

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Silver Linings

Week 4: God's Mercy
Luke 1:67-79

Week of December 19, 2021
(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Thankfully, our God is one of mercy, offering hope — not through our effort, but by His grace. This week, we look at the life of Zechariah and see the silver lining of guilt — appreciating God's salvation during our cloudiest days.

Kicking it off:

When it comes to how you season your food, are you more of a “salt person,” a “pepper person,” or a “don't add anything to my food” kind of a person? What's your favorite food to add some salt?

Discussion:

1. At the end of Luke chapter 1, Zechariah finally gets to speak again after 9 months of silence. Think of a time when something so amazing or unexpected happened that it literally left you speechless for a bit. Tell your group about what happened.
2. Read Luke 1:67. What's the significance of the Holy Spirit being present at that point in time? (See also Acts 2:1-4 for a greater explanation.) How does the Holy Spirit work today?

“His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.” (NIV)

3. In Luke 1:76-77, Zechariah foretells the role of John the Baptist in preparing people for Jesus' earthly ministry. Who has God used in your life to help you learn more about Jesus and His time on earth?

“To give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven ...”

4. Jeff mentioned that we must remember who we are apart from Jesus: sinners in need of salvation. Read Romans 3:23-24. Why did God need to send Jesus at Christmas? How has Jesus' birth and resurrection had an impact in your life? (If you're still considering the claims of Christianity, what difference might believing you need Jesus make to you?)

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

5. Jeff mentioned that the church is a bunch of people who can all get together and celebrate how God has cleansed their slates and forgiven their sins. Which areas of your life make you more aware of — and even appreciate — your need for His mercy and grace? How can you share the hope of Christmas with others this year?

Wrapping It Up:

Take a moment to reflect on Zechariah's final words in Luke 1:78-79. As a group, spend a few minutes in prayer to thank God Almighty for sending His Son to bring light into our dark world. *Merry Christmas!*

“Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace.” (NLT)