

The Stories That Remain

It's Not Too Late

Pastor Craig Sweeney | December 10, 2023

Thread: It's not too late to be part of God's story.

Text: Luke 1:5 - 25 ESV

"In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and 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, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.'" Luke 1:5 – 17 ESV

One man or woman living fully devoted to God will draw others to God as well.

- John was born to speak in a certain way.
- John was born to live in a certain way.
- John was born with a purpose to live into.

"And Zechariah said to the angel, 'How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.'" Luke 1:18 ESV

Is Zechariah's response more or less like yours when God speaks?

"And the angel answered him, '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 behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.' And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, 'Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.'" Luke 1:19 – 25 ESV

Luke begins his Gospel with this story because it is the bridge that connects the Old Testament to the New Testament.

John was born to be the bridge.

- John would revive their HOPES again.
- The season of advent reminds us to revive our HOPES again for the second coming of Jesus.
- IT'S NOT too late.
- Whose HOPE do you revive?

Challenge:

- Since its NOT too late, what am I going to do with my words, actions and purpose?
- What will you exercise your faith for?
- Whose HOPE will you revive?

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