CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Luke Chapter 1 —

The Birth of John and Jesus Foretold

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Luke Chapter 1 opens the Gospel of Luke.

Luke was a doctor and a traveling companion of the apostle Paul.

He also wrote the book of Acts.

He was not one of the twelve, so he carefully investigated everything, speaking with eyewitnesses.

He wrote to a man named Theophilus so that he could be certain of what he had been taught.

Luke's Gospel gives special attention to prayer, to the Holy Spirit, to joy and praise, and to people others often overlooked: women, the poor, the sick, and outsiders.

Chapter 1 tells two birth announcements side by side.

An old priest and his barren wife will have a son named John.

A young virgin in Nazareth will have a Son named Jesus.

Both announcements come from the angel Gabriel.

One is met with doubt.

The other is met with humble faith.

The chapter is filled with songs of praise as God begins to keep His ancient promises.

The chapter moves through seven movements:

- Luke's Purpose in Writing (verses 1–4).
- The Birth of John Foretold (verses 5–25).
- The Birth of Jesus Foretold (verses 26–38).
- Mary Visits Elizabeth (verses 39–45).
- Mary's Song of Praise (verses 46–56).
- The Birth of John the Baptist (verses 57–66).
- Zechariah's Prophecy (verses 67–80).

The central truth of Luke 1 is:

God keeps His promises in His perfect time, doing the impossible through humble, believing servants, as He prepares the way for Jesus, the eternal King whose kingdom will never end.

I. MANY HAVE WRITTEN

Luke 1:1 — An Account of What Happened

“Many people have tried to write an account of the things that have happened among us,”

“Many people have tried to write an account.”

Luke was not the first to write about Jesus.

Others had already put the story into writing.

“Of the things that have happened among us.”

These were real events in real history.

The gospel is not a collection of ideas.

It is the record of what God actually did.

Cross References

John 21:25

> Jesus also did a great many other things. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the whole world could not hold all the books.

Acts 1:1

> Theophilus, in my first book I wrote about everything Jesus began to do and to teach.

2 Peter 1:16

> We were not passing along clever made-up stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw His greatness with our own eyes.

Spiritual Principle

Christian faith rests on things that truly happened.

Key Truth

The gospel is history before it is anything else.

II. EYEWITNESSES AND SERVANTS OF THE WORD

Luke 1:2 — Handed Down from the Beginning

“handed down by those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the Word from the beginning.”

“Handed down.”

The story was carefully passed on.

“By those who were eyewitnesses.”

People who saw Jesus with their own eyes.

“And servants of the Word.”

They did not own the message.

They served it.

“From the beginning.”

They had been there from the start of Jesus' ministry.

Cross References

1 John 1:1

> We are telling you about the One who existed from the beginning. We heard Him, we saw Him with our own eyes, we looked at Him, and our hands touched Him. He is the Word of life.

John 1:14

> The Word took on human flesh and made His home with us. We saw His glory, the glory that belongs to the Father's one and only Son, full of kindness and truth.

Acts 1:21

> So we must choose one of the men who were with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us.

Spiritual Principle

God's message has been faithfully passed down by those who saw and served.

Key Truth

We believe because of reliable witnesses.

III. AN ORDERLY ACCOUNT

Luke 1:3 — Carefully Investigated

“I too, having carefully investigated everything from the start, decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,”

“Having carefully investigated everything from the start.”

Luke did careful research.

He checked the facts.

Faith is not afraid of investigation.

“An orderly account.”

Well arranged and clearly told.

“Most excellent Theophilus.”

His name means “friend of God” or “loved by God.”

The title “most excellent” suggests he may have been a person of high rank.

Cross References

Acts 1:1

> In my earlier book, Theophilus, I told about all that Jesus began to do and teach.

2 Timothy 3:16

> All Scripture is breathed out by God and is useful for teaching, for correcting, for setting things right, and for training in right living.

John 20:31

> These things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you will have life through His name.

Spiritual Principle

God used careful human work to give us His inspired Word.

Key Truth

Honest questions can lead to solid faith.

IV. THAT YOU MAY KNOW FOR CERTAIN

Luke 1:4 — The Certainty of the Faith

“so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.”

“So that you may know.”

Luke wrote for a purpose.

“The certainty.”

Not guesswork.

Not wishful thinking.

Sure ground to stand on.

“Of the things you have been taught.”

Theophilus had already been taught.

Luke wanted his faith to be firm.

Cross References

John 20:31

> These are written down so that you may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name.

1 John 5:13

> I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you can know for sure that you have eternal life.

2 Timothy 3:16

> Every part of Scripture comes from God and is useful for teaching and training in what is right.

Spiritual Principle

God wants His people to have confidence, not constant doubt.

Application

Read Scripture not only to learn new things, but to grow sure of what you already believe.

V. IN THE DAYS OF HEROD

Luke 1:5 — Zechariah and Elizabeth

“In the days of Herod king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, from the division of Abijah. His wife, Elizabeth, was also a descendant of Aaron.”

“In the days of Herod king of Judea.”

Herod the Great, a cruel and powerful king.

Luke places the story in real history.

“A priest named Zechariah.”

His name means “the Lord remembers.”

“From the division of Abijah.”

The priests were divided into twenty-four groups that took turns serving in the temple.

“His wife, Elizabeth, was also a descendant of Aaron.”

Her name means “my God is faithful” or “God's oath.”

Together their names say: The Lord remembers His promise.

Cross References

1 Chronicles 24:10

> The seventh lot fell to Hakkoz, and the eighth to Abijah.

Exodus 6:23

> Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon. She bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

Matthew 2:1

> Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea while Herod was king. After that, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

God works through ordinary, faithful people in the middle of real history.

Key Truth

The Lord remembers His promise, even in dark times.

VI. RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD

Luke 1:6 — Blameless

“They were both righteous before God, keeping all the Lord's commandments blamelessly.”

“They were both righteous before God.”

Not just in the eyes of people.

Before God.

“Keeping all the Lord's commandments blamelessly.”

This does not mean they never sinned.

It means they lived faithful, sincere lives of obedience.

No one could rightly accuse them.

Cross References

Genesis 17:1

> When Abram was ninety-nine, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty. Walk before Me faithfully and live a blameless life.”

Genesis 6:9

> Noah was a righteous man, without blame among the people of his day. He walked closely with God.

Philippians 3:6

> As for keeping the law, I was faultless.

Spiritual Principle

Faithful obedience is pleasing to God.

Key Truth

Their faith was real, even when their prayers seemed unanswered.

VII. NO CHILDREN

Luke 1:7 — Barren and Very Old

“But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were very old.”

“But they had no children.”

In that culture, this was a deep sorrow.

Many people wrongly thought it was a sign of God's displeasure.

But Luke has just told us they were righteous.

Their childlessness was not a punishment.

“Because Elizabeth was barren.”

She was unable to conceive.

“And both were very old.”

Humanly speaking, all hope was gone.

But this is exactly where God loves to work.

Cross References

Genesis 18:11

> Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was well past the age of having children.

Genesis 25:21

> Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she could not have children. The Lord answered his prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant.

1 Samuel 1:2

> Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

Spiritual Principle

Hardship and unanswered longing are not proof of God's displeasure.

Key Truth

The godly can carry deep sorrow, and God sees it.

Application

If you carry the pain of infertility or unfulfilled longing, know that God sees you, and your sorrow is never a sign that He has rejected you.

VIII. SERVING AS PRIEST

Luke 1:8 — Before God

“One day, while Zechariah was serving as priest before God,”

“One day.”

An ordinary day.

God often breaks into ordinary days.

“While Zechariah was serving as priest.”

He was faithfully doing his duty.

“Before God.”

His work was done in God's presence.

Cross References

1 Chronicles 24:19

> This was the order in which they served when they came into the house of the Lord.

Exodus 28:1

> Bring your brother Aaron and his sons to you from among the Israelites, so that they may serve Me as priests.

Hebrews 5:1

> Every high priest is chosen from among the people and appointed to act for them before God, offering gifts and sacrifices for sins.

Spiritual Principle

God meets faithful people as they serve Him in ordinary duties.

Key Truth

Keep serving; God may visit you in the middle of your routine.

IX. CHOSEN BY LOT

Luke 1:9 — Burning Incense

“he was chosen by lot to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.”

“He was chosen by lot.”

There were thousands of priests.

A priest might be chosen for this honor only once in his life, if ever.

What looked like chance was God's appointment.

“To go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.”

The incense rose before God as a picture of prayer.

Cross References

Exodus 30:7

> Aaron must burn sweet-smelling incense on the altar every morning when he tends the lamps.

