

Luke 1

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[0 : 00] So, it is a great honor to be here with you this morning and preach the Word of God.

So, please open your Bibles in Luke, the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 1. And we are just going to read the first two verses.

So, that, sorry, verse 68 and 69. Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come to His people and redeemed them.

He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your holy Word, Your perfect Word.

And we ask for Your Holy Spirit. We ask for Your Holy Spirit to be filled with the Holy Spirit that Zachariah was filled with Your Holy Spirit. To proclaim the good news of the Gospel.

[1 : 19] And to live according to the good news of the Gospel. In Jesus we pray. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.

So, thank you for your kind invitation to be here this morning. Feliz Navidad or Merry Christmas. We are celebrating this season of Christmas. Actually, two days ago we celebrated with the whole Spanish-speaking community here. And it was really good to know that here in Aberdeen and in Scotland, in Edinburgh as well, we have this Spanish-speaking community.

People from all the world knowing that the Church of God, the Church of Christ, is from every tongue, from every nation. So, now we are living like a little piece of heaven here on earth because of the Holy Spirit.

So, we know that the whole world is celebrating Christmas. Even we can listen to people around us singing a wonderful Christmas time. But, it is a real wonderful time.

[2 : 31] Sadly, we can observe that this season, that the world has lost the complete meaning of Christmas. If you ask somebody just in the street about the meaning of Christmas, probably the world, they don't know the meaning of Christmas.

And that's really sad. Because we are singing about the coming of the Savior. But, let me ask you something. But, what about us? What about the Church?

Have we remembered the true meaning of the coming of the Savior? Do we really know the meaning of, not just Christmas, but about the Gospel?

Does the coming of Christ have any personal sense for our life, or a meaning for our life, for your family, for the Church?

Probably, we can understand this doctrine. And we sing about it. We sing about the coming of the Messiah. But, can we find this doctrine in our hearts?

[3 : 48] In short, is the Savior in your heart? Maybe. Maybe. We have a clear understanding of the Gospel, or about the Christmas season.

But, do you believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Maybe, as me, I grew up in a Christian home. But, can you say that the God of your parents is your God as well?

Is your personal God? But, why, if we call ourselves Christians, why is sometimes it so hard to believe this simple but deep truth about the Gospel?

Maybe it's easy to sing about the Gospel. But, what about to believe in the Gospel? What about to live according to the Gospel? The Gospel? And, let me tell you this.

The consequence of not believing are terrible. Because, we face the judgment of God. So, in order to know the good news, we need to know the bad news.

[5 : 06] And, these good news are not just for the people outside of the church, they're walking on the street. The Gospel is for the church. The Gospel is for you.

The Gospel is for every Christian. Because, we need the Gospel. Not just once in a month. Not just every Sunday. We need the Gospel every single day. Because, we live by faith.

For the glory of God. So, the consequence of not believing this message are terrible. So, that's the reason why we need a Savior.

But, not any kind of Savior. But, a Savior who at the same time, is fully human and fully God. A Savior who comes to us.

And, that Savior is Jesus Christ. For that reason, I would like to share with you the story of a believer. Who, in a specific moment of his life, he did not believe in the good news.

[6 : 14] Sorry. A believer who did not believe in the good news. And, that sin led him to realize about the importance of understanding and experiencing every day the good news of the Gospel.

Through this story of that believer, I would like to share with you that the Christian life was not about him. The Christian life is not about you.

But, it's all about the coming of God himself. It's all about Jesus Christ. And, that man, that believer, was Zechariah. Therefore, the story of Zechariah was not about Zechariah.

But, it was about his Savior, Jesus Christ. The only one who can satisfy his deepest desires. So, up to this point, what I'm trying to say here is that your life, it's not about your life.

It's not about you. It's about the life of Christ in you, among us, as a church of Christ. So, today, I want to...

[7 : 33] The theme of this sermon is about proclaiming and living according to God's visitation. It's to proclaim and live according to the Gospel.

