1. God's \_\_\_\_\_ and God's \_\_\_\_\_.

- The \_\_\_\_\_:
  - Roman peace
  - Common language
  - Roman roads
  - \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ – particularly with Roman gods

2. \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Promises.

- A \_\_\_\_\_ like Moses - *Deuteronomy 18 :15-18*
- A \_\_\_\_\_ covenant – *Jeremiah 31 :31-34*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit – *Ezekiel 36 :26*

3. \_\_\_\_\_ a Prophet

- **Luke 7:26-28** *But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."*
- Israel suffered \_\_\_\_\_ without a prophetic voice.
- **Mark 1:4** *And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*

4. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- **Isaiah 9:2** *The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.*
- God is at work in your \_\_\_\_\_ and in our \_\_\_\_\_.
- As long as there is \_\_\_\_\_, there is \_\_\_\_\_.

# Lagniappe

As I write this, I am looking out my office window at our Plaza Christmas Tree going up. We are looking forward to **Sunday night** when we will celebrate this Christmas Tree Lighting with carols, cocoa, and cookies **at 6pm on the South Lawn**.

The Christmas tree lighting is a fun event tailormade for children and adults to think about *Jesus being the light of the world*. It also gives us time to remember what God did for us by sending His Son.

I hope you will join us for this special time.

## **This week is also a time of new beginnings for our church.**

- All our Connect Groups will begin a Study on the **Book of Genesis**, which will continue to cover all of the Book. This is a great opportunity for you to join in a connect group, and an opportunity to explore the great theological teachings of Scripture.

- The sermon series will turn to focus on the **Christmas message from Luke 1-2**.

Luke's gospel is unique. As far as we know, Luke was a gentile convert who put together his gospel to give an "orderly account" of all that Jesus said and did.

I hope you will join us this Sunday, and all the Sundays of December, as we look at the narrative of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke.

Then next **Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>** we will have **Miracle in the Manger** - a fun Christmas Season event for K-6<sup>th</sup> graders with live animals, special guests, a "Bethlehem marketplace", and more! This will happen during their Connect Group times at 9:30am & 11am.

# Waylon