1 Chronicles 24:5

> They divided them fairly by drawing lots, for there were officials of the holy place and officials of God among them.

Exodus 30:1

> Make an altar out of acacia wood for burning incense.

Spiritual Principle

God directs even the details that seem like chance.

Key Truth

Zechariah's once-in-a-lifetime moment was God's perfect timing.

X. ALL THE PEOPLE WERE PRAYING

Luke 1:10 — The Hour of Incense

“At the time of the incense offering, all the people were praying outside.”

While Zechariah offered incense inside, the people prayed outside.

The whole nation was waiting on God.

Luke's Gospel begins with prayer.

It will be a Gospel full of prayer.

Cross References

Exodus 30:8

> When Aaron lights the lamps at evening, he must burn incense again. This incense will burn before the Lord in every generation.

Psalm 141:2

> Let my prayer come before You like incense, and my lifted hands like the evening offering.

Revelation 8:3

> Another angel came with a gold incense holder and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all God's people.

Spiritual Principle

Prayer rises to God like incense.

Key Truth

God was about to answer the prayers of a whole nation.

XI. AN ANGEL OF THE LORD

Luke 1:11 — At the Altar of Incense

“Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.”

“Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him.”

For about four hundred years, Israel had heard no new word from a prophet.

Now heaven speaks again.

“Standing at the right side of the altar of incense.”

The right side was a place of favor.

This was good news, not judgment.

Cross References

Exodus 3:2

> There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire coming from inside a bush.

Judges 6:12

> The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”

Daniel 9:21

> While I was still praying, Gabriel, the one I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me quickly at about the time of the evening offering.

Spiritual Principle

God breaks long silences in His own time.

Key Truth

The long wait ended in the place of prayer.

XII. STARTLED AND AFRAID

Luke 1:12 — Overwhelmed with Fear

“Zechariah was startled and overwhelmed with fear.”

Zechariah was a righteous man.

Yet he was terrified.

When sinful people come near God's holy presence, fear is natural.

Again and again in Scripture, people tremble when heaven appears.

Cross References

Judges 6:22

> When Gideon understood it was the angel of the Lord, he cried, “Oh no, Lord God! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!”

Daniel 10:7

> I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision. The men with me did not see it, but great fear came over them, and they ran and hid.

Genesis 15:1

> After this, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your protector and your very great reward.”

Spiritual Principle

God's holiness awakens holy fear.

Key Truth

Even good people tremble before the glory of heaven.

XIII. YOUR PRAYER HAS BEEN HEARD

Luke 1:13 — You Are to Call Him John

“But the angel said, “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.”

“Do not be afraid.”

The first words of good news.

“Your prayer has been heard.”

Perhaps Zechariah had stopped praying for a child years ago.

But God had not forgotten.

“Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son.”

The impossible will happen.

“You are to call him John.”

The name means “the Lord is gracious.”

Cross References

Genesis 17:19

> God said, “Your wife Sarah will have a son, and you will name him Isaac. I will make My covenant with him and his descendants forever.”

Judges 13:3

> The angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said, “You have not been able to have children, but you will become pregnant and have a son.”

Isaiah 44:2

> This is what the Lord says, the One who made you and shaped you in the womb and will help you: Do not be afraid.

Spiritual Principle

God hears prayers long after we stop expecting an answer.

Key Truth

Delayed answers are not denied prayers.

XIV. JOY AND DELIGHT

Luke 1:14 — Many Will Rejoice

“He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice at his birth,”

“He will be a joy and delight to you.”

Years of sorrow would turn into gladness.

“And many will rejoice at his birth.”

John's birth would bring joy far beyond his family.

Joy is a key theme in Luke's Gospel.

Cross References

Genesis 21:6

> Sarah said, “God has made me laugh, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.”

Isaiah 9:3

> You have made the nation larger and given them great joy. They are glad before You, like people celebrating at harvest time.

John 3:29

> The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and he is full of joy when he hears the groom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

Spiritual Principle

God turns long sorrow into overflowing joy.

Key Truth

God's answers often bless far more people than we expect.

XV. GREAT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD

Luke 1:15 — Filled with the Holy Spirit

“for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb.”

“He will be great in the sight of the Lord.”

Not great in the world's eyes.

John would live in the desert and wear camel's hair.

But he would be great before God.

“He must never drink wine or strong drink.”

Like a Nazirite, John would be set apart for God.

“Filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb.”

God was at work in him before birth.

Cross References

Numbers 6:3

> He must stay away from wine and other strong drink. He must not drink vinegar made from them or eat grapes, fresh or dried.

Judges 13:4

> Now be careful not to drink wine or any strong drink, and do not eat anything unclean.

Jeremiah 1:5

> I knew you even before I shaped you inside your mother. Before your birth I chose you for Myself and made you a prophet to the nations.

Spiritual Principle

True greatness is measured in God's sight, not the world's.

Key Truth

God knows and calls His servants even before they are born.

XVI. BACK TO THE LORD

Luke 1:16 — Turning Many

“He will bring many of the people of Israel back to the Lord their God.”

John's mission was to turn people back.

Back from sin.

Back from empty religion.

Back to the Lord their God.

This is the heart of repentance.

Cross References

Malachi 4:6

> He will turn the hearts of parents toward their children and the hearts of children toward their parents.

Isaiah 40:3

> A voice is calling: “In the wilderness clear a road for the Lord. Make a straight highway in the desert for our God.”

Malachi 3:1

> Look, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me.

Spiritual Principle

God calls His people to turn back to Him.

Key Truth

Repentance is coming home to God.

XVII. THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF ELIJAH

Luke 1:17 — A People Prepared

“And he will go on before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.””

“He will go on before the Lord.”

John would be the forerunner.

“In the spirit and power of Elijah.”

Bold, fearless, and calling people to repent.

Malachi had promised Elijah would come before the day of the Lord.

“To turn the hearts of fathers to their children.”

Healing broken families.

“And the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous.”

Changing hearts and lives.

“To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

John's whole life was preparation for Jesus.

Cross References

Malachi 4:5

> Watch, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.

Malachi 4:6

> He will bring parents and children back together in their hearts, so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse.

Matthew 11:14

> If you are willing to accept it, John is the Elijah who was to come.

Spiritual Principle

God prepares hearts before He comes.

Key Truth

Real revival changes homes as well as hearts.

XVIII. HOW CAN I BE SURE?

Luke 1:18 — Zechariah's Doubt

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

“How can I be sure of this?”

Zechariah asked for a sign.

An angel was standing before him, yet he doubted.

“I am an old man, and my wife is well along in years.”

He looked at the facts of his situation.

He forgot the power of God.

Abraham and Sarah had faced the same question long before.

Cross References

Genesis 17:17

> Abraham bowed down with his face to the ground and laughed. He said to himself, “Can a man a hundred years old have a son? Can Sarah have a child at ninety?”

Genesis 18:11

> Abraham and Sarah were old, and Sarah was too old to have children.

Genesis 15:8

> But Abram said, “Lord God, how can I know that I will really own it?”

Spiritual Principle

Doubt looks at our limits; faith looks at God's power.

Spiritual Warning

Even faithful people can struggle to believe God's promises.

XIX. I AM GABRIEL

Luke 1:19 — Sent with Good News

“The angel said, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and tell you this good news.”

“I am Gabriel.”

The same angel who appeared to Daniel centuries earlier.

“I stand in the presence of God.”

He came straight from God's throne.

“I was sent to speak to you.”

The message was not his own.

“And tell you this good news.”

This is the first time “good news” appears in Luke.

The gospel begins with an announcement from heaven.

Cross References

Daniel 8:16

> I heard a man's voice from the Ulai Canal calling, “Gabriel, explain the vision to this man.”

Daniel 9:21

> While I was praying, Gabriel came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.

Hebrews 1:14

> All the angels are spirits who serve God. He sends them to help the people who are going to be saved.

Spiritual Principle

God's messages come with God's authority.

Key Truth

The gospel story begins with good news from the presence of God.

XX. SILENT UNTIL IT HAPPENS

Luke 1:20 — Because You Did Not Believe

“But now you will be silent and unable to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.””

“You will be silent and unable to speak.”

Zechariah asked for a sign.

He received one.

“Until the day this happens.”

It was a discipline, but also a promise.

The silence would end when the promise came true.

“Because you did not believe my words.”

Unbelief has consequences.

“Which will come true at their appointed time.”

God's word does not depend on our faith to be true.

It will come to pass when He has planned.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:26

> I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth, and you will be silent.

Daniel 10:15

> While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and could not speak.