But, who was Zechariah? Who was this man? It's very important to know that the story of the Gospel, according to Luke, begins with the story of Zechariah.

Zechariah. So, Zechariah, he was a priest, someone with a specific task in the people of God in those times.

And, his wife, he was from the daughters of Aaron. That means that both have the knowledge about the importance of a mediator.

So, both have knowledge of to be a... the meaning of to be a priest, in the case of Zechariah. And, in verse 6, we can read that both were righteous, and both they walked blamelessly in all the commandments of the Lord.

[8 : 55] So, up to this point, here we can see a good example, a clear example of a man of God and a woman of God. By the way, this is what we need here in the Church of God in these times.

We need man of God and woman of God. But, for that, we need to believe and live according to the Gospel. So, the life of Zechariah and his wife, we can say that in our modern times, they were good Christians.

They were committed Christians. Zechariah was a priest. Maybe we can say that Zechariah was like a kind of minister or deacon or elder.

But, they were committed Christians. But, we can read that they had no child.

They had no child. And, according to the Psalm 127, verse 3, in this Psalm, we can read that, Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord.

[10 : 18] So, think about this. Think about this couple. This lovely Christian couple. But, with no children. Think about them.

Singing in the Church, this Psalm. Singing that children are a heritage from the Lord. But, they had no child.

Think about this good, blameless, righteous, committed Christians with no child. Singing about children, for example.

Because, both were old people. And, his wife was barren, sterile. They were good, godly believers. But, can you imagine the frustration of this couple? Can you imagine the feelings of Zechariah and his wife?

[11 : 18] Because, they had no child. Can you think about this for a moment? Maybe you are a committed Christian here. Or, maybe you know about the Christian message.

You know about the gospel. But, we face, every day, this kind of frustration. And, we say, Why God? Why God? Why am I living this?

So, can you understand for a while this man, this blameless man with his wife?

But, in a moment, while Zechariah was serving, an angel appears saying the most expected words for Zechariah. And, the angel said, Your prayer has been heard.

And, your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son. And, you shall call his name John. So, God said to Zechariah through the angel, Hey, John.

[12 : 27] Your prayer has been heard. So, now, again, can you imagine the joy of this man? Can you imagine the happiness of Zechariah because his prayer was heard by God?

And, now, he's going to become, he's going to be a father of a son of John the Baptist. Can you imagine this experience? And, can you imagine, can we imagine the happiness of that righteous and blameless believer when the angel proclaimed about his son that he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God?

After 400 years of silence, this is the first special revelation from God to his people. These are the very first words from God.

Can you imagine your own life in Zechariah's position here? Maybe we can think about him.

Now he was really happy. He was a really happy man. But, no. There was no joy. Just a reply to the angel.

[13 : 56] Zechariah didn't say, oh, thank you, God, for this because you have been, you heard my prayers. He didn't say that. According, in verse 18, Zechariah said to the angel, how shall I know this?

How shall I know this? So in Zechariah's heart were these words, but how? But how, oh God? I am an old man.

But how, but how were the words in the heart of this blameless and righteous Christian believer? How can this be?

We are all people. So, what was the problem of his reply? What was the problem of Zechariah's reply? He was honest.

I am, I am an old man. But, that was not the problem. The problem was his unbelief.

[15 : 06] According to the angel, the angel said, I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God. and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

And please go with me to verse 20 of chapter 1 of Luke. And you, and now, you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens.

Because you did not believe my words. Zechariah's problem was his unbelief. And the, and in the original here, the words for, because you did not believe my words, actually are, because you did not believe this good news.

Because you did not believe the gospel. Think about this. A blameless Christian, a blameless and righteous man man of God as Zechariah.

But in this moment, he didn't believe in this good news. And the consequence were to be, to be unable to speak.

[16 : 39] So the problem of Zechariah was his unbelief and at the same time, trusting in his own deeds, in his own works. Where the gospel is about believing in God's work, not our works.

And I think, and I believe that sometimes we as church, or maybe we as individual Christians, we are silent to proclaim the good news of the gospel.

because we don't believe this really good news of the gospel. That this is not about your efforts.

