**The Light Shines in the Darkness!**

**Luke 1:5-25**

**John 1:4-5** “In him was life, and the life was the **light** of men. The **light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

* The Christian faith is a reasonable faith because it rests upon **fulfilled prophecy**. One of the prophets I quoted last week was Isaiah. When Isaiah saw that ray of light breaking through the clouds of darkness out on the horizon of the future, he sat down and penned these:

*"The people walking in darkness have seen* ***a great light****: on those living in the land of the shadow of death****, a light has dawned.***

**What great light did he see?** He saw the Light of the world!

*For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”* (Isaiah 9:2, 6).

* During the darkest moments of history, the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ shines the brightest and the darkness cannot overcome it.

**Malachi 4:2, 5-6** But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in [HIS] wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall…

Behold, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and awesome day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers…

* If there is one truth, I want you to carry away tonight, it is this: God is faithful. He remembers His Word and His promises never fail.
* Through the prophet Isaiah, God promised to send a Savior into the world.
* 300 years later, through the prophet Malachi, God promised to send a **forerunner** to announce to the world the coming of the Lord. This forerunner would be a messenger of Good News— "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”

When you read through the Bible, you will notice that when God moves in world history, he tends to find one righteous man, like Billy Graham, or a righteous woman like Corrie Ten Boom, or in this case a righteous couple: like Zechariah and Elizabeth, through whom He speaks. It’s interesting to note the meaning of their names:

* The name Zechariah means: “Jehovah has remembered!”
* The name Elizabeth means: “God is faithful!”

Righteousness is simply a declaration that God makes over a man who has placed his trust in Jesus. When God sees faith born in a man’s heart, he declares him righteous. That declaration is pronounced in the eternal courtroom of God; so that, once saved, always saved.

God is faithful. He heard their many prayers asking for a child. His mercy was coming.

* While God was concerned about the nation of Israel, He was also concerned about the plight of this godly, humble couple.
* The same is still true today. God is concerned about the condition of our world; however, He is also concerned about you and the difficulties you may be going through right now.

**Psalm 34:15-18** says,

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry… The righteous cry out, and the lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

**Matthew 11:28-30** Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

* This is the providence of God. God is sovereign and He rules over the world and nothing happens by chance, particularly in the lives of those who belong to Him.

**Proverbs 3:5-6** Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

* If you trust Jesus, He will direct your path through this life.

God is faithful; but sadly, we are not (Romans 3:10-12)!

Did you know there is only one sin God cannot forgive? That is the sin of unbelief. Now, deep down, Zechariah believed in the Lord. Yet, here he has a moment of unbelief.

In **John 3:19-21**, Jesus said: This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.