Numbers 14:11

> The Lord said to Moses, “How long will these people refuse to respect Me? How long will they refuse to believe in Me, even after all the signs I have done among them?”

Spiritual Principle

God disciplines unbelief, yet His promises still stand.

Key Truth

Zechariah's silence was correction, not rejection.

XXI. THE PEOPLE WERE WAITING

Luke 1:21 — Why So Long?

“Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.”

The priest usually came out quickly to bless the people.

But Zechariah was delayed.

The people began to wonder.

Had something happened to him?

Something had happened, but not what they feared.

Cross References

Leviticus 16:17

> No one may be in the meeting tent from the time Aaron goes in to make atonement in the Most Holy Place until he comes out.

Exodus 34:33

> When Moses finished speaking with them, he put a covering over his face.

1 Samuel 1:12

> As Hannah kept on praying before the Lord, Eli watched her mouth.

Spiritual Principle

Time spent in God's presence can change everything.

Key Truth

While people waited outside, heaven was at work inside.

XXII. HE COULD NOT SPEAK

Luke 1:22 — He Had Seen a Vision

“When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision, for he kept making signs to them but remained mute.”

“He could not speak to them.”

The priest could not pronounce the blessing.

“They realized he had seen a vision.”

Something supernatural had happened.

“He kept making signs to them.”

He tried to explain with his hands.

“But remained mute.”

The silence was itself a sign that God's word was true.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:26

> I will make you unable to talk, so that you cannot correct them.

Daniel 10:15

> I turned my face to the ground and was unable to say anything.

Acts 9:8

> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.

Spiritual Principle

God's discipline can become a testimony to others.

Key Truth

Zechariah's silence spoke loudly that God was at work.

XXIII. HE RETURNED HOME

Luke 1:23 — His Time of Service Completed

“When his time of service was completed, he returned home.”

Zechariah did not quit.

Though he could not speak, he finished his service.

Then he went home to the hill country of Judea.

Faithfulness continued, even under discipline.

Cross References

1 Chronicles 24:19

> This was their appointed order for serving when they entered the Lord's temple.

Numbers 8:25

> At age fifty they must stop their regular work and serve no longer.

Leviticus 8:33

> Do not leave the entrance of the meeting tent for seven days, until your days of ordination are finished.

Spiritual Principle

Keep serving faithfully, even after a failure.

Key Truth

Zechariah finished his work while waiting for God's promise.

XXIV. ELIZABETH BECAME PREGNANT

Luke 1:24 — Five Months of Seclusion

“After this, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and remained in seclusion for five months.”

“Elizabeth became pregnant.”

God did exactly what He said.

“And remained in seclusion for five months.”

She stayed quietly at home.

Perhaps to rest.

Perhaps to worship.

Perhaps to treasure the miracle before others could see it.

Cross References

Genesis 30:23

> She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, “God has removed my shame.”

1 Samuel 1:20

> In time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the Lord for him.”

Genesis 25:21

> The Lord answered Isaac's prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.

Spiritual Principle

God's word comes true exactly as He promised.

Key Truth

The impossible became real in a quiet home.

XXV. THE LORD HAS DONE THIS

Luke 1:25 — My Disgrace Taken Away

“She said, “The Lord has done this for me. In these days He has shown His favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.””

“The Lord has done this for me.”

Elizabeth gave God the credit.

“He has shown His favor.”

She saw His kindness.

“And taken away my disgrace among the people.”

For years she had carried shame.

People may have whispered about her.

But the shame was never from God.

Now He lifted it in public.

Cross References

Genesis 30:23

> Rachel conceived and had a son, and said, “God has taken away my disgrace.”

1 Samuel 1:6

> Her rival kept provoking her and making her miserable because the Lord had not given her children.

Isaiah 54:4

> Do not be afraid, for you will not be ashamed. Do not lose heart, for you will not be disgraced. You will forget the shame of your youth.

Spiritual Principle

God lifts shame that others have placed on us.

Key Truth

Elizabeth's first words were praise.

XXVI. GABRIEL SENT TO NAZARETH

Luke 1:26 — In the Sixth Month

“In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,”

“In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.”

The two stories are tied together.

“God sent the angel Gabriel.”

The same messenger, now with even greater news.

“To Nazareth, a town in Galilee.”

The first announcement came in the great temple in Jerusalem.

The second came to a small, ordinary village.

Nazareth was a place many people looked down on.

Cross References

Daniel 8:16

> A voice called out, “Gabriel, help this man understand what he has seen.”

Daniel 9:21

> Gabriel, the one I had seen before, came flying to me as I prayed.

Matthew 1:18

> This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah happened. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they came together she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

God works in overlooked places.

Key Truth

The greatest news came to a humble town.

XXVII. A VIRGIN NAMED MARY

Luke 1:27 — Pledged to Joseph

“to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.”

“To a virgin.”

Luke states it clearly, twice.

Mary had never been with a man.

“Pledged to be married.”

Engagement in that day was a binding agreement.

“To a man named Joseph, a descendant of David.”

Through Joseph, Jesus would legally belong to David's royal family.

“The virgin's name was Mary.”

She was likely a young woman from an ordinary family.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

> So the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and she will call Him Immanuel.

Matthew 1:18

> Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they married she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:20

> An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The child in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Spiritual Principle

God chose a humble young woman for the greatest task in history.

Key Truth

The virgin birth fulfills what God promised through Isaiah.

XXVIII. HIGHLY FAVORED

Luke 1:28 — The Lord Is with You

“The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.””

“Greetings, you who are highly favored!”

Mary had received God's gracious favor.

It was a gift of grace.

“The Lord is with you.”

The greatest blessing anyone can have.

Christians have honored Mary in different ways through history.

All agree that she received God's grace in a special way and that she is a beautiful example of humble faith.

Cross References

Judges 6:12

> The angel said to Gideon, “The Lord is with you, brave man.”

Zephaniah 3:17

> The Lord your God is among you, a mighty One who rescues. He will be glad over you and celebrate you with songs of joy.

Daniel 10:19

> He said, “Do not be afraid, you who are greatly loved. Peace to you. Be strong now, be strong.”

Spiritual Principle

God's favor is a gift of grace.

Key Truth

The Lord's presence is the heart of every blessing.

XXIX. GREATLY TROUBLED

Luke 1:29 — What Kind of Greeting?

“Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.”

“Mary was greatly troubled.”

Not mainly by the angel, but by his words.

Why would an angel call her highly favored?

“And wondered what kind of greeting this might be.”

Mary was thoughtful.

She considered things carefully.

This will be true of her throughout Luke's Gospel.

Cross References

Judges 6:22

> Gideon realized it was the angel of the Lord, and he was terrified.

Daniel 8:17

> As he came near, I was frightened and fell facedown.

Daniel 10:12

> Do not be afraid, Daniel. From the first day you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before God, your words were heard.

Spiritual Principle

Humble hearts are surprised by God's favor.

Key Truth

Mary did not think of herself as special.

XXX. YOU HAVE FOUND FAVOR

Luke 1:30 — Do Not Be Afraid, Mary

“But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God.”

“Do not be afraid, Mary.”

The angel called her by name.

God knows His servants personally.

“You have found favor with God.”

Grace, not merit.

God chose her as His gift.

Cross References

Genesis 6:8

But Noah received grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Judges 6:12

The Lord is with you, mighty one.

Daniel 10:19

Do not be afraid, you who are deeply loved. Take courage and be strong.

Spiritual Principle

God's favor removes fear.

Key Truth

God knows you by name.

XXXI. YOU ARE TO CALL HIM JESUS

Luke 1:31 — A Son

“You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.”

“You will conceive and give birth to a son.”

A real pregnancy.

A real baby.

God would become truly human.

“You are to call him Jesus.”

The name means “the Lord saves.”

His name tells His mission.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

The virgin will be with child and give birth to a son and will name Him Immanuel.

Matthew 1:21

> She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will rescue His people from their sins.

Genesis 3:15

> I will put hatred between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus came as a real human being to save.

Key Truth

The name of Jesus means the Lord saves.

XXXII. SON OF THE MOST HIGH

Luke 1:32 — The Throne of David

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David,”

“He will be great.”

John would be great in the sight of the Lord.

Jesus would simply be great, without limit.

“And will be called the Son of the Most High.”

He is the Son of God.

“The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.”

God promised David that his descendant would reign forever.

Jesus is that King.

Cross References

2 Samuel 7:12

> When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your own sons to follow you, and I will make his kingdom strong.

2 Samuel 7:13

> He will build a house for My name, and I will make the throne of his kingdom last forever.