This is not about your good behavior.

This is not about your works. It's about the work of Jesus Christ. But sometimes we don't believe this. And maybe we can call Christians.

But can we find Christ in our hearts? So that was the problem of Zechariah. So God used this situation to show that the main necessity, the main need of Zechariah was not to having a son, in this case, John, but receiving and believing in the very own son of God, Jesus Christ.

[18 : 03] Before having to having a son, in the case of Zechariah, he really needed the son with capital T and capital S. Zechariah's most profound need was not his son, John, but the son of God, Jesus Christ.

So after the birth of John, when John was circumcised, Zechariah's tongue and life was restored.

So I want to focus on this morning, about the restoration of a man who was a believer, about the restoration of a man who was a righteous and blameless, good, committed Christians in the church of God, but in a moment, he did not believe in the gospel.

He did not believe in the good news of the gospel. So I don't know how many Zechariah's are here that we call Christians, but maybe we are not really believing in this precious, beautiful message about the gospel.

So Zechariah's was restored. His life and tongue was restored. So let me ask you this, what do you think that were the first words that Zechariah proclaimed after his restoration?

restoration. And it's for all this that I want to share with you very briefly three heads or three points about Zechariah's restoration, three things that Zechariah did, three things that we must do after receiving the forgiveness and restoration from God.

[19 : 45] And I think that this is, we need this as church, because sometimes maybe we are just sleeping and this is just a routine to come here every Monday and sing good songs and sing good carol service.

But it's time to ask ourselves if we are really believing this, because we are not playing to be the church. This is about your eternity.

This is about your soul. This is about your children, your family. this is about the society here in Aberdeen. This is about Scotland. The main problem of our nations, the main problem of the Chilean nation, and I think that the main problem of here in Scotland and in every part, it's not in the parliament, it's not in the White House or in the presidential house, back in Chile, the main problem, I think, is the church.

Because sometimes we are not believing this, and because we are not believing this message, we are not living according to this. We are not living for God's glory.

Maybe we are just living for our glory. We are maybe using God as a means to get something. But are you living for Christ?

[21 : 14] Are you believing this? Do you remember the first time that you believe in the gospel? Are you living according to that?

Are you living according to God's work and not about according to your own efforts? In short, do you really believe that God loves you?

God loves you? Do you really love God? God loves you God loves you to do it.

God loves you to do it. This is my focus this morning, my brothers. We as Christians, we need to be restored and understand this message of Christmas.

That is not about just saying Christmas. It's about the gospel. God loves you to do it. After Zechariah's restoration, Zechariah, in the first place, he proclaimed the coming of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

[22 : 26] Secondly, he proclaimed the purpose of his own son, John. And finally, he proclaimed the essence or the marrow of the gospel. So just let me be briefly and explain these three heads or three points.

So the first point that Zechariah, what he did after his restoration was, the first thing that he did was, number one, he proclaimed the coming of God in the person of the son, Jesus Christ.

It is very important to know that Zechariah's first words were not related to John. After recovering his speech or speaking, he didn't say, oh God, I'm sorry for my unbelief, but thank you for my son, thank you for my very own son, John, thank you God.

No, he didn't say that. according to the verse 68, praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel.

He didn't say, thank you for John, thank you for this little, for my wee, John. No, he didn't say that.

He said, praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

[23 : 56] The focus of Zechariah was not in John. The focus of Zechariah was in the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

The restoration of a Christian through the work of the Holy Spirit led him to fix their eyes and desires in Christ. Zechariah, he yearned for a son, but now his desires are fixed in another son, but that son was the Son of God.

So for Zechariah, yeah, it was important to have a son, but his deepest desires were satisfied by the Son of God.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people. God has come. God himself had visited him.

What is more glorious than this? The almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, he has come, and he is here right now among his people.

[25 : 22] The blameless and righteous man, Zechariah, he realized that he was a sinner in a need of a great savior. Because not believing the word of God through the angel, because of his unbelief, he turned away from the Lord.

