

## Discussion Guide

# LIGHT IN THE SHADOW OF ADVENT

**Luke 1:5-25 & 57-80**

### Opener

- Have you ever had someone tell you something with words, but you doubt it was true? Why?

### Read the Passage

Take turns reading passages through the section. If you have children involved, this is a great time to include the readers.

*[57] Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. [58] And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. [59] And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, [60] but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." [61] And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." [62] And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. [63] And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. [64] And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. [65] And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, [66] and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him. [67] And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, [68] "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people [69] and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, [70] as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, [71] that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; [72] to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, [73] the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us [74] that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, [75] in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. [76] And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, [77] to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, [78] because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high [79] to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."*

*[80] And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel. (Luke 1:57-80, ESV)*



## Watch the Video

Encourage participants to have a pen and paper to write down questions they may have. Then, if they are not answered throughout the study, they can ask them.

## Talk About It

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### Luke 1:5-25—Zechariah Who?

- Zechariah's circumstances, particularly his age, led him to question the promises the angel communicated to him. As you consider your own life, are there promises in Scripture that your circumstances cause you to doubt?
  - By the grace of God, he didn't remove the promise because of Zechariah's disbelief, but he did suffer a consequence for it. Has there ever been a time in your life when your lack of faith caused you to suffer a consequence?
  - **FOR THE KIDS:** Can you tell us a time you had bad consequences for not believing and obeying what your parents said? This is a reminder of why we believe in God and obey His word.
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### Luke 1:57-66—Zechariah's Moment

- When Zechariah gets the opportunity to obey, he doesn't delay. Despite the traditions of others around him and the lack of a voice, he cannot help but obey. His obedience not only freed his tongue and glorified God, but it also inspired awe in all who saw it happen. What kind of obedience do you think we could do as individuals or the church that would inspire awe in those around us?
  - **FOR THE KIDS:** In what ways could your behavior help other people to obey, worship, and be encouraged?
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### Luke 1:67-80—Zechariah's Heart

- His initial concern with the angel Gabriel's message was the birth of a son at his age, but by the time he could sing again, it was Gabriel's message of salvation that was his most significant concern. What is the thing that brings you the most joy during the Holiday season? How can we grow our joy more in salvation than in other things?
- Zechariah declares that the goal of this glorious salvation is that we "might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days." How is the salvation message inspiring you to serve the Lord more?
- **FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY:** Zechariah states that the purpose of John would be to light the way for other people to find Jesus. Who would you like to help find Jesus? Spend time praying for them together.



## **Bring It Home**

Zechariah's response to this great news was to sing a song! Take time to sing a few more songs together (It's ok to use a YouTube video to help).