Psalm 132:11

> The Lord made a sure promise to David that He will not take back: “One of your own descendants I will place on your throne.”

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is the promised Son of David and the Son of God.

Key Truth

God keeps promises He made a thousand years earlier.

XXXIII. HIS KINGDOM WILL NEVER END

Luke 1:33 — Reigning Forever

“and He will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; His kingdom will never end.””

“He will reign over Jacob's descendants forever.”

Jesus is the true King of God's people.

“His kingdom will never end.”

Every human kingdom rises and falls.

Herod's kingdom would end.

Rome would fall.

But Jesus' kingdom lasts forever.

Cross References

2 Samuel 7:16

> Your family and your kingdom will last forever before Me. Your throne will stand firm forever.

Daniel 7:14

> He received power to rule, honor, and a kingdom, so that people of every nation and language would serve Him. His rule will last forever and never end. No one will ever destroy His kingdom.

Micah 4:7

> The Lord will rule over them on Mount Zion from that day and forever.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus' kingdom outlasts every earthly power.

Key Truth

The baby promised to Mary is the eternal King.

XXXIV. HOW WILL THIS BE?

Luke 1:34 — Since I Am a Virgin

““How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?””

“How will this be?”

Mary's question was different from Zechariah's.

Zechariah asked, “How can I be sure?”

Mary asked, “How will it happen?”

Zechariah asked for proof.

Mary asked for understanding.

“Since I am a virgin.”

She knew this was humanly impossible.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

> The Lord will give you a sign: a virgin will conceive and bear a son.

Matthew 1:18

> Before they were married, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 18:14

> Can anything be too hard for the Lord? I will come back to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.

Spiritual Principle

Faith can ask honest questions.

Key Truth

Mary questioned how, not whether.

XXXV. THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL COME UPON YOU

Luke 1:35 — The Son of God

“The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you.”

God Himself would do this.

“The power of the Most High will overshadow you.”

Like the cloud of God's glory that covered the tabernacle.

“So the holy one to be born.”

Jesus was born without sin.

“Will be called the Son of God.”

He is fully God and fully man.

This is the wonder of the incarnation.

Cross References

Exodus 40:35

> Moses could not go into the meeting tent, because the cloud rested on it and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Matthew 1:20

> What has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 7:14

> The virgin will give birth to a son, and he will be called Immanuel.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus' birth was the work of God's Spirit.

Key Truth

The holy One came into the world as a human child.

XXXVI. EVEN ELIZABETH

Luke 1:36 — In Her Sixth Month

“Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month.”

“Even Elizabeth your relative.”

God gave Mary a sign to strengthen her faith.

“Is going to have a child in her old age.”

If God could do that, He could do this.

“She who was said to be unable to conceive.”

People had labeled her.

God changed the label.

Cross References

Genesis 18:14

> Is anything too difficult for the Lord?

Genesis 21:2

> Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised.

Judges 13:3

> You are unable to have children, but you will conceive and give birth to a son.

Spiritual Principle

God gives encouragement to strengthen our faith.

Key Truth

God changes what people say can never change.

XXXVII. NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD

Luke 1:37 — God's Power

“For nothing is impossible with God.””

This is one of the great verses of the Bible.

Not one word from God will fail.

A barren old woman would have a son.

A virgin would give birth.

God can do what no one else can do.

Cross References

Genesis 18:14

> Is there anything the Lord cannot do?

Jeremiah 32:17

> Oh, Lord God! With Your mighty power and Your strong arm You created the sky and the earth. There is nothing You cannot do.

Matthew 19:26

> Jesus looked at them and said, “For people this is impossible, but with God everything is possible.”

Spiritual Principle

God is able to do what is humanly impossible.

Application

What situation have you decided is impossible? Bring it to God.

XXXVIII. THE LORD'S SERVANT

Luke 1:38 — May It Be

““I am the Lord's servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.”

“I am the Lord's servant.”

Mary surrendered herself to God.

She would face misunderstanding.

Joseph might reject her.

People would talk.

Yet she said yes.

“May your word to me be fulfilled.”

Humble faith.

Complete trust.

“Then the angel left her.”

Now she would walk by faith.

Cross References

1 Samuel 3:9

> Eli said to Samuel, “Go and lie down. If He calls you, answer, ‘Speak, Lord. Your servant is ready to hear.’”

Psalm 123:2

> As servants watch their master's hand, so our eyes look to the Lord our God until He shows us mercy.

Isaiah 6:8

> Then I heard the Lord's voice asking, “Who should I send? Who will go for Us?” And I said, “I am here. Send me!”

Spiritual Principle

True faith surrenders to God's will, whatever the cost.

Key Truth

Mary's answer is the answer of every true servant: Let it be as You say.

XXXIX. MARY HURRIED

Luke 1:39 — To the Hill Country

“At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea,”

“Mary got ready and hurried.”

She did not delay.

She went to the one person who would understand.

“To a town in the hill country of Judea.”

A journey of several days from Nazareth.

Faith moves.

Cross References

Joshua 21:11

> They gave them Kiriath Arba, also called Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, along with its pasturelands.

Joshua 15:48

> In the hill country were the towns of Shamir, Jattir, and Sokoh.

Genesis 12:1

> The Lord said to Abram, “Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's household, and go to the land I will show you.”

Spiritual Principle

Faith responds to God's word with action.

Key Truth

God gives us people who can share in what He is doing.

XL. SHE GREETED ELIZABETH

Luke 1:40 — Zechariah's Home

“where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.”

Two women.

One old, one young.

One barren, one a virgin.

Both carrying a miracle.

Mary entered and greeted her.

A simple greeting would bring a powerful response.

Cross References

Genesis 29:13

> When Laban heard about Jacob, he ran to meet him. He hugged him, kissed him, and brought him home.

Exodus 18:7

> Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. He bowed down and kissed him, and they asked about each other's welfare.

1 Samuel 25:14

> David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master.

Spiritual Principle

God uses fellowship between believers to strengthen faith.

Key Truth

Spiritual friendships are a gift from God.

XLI. THE BABY LEAPED

Luke 1:41 — Filled with the Holy Spirit

“When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.”

“When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting.”

Mary had told her nothing yet.

“The baby leaped in her womb.”

John, even before birth, responded to the presence of Jesus.

He was already pointing to the Messiah.

“And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.”

The Spirit gave her understanding.

Cross References

Genesis 25:22

> The babies jostled each other inside her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she went to ask the Lord.

Judges 6:34

> Then the Spirit of the Lord came on Gideon, and he blew a trumpet to call the people to follow him.

1 Samuel 10:10

> When they arrived at Gibeah, a group of prophets met Saul. The Spirit of God came powerfully on him, and he joined in their prophesying.

Spiritual Principle

The Holy Spirit reveals who Jesus is.

Key Truth

John's first act was to rejoice at the presence of Jesus.

XLII. BLESSED AMONG WOMEN

Luke 1:42 — Blessed Is the Child

“In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!”

“In a loud voice she exclaimed.”

Elizabeth could not keep quiet.

“Blessed are you among women.”

Mary was honored above all women for her role.

“And blessed is the child you will bear!”

The greatest blessing was the Child Himself.

Mary's blessing came from the One she carried.

Cross References

Judges 5:24

> Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, is the most blessed of women, most blessed of women who live in tents.

Genesis 49:25

> May the God of your father help you, and the Almighty bless you with blessings from heaven above and from the deep below, blessings of the breast and the womb.

Deuteronomy 28:4

> Your children will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock.

Spiritual Principle

All true blessing flows from Jesus.

Key Truth

Mary was blessed because of the Child she would bear.

XLIII. THE MOTHER OF MY LORD

Luke 1:43 — Why Am I So Favored?

“But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

“Why am I so favored?”

Elizabeth was older, the wife of a priest.

Yet she humbled herself before a young girl.

“The mother of my Lord.”

Elizabeth called the unborn Jesus “my Lord.”

By the Spirit, she recognized who He was.

Cross References

2 Samuel 6:9

> David was afraid of the Lord that day and said, “How can the ark of the Lord ever come to me?”

Psalm 110:1

> The Lord told my Lord, “Sit beside Me in the place of honor until I put Your enemies under Your feet.”

1 Samuel 25:41

> She bowed with her face to the ground and said, “I am your servant, ready to serve.”

Spiritual Principle

Humility rejoices in God's work through others.

Key Truth

Elizabeth called Jesus Lord before He was born.

XLIV. LEAPED FOR JOY

Luke 1:44 — The Baby's Joy

“As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.”

“The baby in my womb leaped for joy.”