And because of that, God is coming to him to rescue. So let me ask you this, have you turned away? Have you turned away from the Lord?

Are you right now far away from the Lord? Maybe we are here seated, singing about God. Your mouth is proclaiming this good news.

But let me ask you this, but where is your heart? where is your heart right now? So, if you have turned away from the Lord, if you feel like you are so far away from the Lord, let me tell you this, that's the reason of the gospel.

God has come to you in the person of Jesus Christ. And actually, right now, he is coming to you to rescue and redeem you from your sins, from our sins.

[26 : 49] Can you believe this? Our great need is God himself, but because of our sins, we walk far away from the Lord. But in the gospel, we can learn that God comes to every lost sheep.

That is the gospel. the one who came is a powerful savior. Verse 69, he has raised up a horn of salvation.

In the Spanish version said, a powerful savior. That's the original words, like a powerful savior. The Lord of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people.

And he is a powerful savior in the house of his servant David. But think about this. Think about this. Where was Jesus in that time? He was a little baby in the womb of Mary. So for God the father, the best place in the world for his very own son, was the womb of Mary.

[28 : 17] That's the reason that we love and we take care and we look after of every baby in the womb of every woman. God come to us.

Go with me to verse 72. What is the foundation of this?

Why did God come to Zechariah? Why are we singing this about the coming of the Savior? What is the foundation of this?

And please focus on this verse, verse 72, to show mercy to our fathers. others. And please, I really ask the Holy Spirit about this precious word and to remember his holy covenant.

covenant. God has come to us. God is coming right now to us because of his covenant.

[29 : 39] Yesterday we were talking about the covenant. And the word covenant is so important in the Bible because the covenant is the way of how we can understand our relationship with God.

It's a covenantal relationship. So to fulfill his covenant, to have an intimate relationship with us, that's the reason of the covenant of grace, full of joy and delight.

That's the kind of relationship that we have with God, a covenantal relationship. When God said, you are my people, and we can say, you are our God.

It is not just saying, oh, God, but it's our God. He's our God. And we are his people.

So this did us to live for his glory, to serve him without fear, but with joy, with this fear and joy at the same time, as the minister David said before.

[30 : 58] So, just to finish this, the heart of Zechariah was fixed in the heart of Christ.

The desire of Zechariah was the Son of God. So, therefore, what does Zechariah desire now for his very own son?

So, if the focus of Zechariah was the Son of God, what was his desire for his son, John? What do we want for our family, for our children and family?

So, the purpose of Zechariah was to proclaim the purpose of his very own son, John.

If Zechariah knew in an experiential way about the beauty of the gospel, his only desire now was to consecrate his own son to the son of the house, of David, Jesus Christ, he prophesied upon his children, saying to him, a new child will be called the prophet of the Most High.

[32 : 18] If Zechariah was a priest, his son will be a prophet of the true King Jesus Christ, a whole family consecrated to God.

Our children and our families belong to God. Therefore, the duty of every father, of every mother here is to lead his children to Christ.

But how can we do this if we are not believing this message? How can we lead our children to Christ if we are not in Christ?

Again, that's the reason that we need to understand the gospel, especially in this Christmas season. Emmanuel, God has come.

God with us. People used to say that Christmas is a family season, right? So good to be with family.

[33 : 21] And we enjoy this. We can enjoy this. But the truth is that society is living in a very individualistic way. But the really sad thing is that sometimes we can see this even in the church.

We are so individualistic. We are just self-centered. Fragmented families mean a fragmented church.

And fragmented churches lead us to fragmented or divided societies. How can we restore the family? When both husband and wife, father and mother, turn with all their hearts to the heart of Christ.

When the head of the house turns again to the first love, that is Christ, in order to truly love his wife, in order to truly love their children, in order to truly love the church of God.

Young people here, or maybe they are downstairs, but young people here, are you proclaiming the good news of the gospel to your friends?

