



Big Idea: Blessed are they who trust and obey.

- In response to direct revelation from God, Zechariah **DOUBTED** and **DEMANDED** proof (v. 18-20).
- Mary believed God and embraced His revealed will (v. 38).

1.) Faith is not a function of social STATUS

- The fact that Zechariah was a priest did not guarantee that he would act by faith when presented with unlikely truth from God (v. 5-6).
- Against cultural expectation, God revealed a promise of blessing to Mary, and Mary responded in submissive faith (v. 26-27).

2.) Faith is not a response to favorable CIRCUMSTANCES

- Whereas Zechariah received the Word of the Lord in the temple, the angel appeared to Mary in the lowly town of Nazareth (v. 8-11, 26-27).
- In spite of her presumably unfavorable circumstances, Mary heard God and responded with obedient faith (v. 38).

3.) The call of faith is often UNEXPECTED

- For Zechariah, the prophecy declared to him in the temple was a direct answer to his own fervent prayer (v. 6-7, 13).
- For Mary, the news of Jesus' birth was a complete surprise (v. 34).

4.) The call of faith is often HARD

- For Zechariah and Elizabeth, the prophecy about their son was the most delightful news imaginable (v. 24-25).

-- For Mary, although the prophesy about her Son was unbelievably glorious, it was also incredibly distressing (v. 26-31).

5.) The response of faith **MATTERS to God.**

-- Zechariah lingered under God's discipline until He finally submitted to God's will at the birth of his son (v. 18-20, 63).

-- Mary, conversely, was overjoyed, even in the midst of stressful circumstances (v. 39-56).

Application: Trust and obey the Word of God.

-- Zechariah and Mary received special revelation through an angel; we have received it through God's Word (2 Peter 1:17-21).

-- Failure to submit to God's Word will surely incur the Fatherly **DISCIPLINE** of God (Hebrews 12:7-11).

-- We are responsible for our responses to Scripture, whether or not God's instruction makes immediate sense.

-- Very often, faith in Christ means that **SUBMISSION** must precede understanding.

-- Many times, our understanding of God's will only comes as a result of obedience to it.

-- v. 38 – *“Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”*