Not just movement.

Joy.

The angel had said John would be filled with the Spirit even before birth.

Here we see it.

Even before birth, John knew joy in the presence of Jesus.

Cross References

Genesis 25:22

The children struggled together within her.

Judges 13:24

The woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. He grew, and the Lord blessed him.

Psalm 71:6

I have depended on You since birth. You brought me out of my mother's womb. I will always praise You.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus' presence brings joy.

Key Truth

God values and works in life even before birth.

XLV. BLESSED IS SHE WHO BELIEVED

Luke 1:45 — The Lord Will Fulfill His Promises

“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!””

“Blessed is she who has believed.”

Mary's greatest blessing was her faith.

Notice the contrast.

Zechariah, the priest, doubted and became silent.

Mary, the young girl, believed and was called blessed.

“That the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!”

Faith trusts that God keeps His word.

Cross References

Hebrews 11:11

> By faith even Sarah, who was past the age, was enabled to have a child, because she considered the One who had promised to be faithful.

Genesis 18:14

> Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

1 Samuel 1:17

> Eli answered, “Go in peace. May the God of Israel give you what you have asked of Him.”

Spiritual Principle

Those who believe God's promises are blessed.

Key Truth

Faith opens the door to blessing.

XLVI. MY SOUL GLORIFIES THE LORD

Luke 1:46 — Mary's Song Begins

“And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord,”

This song is often called the **Magnificat**, from its first word in Latin.

“My soul glorifies the Lord.”

Mary's whole being praised God.

She did not glorify herself.

She magnified the Lord.

Her song is full of Old Testament words, especially from Hannah's song.

Mary knew the Scriptures well.

Cross References

1 Samuel 2:1

> Hannah prayed: “My heart is glad in the Lord. In the Lord I am made strong.”

Psalm 34:2

I will boast about the Lord. Let the humble hear and be glad.

Psalm 103:1

My soul, bless the Lord! All that is in me, bless His holy name.

Spiritual Principle

Worship makes God great in our eyes.

Key Truth

The more God is magnified, the more we see His greatness.

XLVII. GOD MY SAVIOR

Luke 1:47 — My Spirit Rejoices

“and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,”

“My spirit rejoices.”

Deep joy.

“In God my Savior.”

Mary called God her Savior.

She knew she needed saving, like everyone else.

The One she carried would be her Savior too.

Cross References

1 Samuel 2:1

I rejoice because You have saved me.

Habakkuk 3:18

Still, I will be glad in the Lord. I will find my joy in the God who saves me.

Psalm 35:9

Then I will be joyful in the Lord and glad because He has saved me.

Spiritual Principle

Everyone needs God as Savior.

Key Truth

Mary rejoiced in God her Savior.

XLVIII. ALL GENERATIONS WILL CALL ME BLESSED

Luke 1:48 — The Humble State of His Servant

“for He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,”

“He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant.”

God noticed a poor young woman from Nazareth.

God sees the lowly.

“From now on all generations will call me blessed.”

This has come true.

For two thousand years, believers have called Mary blessed.

Not because of her greatness, but because of God's grace to her.

Cross References

1 Samuel 1:11

> Lord of Heaven's Armies, if You will look on Your servant's sorrow and remember me and give me a son, I will give him to You for his whole life.

Psalm 138:6

> Though the Lord is high above, He cares for the lowly, but He knows the proud from far away.

1 Samuel 2:8

> He lifts the poor from the dust and raises the needy from the ash heap. He seats them with princes.

Spiritual Principle

God notices and lifts up the humble.

Key Truth

God sees those the world overlooks.

XLIX. HOLY IS HIS NAME

Luke 1:49 — Great Things

“for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is His name.”

“The Mighty One.”

God is all-powerful.

“Has done great things for me.”

Mary gave Him the credit.

“Holy is His name.”

God is set apart, pure, and perfect.

His power is joined with His holiness.

Cross References

1 Samuel 2:2

> There is no one holy like the Lord. There is no one besides You. There is no Rock like our God.

Psalm 111:9

> He sent rescue to His people. He made His covenant to last forever. His name is holy and awesome.

Deuteronomy 10:21

> He is the One you praise. He is your God, who did the great and amazing things you saw with your own eyes.

Spiritual Principle

God's power and holiness deserve our praise.

Key Truth

Every great thing in our lives comes from the Mighty One.

L. HIS MERCY EXTENDS

Luke 1:50 — From Generation to Generation

“His mercy extends to those who fear Him, from generation to generation.”

“His mercy extends to those who fear Him.”

To those who honor and respect God.

“From generation to generation.”

God's mercy did not end with Abraham.

It did not end with Mary.

It continues to every generation, including ours.

Cross References

Psalm 103:17

> But the Lord's love for those who honor Him lasts from everlasting to everlasting, and His goodness reaches their grandchildren.

Psalm 100:5

> The Lord is good. His kind love never ends, and He stays faithful to every generation.

Exodus 20:6

> I show love to thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commands.

Spiritual Principle

God's mercy reaches every generation.

Key Truth

The mercy shown to Mary is offered to you.

LI. MIGHTY DEEDS WITH HIS ARM

Luke 1:51 — The Proud Scattered

“He has performed mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.”

“He has performed mighty deeds with His arm.”

God's arm is a picture of His power.

“He has scattered those who are proud.”

God opposes pride.

“In their inmost thoughts.”

Pride begins in the heart.

God sees what is hidden.

Cross References

Psalm 89:10

> You crushed Rahab like one who is killed. With Your strong arm You scattered Your enemies.

1 Samuel 2:3

> Stop your proud talk. Do not let arrogant words come from your mouth, for the Lord is a God who knows everything, and He weighs every deed.

Psalm 33:10

> The Lord ruins the plans of the nations. He defeats the purposes of the peoples.

Spiritual Principle

God scatters the proud.

Spiritual Warning

Pride in the heart puts us in opposition to God.

LII. RULERS BROUGHT DOWN

Luke 1:52 — The Humble Lifted

“He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.”

“He has brought down rulers from their thrones.”

Herod sat on a throne.

Caesar sat on a throne.

But God is the true King.

“But has lifted up the humble.”

A young woman from Nazareth.

Shepherds in a field.

Fishermen by a lake.

God's kingdom turns the world's values upside down.

Cross References

1 Samuel 2:7

> The Lord makes some poor and others rich. He brings some down and lifts others up.

Psalm 147:6

> The Lord lifts up the humble, but He throws the wicked to the ground.

Ezekiel 21:26

> Take off the turban and remove the crown. Things will not stay as they are. The lowly will be lifted up, and the proud will be brought down.

Spiritual Principle

God reverses human status.

Key Truth

In God's kingdom, the way up is down.

LIII. THE HUNGRY FILLED

Luke 1:53 — The Rich Sent Away Empty

“He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.”

“He has filled the hungry with good things.”

Those who know their need receive from God.

“But has sent the rich away empty.”

Those who trust in their riches and feel no need of God leave with nothing.

Luke's Gospel will say much about the poor and the dangers of wealth.

Cross References

1 Samuel 2:5

> Those who were full now hire themselves out for food, but those who were hungry are hungry no more.

Psalm 107:9

> He gives the thirsty all they need and fills hungry people with good food.

Psalm 34:10

> Even strong young lions may go hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack nothing good.

Spiritual Principle

God fills those who know their need.

Key Truth

Spiritual hunger is the beginning of being filled.

LIV. HE HAS HELPED ISRAEL

Luke 1:54 — Remembering Mercy

“He has helped His servant Israel, remembering to be merciful”

“He has helped His servant Israel.”

God came to the aid of His people.

“Remembering to be merciful.”

God had not forgotten.

Through centuries of waiting, His mercy remained.

Cross References

Isaiah 41:8

> But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the descendants of My friend Abraham.

Psalm 98:3

> He has remembered His love and faithfulness to Israel. People everywhere have seen how our God saves.

Isaiah 49:3

> He said to me, “You are My servant, Israel, in whom I will show My glory.”

Spiritual Principle

God remembers His mercy.

Key Truth

God never forgets His people.

LV. AS HE PROMISED

Luke 1:55 — To Abraham Forever

“to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as He promised our ancestors.””

“To Abraham and his descendants forever.”

God's promise to Abraham was being kept.

Through Abraham's family, all nations would be blessed.

“Just as He promised our ancestors.”

God's promises may take centuries.

But they never fail.

Cross References

Genesis 17:7

> I will keep My covenant with you and your descendants after you for all generations. It will be a covenant that lasts forever.