[34 : 33] But before that, before to proclaim the gospel, do you know the gospel? And if not, we as parents, we as elders of the church of Christ, we must lead these children to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Christ, if Zechariah's desire was to consecrate his son to the son of David, that is Jesus Christ, we must do the same.

We can only give what we already have in our hearts, so we are given something right now. You are giving something to your children. You as husband, you are giving something to your wife.

You as son or daughter, you are giving something to your parents or to your friends. The question is, what are you giving to your children?

So we can give, we can only give something that we already have in our hearts. So let me ask you this, is Christ in your hearts?

[35 : 35] Is Christ in our hearts? If not, please hear this final point, short point. So after Zechariah's resurrection, Zechariah, in the first place, he proclaimed the coming of God in the person of Christ.

The second point was he proclaimed the purpose of his son. Son, you are going to live for the son of God.

And the third point, and this one is, after Zechariah's restoration, what he did was to proclaim the essence or the marrow of the gospel.

From verse 78, from verse 79, we can see the reason of why God, why God has come, and why Zechariah consecrates his son to the God who is coming.

The reason of everything is the gospel. The essence of the gospel is God himself, the tender mercy of our God.

[36 : 39] And let me finish with this. Mercy, we know, that refers to something undeserved. The grace is an undeserved gift from God.

The tender mercy of God. But where does this mercy come from? The answer, we can find it in the word tender.

The tender. In English and maybe in Spanish, it's difficult to translate this. But when you think about tender, we can think about sympathy or tenderness, right?

But, please, this is so powerful. The meaning of tender means something like the inward parts of God.

The inward parts, the very own heart of God. Actually, when I was reading this, I was reading the Latin version for that, and the Latin version is like from the visceral, the visceral, from the very inward parts of God, that's the place of God's mercy.

[37 : 54] Therefore, from the very heart of God, this beautiful mercy comes. And think about this. how big is the heart of our God, the tender of our God.

If the creation is beautiful, and the creation is beautiful, and if you can see the universe, the stars, the galaxies, and everything, or the landscapes here in Scotland, or in Peru, or in Chile, or in every place, why, why do you think that the universe is so beautiful?

The universe and the creation is so beautiful just to show us that it's nothing compared with the Creator. If you think why the universe is so big, so huge, it's only to show us that it's nothing compared with our great God.

if your heart is full of sin right now, let me tell you this, there's a heart full of mercy, of tender mercy for you to restore your life, not tomorrow, but right now.

Even if you are a Christian, you need this gospel right now. You need to rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel, God has come.

[39 : 33] This gospel, according to the verse 79, is offered to everyone who is sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. Where are you now?

Where is your heart right now? Is your heart in the shadow of death? Is your heart full of anxiety or sin? The gospel is for you.

Because right now, in this very moment, in heaven, there's a human heart beating for you.

Every single beating from the heart of Christ, a human heart, fully human, fully God, is beating for you.

Saying, I love you. This is the gospel. This is the reason of why we are celebrating Christmas.

Because it wants to restore your life right now.

[40 : 36] To live for his glory and enjoy him forever. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your holy word.

Father, we thank you because it is not about or on efforts. It's about your work.

It's about Emmanuel. that your first coming. And I pray that while now we are praying and remember your first coming, lead us to remember your second coming.

And guide us to live for your glory. Guide us to live and to proclaim the gospel first to our life, but also to our families, to our children, O Lord, please come and restore your church.

Father, we ask for your Holy Spirit to be filled with your Holy Spirit in order to proclaim the beauty of the gospel, the beauty of Jesus Christ, in order to rejoice in him in the glory of God.

[42 : 07] Father, we pray for this church and for every free church congregation and for every church here in Scotland that proclaims your gospel. Father, we pray for your Holy Spirit and we pray for even for a revival in our hearts, in our nation.

Not for our glory, but for your glory. Father, thank you for your son, for your son, Jesus Christ.

Father, and I pray especially for every Christian, maybe we grew up in a Christian house, in a Christian home, or in the church, but I really pray for real conversions in order to just to live for your glory.

in your precious name we pray. Amen.