Micah 7:20

> You will be faithful to Jacob and show love to Abraham, as You promised our ancestors long ago.

Genesis 22:18

> Every nation on earth will be blessed through your family, because you did what I told you.

Spiritual Principle

God keeps His promises across generations.

Key Truth

The birth of Jesus was God keeping His word to Abraham.

LVI. ABOUT THREE MONTHS

Luke 1:56 — Mary Returned Home

“Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.”

Mary stayed until about the time John was born.

The two women encouraged each other.

Then Mary went home to Nazareth.

She would face the challenge of explaining her pregnancy.

But she had been strengthened.

Cross References

Genesis 29:27

> Finish the wedding week with this daughter, and then we will give you the younger one also.

Ruth 1:4

> They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

Genesis 24:55

> Her brother and mother said, “Let the young woman stay with us ten days or so, and then she may go.”

Spiritual Principle

God strengthens us through time spent with other believers.

Key Truth

Before facing hard days, Mary was surrounded by encouragement.

LVII. SHE HAD A SON

Luke 1:57 — John Is Born

“When it was time for Elizabeth to give birth, she had a son.”

God's promise came true.

Just as Gabriel said.

The barren woman gave birth.

The old couple held their son.

God's word never fails.

Cross References

Genesis 21:2

Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the exact time God had said.

1 Samuel 1:20

Hannah had a son and named him Samuel, because she said, “I asked the Lord for him.”

Genesis 25:24

When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb.

Spiritual Principle

God's promises come true in His time.

Key Truth

What God says, God does.

LVIII. THEY SHARED HER JOY

Luke 1:58 — Great Mercy

“Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.”

“The Lord had shown her great mercy.”

Everyone saw it was God's work.

“They shared her joy.”

Joy is meant to be shared.

The community rejoiced together.

Cross References

Genesis 21:6

Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and all who hear will laugh with me.”

Ruth 4:14

> The women said to Naomi, “Praise the Lord, who has not left you without a family redeemer today.”

Psalm 113:9

> He gives the childless woman a home and makes her a happy mother of children. Praise the Lord!

Spiritual Principle

God's people rejoice with those who rejoice.

Key Truth

God's mercy to one becomes joy for many.

LIX. ON THE EIGHTH DAY

Luke 1:59 — Circumcision and Naming

“On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah,”

“On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child.”

They obeyed God's law, given to Abraham.

“They were going to name him after his father Zechariah.”

This was a common custom.

But God had already chosen his name.

Cross References

Genesis 17:12

> Every boy among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, for all generations to come.

Leviticus 12:3

> On the eighth day the boy must be circumcised.

Genesis 21:4

When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded.

Spiritual Principle

Faithful families obey God's word.

Key Truth

God's plan was greater than human custom.

LX. HE IS TO BE CALLED JOHN

Luke 1:60 — Elizabeth Speaks Up

“but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.””

“His mother spoke up.”

Elizabeth was firm.

“No! He is to be called John.”

She obeyed God's word over family custom.

John means “the Lord is gracious.”

His name declared that a new season of God's grace had begun.

Cross References

Genesis 17:19

Your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you are to name him Isaac.

Isaiah 49:1

Before I was born the Lord called me. From my mother's womb He spoke my name.

Numbers 6:2

If a man or woman makes a special promise to set themselves apart to the Lord as a Nazirite,

Spiritual Principle

Obedience to God matters more than pleasing people.

Key Truth

Elizabeth chose God's word over family tradition.

LXI. NO ONE HAS THAT NAME

Luke 1:61 — The Relatives Object

“They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.””

The relatives were surprised.

Names usually honored family members.

But God was doing something new.

John would not simply continue the family line.

He would prepare the way for the Lord.

Cross References

Ruth 4:17

> The neighbor women gave him a name. They said, “Naomi has a son!” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Genesis 4:26

> Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord.

1 Samuel 1:20

> She named him Samuel, saying, “I asked the Lord for him.”

Spiritual Principle

God's plans may break with human expectations.

Key Truth

God was doing something new.

LXII. THEY MADE SIGNS

Luke 1:62 — Asking the Father

“Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child.”

They turned to Zechariah.

They used gestures, which suggests he may also have been unable to hear.

Everyone waited for his answer.

This was Zechariah's moment to show faith.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:26

> I will make you silent and unable to speak.

Daniel 10:15

> I bowed my face toward the ground and became speechless.

Habakkuk 2:2

> The Lord answered me: “Write down the vision. Make it clear on tablets so that anyone can read it quickly.”

Spiritual Principle

Moments of decision reveal whether we have learned to trust God.

Key Truth

Zechariah's answer would show how God had changed him.

LXIII. HIS NAME IS JOHN

Luke 1:63 — Written on a Tablet

“He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.””

“He asked for a writing tablet.”

He could not speak, but he could write.

“His name is John.”

Not “His name will be John.”

“His name is John.”

The matter was settled.

God had spoken, and Zechariah now fully believed.

“To everyone's astonishment.”

Husband and wife agreed, though no one had told them.

Cross References

Isaiah 49:1

> The Lord called me before I was born and named me while I was in my mother's womb.

Genesis 17:19

> You will call his name Isaac.

Isaiah 8:1

> The Lord said to me, “Take a large scroll and write on it clearly.”

Spiritual Principle

Obedience follows true faith.

Key Truth

Zechariah's doubt had turned into firm obedience.

LXIV. HIS MOUTH WAS OPENED

Luke 1:64 — Praising God

“Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God.”

“Immediately his mouth was opened.”

The moment he obeyed, his voice returned.

“And his tongue set free.”

The silence was over.

“And he began to speak, praising God.”

His first words in nine months were praise.

He did not complain.

He worshiped.

Cross References

Ezekiel 3:27

> But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth, and you will say to them, “This is what the Lord God says.”

Ezekiel 24:27

> On that day your mouth will be opened, and you will speak and no longer be silent.

Psalm 51:15

> Lord, unlock my lips so my mouth can speak Your praise.

Spiritual Principle

God's discipline leads to restored praise.

Key Truth

The one silenced by unbelief was opened by obedience.

LXV. FILLED WITH AWE

Luke 1:65 — People Were Talking

“All the neighbors were filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things.”

“All the neighbors were filled with awe.”

Holy wonder.

They knew God was at work.

“People were talking about all these things.”

The news spread throughout the region.

God was preparing hearts to hear John one day.

Cross References

Acts 2:43

Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

Acts 5:11

Great fear came over the whole church and everyone who heard about these things.

Joshua 6:27

So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread through the whole land.

Spiritual Principle

God's works cause people to wonder.

Key Truth

God's mighty acts are meant to be talked about.

LXVI. WHAT WILL THIS CHILD BE?

Luke 1:66 — The Lord's Hand Was with Him

“Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord's hand was with him.”

“What then is this child going to be?”

Everyone knew this child was special.

“For the Lord's hand was with him.”

God's power and blessing rested on John.

God had a purpose for his life.

Cross References

1 Samuel 2:26

The boy Samuel kept growing, and he was pleasing to the Lord and to people.

Judges 13:24

The boy grew, and the Lord blessed him.

Genesis 39:2

The Lord was with Joseph, and he did well.

Spiritual Principle

When God's hand is on a life, it has a purpose.

Application

Pray that the Lord's hand will be on the children in your life.

LXVII. ZECHARIAH PROPHESIED

Luke 1:67 — Filled with the Holy Spirit

“Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:”

Zechariah's song is often called the **Benedictus**, from its first word in Latin.

The man who had been silent now spoke by the Spirit.

He did not only speak about his son.

He spoke mainly about the Messiah.

Cross References

Joel 2:28

Later I will pour My Spirit on every kind of person. Your sons and daughters will speak My messages.

1 Samuel 10:10

The Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

2 Peter 1:21

> Prophecy never came from human will. People spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

The Spirit fills those who trust God's word.

Key Truth

Nine months of silence ended in a Spirit-filled song.

LXVIII. PRAISE BE TO THE LORD

Luke 1:68 — He Has Redeemed His People

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come to His people and redeemed them.”

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel.”

Zechariah began with praise.

“Because He has come to His people.”

God visited His people in person.

“And redeemed them.”

To redeem means to buy back or set free.

Jesus had not yet been born, but Zechariah spoke as if it were already done.

God's promise was that certain.

Cross References

Psalm 41:13

> Blessed be the Lord, Israel's God, forever and ever. Amen! Amen!

Psalm 111:9

> He sent redemption to His people.

Genesis 21:1

> The Lord was kind to Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what He had promised.

Spiritual Principle

God has come to rescue His people.

Key Truth

Redemption is God's personal visit to set us free.

LXIX. A HORN OF SALVATION

Luke 1:69 — In the House of David

“He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David”

“A horn of salvation.”

A horn was a picture of strength, like the horn of a powerful animal.

God raised up a mighty Savior.

“In the house of His servant David.”

Zechariah was from the family of Aaron.

But he praised God for the King from David's family.

His own son would prepare the way for Mary's Son.

Cross References

Psalm 132:17

> Here I will make the strength of David grow. I will set up a lamp for My chosen king.

Jeremiah 23:5

> The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will rule wisely and do what is fair and right in the land.

2 Samuel 22:3

> My God is my rock, where I am safe. He is my shield and the strength of my salvation.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is the mighty Savior from David's line.

Key Truth

Salvation is strong because the Savior is strong.

LXX. THROUGH HIS HOLY PROPHETS

Luke 1:70 — Long Ago

“(as He said through His holy prophets of long ago),”

Jesus did not appear out of nowhere.

God had promised Him for centuries.

Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, and many others spoke of Him.

The whole Old Testament points to Christ.

Cross References

Jeremiah 23:5

> I will raise up a righteous descendant from David's family.

Isaiah 9:6

> A child has been born for us; God has given us a son. The right to rule will rest on His shoulders, and He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Acts 3:21

> Heaven must keep Him until the time comes for God to restore all things, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets.

Spiritual Principle

God's plan of salvation was promised long ago.

Key Truth

The whole Bible tells one story that leads to Jesus.

LXXI. SALVATION FROM OUR ENEMIES

Luke 1:71 — From All Who Hate Us

“salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—”

Israel had many enemies.

But Jesus came to defeat the greatest enemies of all.

Sin.

Satan.

Death.

His salvation is deeper than political freedom.

Cross References

Psalm 106:10

> He saved them from those who hated them and rescued them from the power of their enemies.

Isaiah 25:9

> On that day people will say, “This is our God! We trusted in Him, and He saved us.”

Psalm 18:3

> I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus saves us from our greatest enemies.

Key Truth

Christ's victory reaches to the deepest needs of the soul.

LXXII. HIS HOLY COVENANT

Luke 1:72 — Mercy Remembered

“to show mercy to our ancestors and to remember His holy covenant,”

“To show mercy to our ancestors.”

God's mercy reached back through history.

“And to remember His holy covenant.”

A covenant is a binding promise.

Zechariah's name means “the Lord remembers.”

Now his song declares it.

Cross References

Genesis 17:7

> I will make My covenant an everlasting one between Me and you and your descendants.

Psalm 105:8

> He will never forget His covenant, the word He gave to last for a thousand generations.

Leviticus 26:42

> I will remember My covenant with Jacob, My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham.

Spiritual Principle

God never forgets His covenant.

Key Truth

The Lord remembers, just as Zechariah's name says.

LXXIII. THE OATH TO ABRAHAM

Luke 1:73 — Sworn by God

“the oath He swore to our father Abraham:”

God swore an oath to Abraham.

God does not need to swear, because His word is always true.

But He did it so His people would be completely sure.

The birth of Jesus was the fulfillment of that oath.

Cross References

Genesis 22:16

> The Lord said, “I swear by My own name that because you have done this and have not held back your son, your only son,

Genesis 26:3

> I will be with you and bless you, and I will keep the oath I swore to your father Abraham.

Psalm 105:9

> The covenant He made with Abraham, the oath He swore to Isaac.

Spiritual Principle

God's oath can never be broken.

Key Truth

God bound Himself to His promise.

LXXIV. SERVE HIM WITHOUT FEAR

Luke 1:74 — Rescued to Serve

“to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve Him without fear”

“To rescue us from the hand of our enemies.”

God rescues.

“And to enable us to serve Him.”

We are saved for a purpose.

Rescued to serve.

“Without fear.”

Not the fear of punishment.

Not the fear of enemies.

Free to serve God with confidence.

Cross References

Exodus 6:6

> I am the Lord. I will bring you out from under the heavy loads of the Egyptians and free you from slavery.

Psalm 97:10

> He protects the lives of His faithful people and rescues them from the power of the wicked.

Hebrews 9:14

> How much more will the blood of Christ make our consciences clean from useless deeds, so that we may serve the living God.

Spiritual Principle

God saves us so that we may serve Him freely.

Key Truth

Salvation leads to service.

LXXV. HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Luke 1:75 — All Our Days

“in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.”

“In holiness.”

Set apart for God.

“And righteousness.”

Living rightly.

“Before Him.”

In His presence.

“All our days.”

Not just on Sundays.

Not just for a season.

Every day of our lives.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 6:13

> Respect the Lord your God, serve Him only, and make your promises in His name.

Ephesians 4:24

> Put on the new self, created to be like God in true goodness and holiness.

Titus 2:12

> It teaches us to say no to ungodly living and worldly desires, and to live with self-control, goodness, and devotion to God in this present world.

Spiritual Principle

The saved life is a holy life, lived every day.

Key Truth

God redeems us for lifelong devotion.

LXXVI. A PROPHET OF THE MOST HIGH

Luke 1:76 — Preparing the Way

“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,”

“And you, my child.”

Now Zechariah turned to his son.

What a moment for an old father.

“Will be called a prophet of the Most High.”

Jesus is the Son of the Most High.

John is the prophet of the Most High.

“To prepare the way for Him.”

John's role was to point to someone greater.

Cross References

Isaiah 40:3

> A voice calls out, “Prepare the way for the Lord in the desert. Make a straight road for our God.”

Malachi 3:1

> I will send My messenger to get the road ready ahead of Me.

Malachi 4:5

> I will send Elijah the prophet to you before the day of the Lord comes.

Spiritual Principle

Every servant of God points beyond himself to Jesus.

Key Truth

John was great because he made Jesus greater.

LXXVII. THE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION

Luke 1:77 — Forgiveness of Sins

“to give His people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,”

“To give His people the knowledge of salvation.”

People needed to understand what true salvation is.

“Through the forgiveness of their sins.”

This is the heart of salvation.

Not mainly freedom from Rome.

Freedom from sin.

Forgiveness is our greatest need.

Cross References

Jeremiah 31:34

> They will all know Me, from the least to the greatest, says the Lord. I will forgive their wrongs and will never again remember their sins.

Isaiah 53:5

> He was wounded because of the wrong we did, and beaten down because of our sins. He was punished so we could have peace, and His wounds make us well.

Acts 5:31

> God lifted Him to His right hand as Prince and Savior, to give Israel the chance to turn from sin and be forgiven.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is centered on the forgiveness of sins.

Key Truth

Our deepest need is forgiveness.

LXXVIII. THE RISING SUN

Luke 1:78 — The Tender Mercy of God

“because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven”

“Because of the tender mercy of our God.”

Salvation comes from God's heart of compassion.

“By which the rising sun will come to us from heaven.”

Jesus is pictured as the dawn.

After a long night, the sun rises.

Light breaks through darkness.

Cross References

Malachi 4:2

> But for you who respect My name, the Sun of what is right will rise, bringing healing in its wings.

Numbers 24:17

> A star will come out of Jacob, and a ruler will rise out of Israel.

Isaiah 60:1

> Rise up and shine, for your light has come. The glory of the Lord is shining on you.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is the dawn of God's mercy.

Key Truth

God's tender mercy sent light from heaven.

LXXIX. LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Luke 1:79 — The Path of Peace

“to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.””

“To shine on those living in darkness.”

The darkness of sin and ignorance.

“And in the shadow of death.”

Death casts a shadow over every life.

Jesus shines into it.

“To guide our feet into the path of peace.”

Peace with God.

Peace in the heart.

Peace with others.

Cross References

Isaiah 9:2

> A people stumbling in the dark have now seen a bright light. Light has dawned on those who lived in a land as dark as death.

Isaiah 42:7

> You will open eyes that are blind, free prisoners from their cells, and bring those who sit in darkness out of the dungeon.

Psalm 107:10

> Some sat in darkness and deep gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus brings light into darkness and leads us to peace.

Key Truth

The path of peace begins with the light of Christ.

LXXX. HE LIVED IN THE WILDERNESS

Luke 1:80 — Growing Strong in Spirit

“And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.”

“And the child grew.”

Years passed quietly.

“And became strong in spirit.”

His inner life grew strong.

“He lived in the wilderness.”

Away from the crowds.

Away from the temple.

Alone with God.

“Until he appeared publicly to Israel.”

God was preparing him in hidden years.

His time would come.

Cross References

Judges 13:24

The boy grew up, and the Lord blessed him.

1 Samuel 2:26

Young Samuel continued to grow, and he had favor with the Lord and with people.

Matthew 3:1

In those days John the Baptist came and began preaching in the wilderness of Judea.

Spiritual Principle

God prepares His servants in hidden places.

Key Truth

Hidden years with God prepare us for public service.

LXXXI. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM LUKE 1

1. God Keeps His Promises

“The Lord would fulfill His promises to her!”

Principle:

God keeps His promises, even when they seem impossible, as with Elizabeth and Mary.

2. Prayer Is Heard in God's Timing

“Your prayer has been heard.”

Principle:

God hears prayer and answers in His timing, not ours.

3. Nothing Is Impossible with God

“For nothing is impossible with God.”

Principle:

He is able to do what no human being can do.

4. Faith Opens the Door; Unbelief Brings Silence

“Blessed is she who has believed.”

Principle:

Faith and obedience lead to blessing, while unbelief brought silence to Zechariah.

5. True Greatness Is Serving the Lord

“I am the Lord's servant.”

Principle:

Greatness comes from serving God, not from worldly position.

6. Jesus Is the Eternal King

“His kingdom will never end.”

Principle:

Jesus is the promised Son of David, whose kingdom lasts forever.

7. God Lifts the Humble

“He has lifted up the humble.”

Principle:

God lifts the lowly, fills the hungry, and shows mercy to those who fear Him.

LXXXII. TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS, TWO RESPONSES

Luke places two stories side by side.

Zechariah

An old priest.

In the temple in Jerusalem.

Asked, **“How can I be sure of this?”**

Doubted and was made silent.

Mary

A young woman.

In a small village in Galilee.

Asked, **“How will this be?”**

Believed and was called blessed.

The Lesson

Position and experience do not guarantee faith.

A humble heart that trusts God is what pleases Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not looking for impressive people; He is looking for believing hearts.

LXXXIII. JOHN AND JESUS COMPARED

Luke shows that John is great, but Jesus is greater.

John Will Be Great in the Sight of the Lord

Jesus will be great, without limit.

John Will Be Filled with the Spirit

Jesus will be conceived by the Spirit.

John Is Born to a Barren Woman

Jesus is born to a virgin.

John Is a Prophet of the Most High

Jesus is the Son of the Most High.

John Prepares the Way

Jesus is the Way.

John's Ministry Will End

Jesus' kingdom will never end.

Key Truth

John's greatness was to point to Someone far greater.

LXXXIV. THE SONGS OF LUKE 1

Luke 1 is full of praise.

Elizabeth's Blessing

“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!”

Mary's Song

“My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Zechariah's Prophecy

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come to His people.”

What They Have in Common

Each song is filled with Scripture.

Each song praises God, not people.

Each song celebrates God keeping His promises.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God works, His people respond with praise.

LXXXV. WHAT LUKE 1 TEACHES ABOUT JESUS

He Is the Savior

“You are to call Him Jesus.”

He Is the Son of the Most High

“He will be called the Son of the Most High.”

He Is the Son of God

“The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

He Is the Son of David

“The throne of His father David.”

He Is the Eternal King

“His kingdom will never end.”

He Is Lord

“The mother of my Lord.”

He Is the Horn of Salvation

“A horn of salvation for us.”

He Is the Rising Sun

“The rising sun will come to us from heaven.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the promised King, and the Light who brings salvation.

LXXXVI. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why did Luke write his Gospel?

So Theophilus could know for certain the things he had been taught.

Question 2

Who were Zechariah and Elizabeth?

A righteous priest and his wife, both descendants of Aaron, who were old and had no children.

Question 3

Was Elizabeth's barrenness a punishment from God?

No. Luke says they were righteous before God. Their sorrow was real, but it was not a sign of God's displeasure.

Question 4

What did Gabriel tell Zechariah?

His prayer had been heard, and Elizabeth would have a son named John who would prepare the people for the Lord.

Question 5

Why was Zechariah made unable to speak?

Because he did not believe Gabriel's words.

Question 6

How was Mary's question different from Zechariah's?

Zechariah asked for proof. Mary asked how it would happen, trusting that it would.

Question 7

What did Gabriel say about Jesus?

He would be great, the Son of the Most High, the Son of God, and would reign on David's throne forever.

Question 8

What was Mary's response to God's word?

“I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.”

Question 9

What happened when Mary greeted Elizabeth?

The baby leaped for joy, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Question 10

What are the main themes of Mary's song?

Praise to God as Savior, His mercy, His holiness, and the way He lifts the humble and brings down the proud.

Question 11

When did Zechariah speak again?

When he wrote, “His name is John,” obeying God's word.

Question 12

What should Luke 1 change about the way Christians live today?

Luke 1 should cause believers to live:

- Trusting that God keeps His promises.

- Continuing to pray, even when answers are delayed.
- Believing that nothing is impossible with God.
- Responding to God's word with faith instead of doubt.
- Surrendering to God's will like Mary.
- Praising God for what He has done.
- Showing compassion to those who carry hidden sorrows.
- Living in holiness and righteousness all their days.

LXXXVII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Luke 1 asks several important questions.

Am I Certain of What I Believe?

Have I grounded my faith in God's Word?

Have I Stopped Praying?

Is there a prayer I gave up on that God may still answer?

Do I Respond Like Zechariah or Like Mary?

Do I doubt, or do I trust?

What Have I Decided Is Impossible?

Have I limited what God can do?

Am I the Lord's Servant?

Have I said, “Let it be as You say”?

Do I Encourage Other Believers?

Like Mary and Elizabeth encouraged each other?

Is My Life Full of Praise?

Do I magnify the Lord?

Am I Preparing the Way for Jesus?

Do I point others to Him, as John did?

LXXXVIII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“I Am the Lord's Servant”

Mary was young.

She was poor.

She lived in a small town.

She was engaged to a carpenter.

Then an angel brought news that would change everything.

She would be misunderstood.

People would talk.

Joseph might walk away.

Her future was suddenly uncertain.

Yet she answered with five simple words:

“I am the Lord's servant.”

She did not demand guarantees.

She did not ask for an easier plan.

She trusted God's word and surrendered her life.

This creates a powerful principle.

God does great things through people who say yes to Him.

Principle:

The greatest response to God's word is not “Prove it,” but “Let it be as You say.”

LXXXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Luke Chapter 1 opens the story of Jesus.

A careful writer investigates the facts.

An old priest receives a promise.

A barren woman conceives.

A young virgin hears she will bear the Son of God.

Two women rejoice together.

Mary sings of God's mercy.

John is born and named.

Zechariah's tongue is set free.

And he prophesies of the rising sun from heaven.

Luke 1 therefore reminds us:

Never stop trusting God's promises.

Never stop praying.

Never think anything is impossible for God.

Never let doubt silence your praise.

Never forget that God lifts the humble.

The church does not need people who only admire Mary's faith.

It needs:

People who believe God's promises.

People who say, “I am the Lord's servant.”

People who magnify the Lord.

And people who prepare the way for Jesus.

The same God still calls:

Tell people that God keeps His promises.

Tell people that nothing is impossible with God.

Tell people that Jesus is the eternal King.

Tell people that the light has come.

And as you live:

Believe.

Surrender.

Praise.

Point others to Jesus.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that Your Word is true and certain.

Thank You that You remember Your promises.

Thank You that You hear our prayers, even when the answer is long delayed.

Thank You that You see the sorrow of those who wait and long.

Thank You that nothing is impossible with You.

Thank You for the faith of Mary and the joy of Elizabeth.

Thank You for John, who prepared the way.

Thank You for Jesus, the Son of the Most High, whose kingdom will never end.

Forgive us when we have doubted Your word like Zechariah.

Forgive us when we have stopped praying.

Forgive us when we have trusted our circumstances more than Your power.

Forgive us when pride has filled our hearts.

Make us humble servants like Mary.

Fill our mouths with praise.

Let the light of Jesus shine into our darkness.

Guide our feet into the path of peace.

And help us prepare the way for Jesus in the lives of others.

“I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.”

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Verse

“For nothing is impossible with God.” — Luke 1:37

Central Truth

God keeps His promises in His perfect time, doing the impossible through humble, believing servants, as He prepares the way for Jesus, the eternal King whose kingdom will never end.

Luke 1 in One Sentence

After Luke explains his careful purpose, Gabriel announces the birth of John to the doubting priest Zechariah and the birth of Jesus to the believing virgin Mary, Mary and Elizabeth rejoice together and Mary sings God's praise, and John is born as Zechariah's voice returns in a Spirit-filled song about the rising sun from heaven.