**The Gospel of Luke**

**Lesson 3** Luke 1:57-80 The Birth of John the Baptist!

**Questions:**

1. What important truth did you learn from the lecture and how does it apply to your life?
2. Scan Wiersbe chapter 1 and read pages 26-28.
   1. What happens when a believer places his trust in Jesus Christ (see Col. 1:12-14)?
   2. What are the results of the victory of salvation? What are outward signs that point to the inward change that has taken place in the heart of a believer?
3. Read Luke 1:57-66. The birth of John and the power of prayer!

At John’s birth, Zacharias, who has been mute for about nine months, is not only able to speak, but he will sing a solo. Elizabeth sang the first song. Mary sang the second one, and now it is quite proper that Zacharias sing a song. **His song is one of prophecy**. Although Zacharias is not in the line of David, he does recognize that his son is going to be **the forerunner** of Jesus Christ, as foretold by Malachi and Isaiah. John is the one to announce the coming of the Messiah. The presence of the forerunner indicates that the Messiah is not far behind. He is coming soon.[[1]](#endnote-1)

* 1. How and why did the Lord show mercy to Elizabeth (see 1:7, 13)?
  2. Who had been praying for Elizabeth to have a child? According to the following verses, explain why prayer is so important in a believer’s life.

Ephesians 6:18

Philippians 4:6-7

John 14:13-14

James 5:16b

Jesus talked to His disciples repeatedly about prayer. He told them to pray for God’s kingdom to be represented on earth and for His will to be done; He told them to pray for their daily sustenance, for forgiveness, and for strength against temptation (Matthew 6:9–13). He also told them that anything they asked for in His name (*To pray in His name is to pray according to God’s will as revealed in Scripture*. \*), for God’s glory, would be done for them (John 14:13–14), and He assured them that God knows how to give good gifts to His children (Matthew 7:11). All of these passages emphasize God’s goodness and concern for us, but none of them guarantee physical healing. We ask for God’s will, we plead for what we desire, and we pray in His name, but sometimes physical healing is not His plan for us.[[2]](#endnote-2)

\* Italics by Russ Andrews.

* 1. According to the following verses, what was God’s will regarding the announcement of the coming Messiah?

Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6 compared with Matthew 11:13-14; 17:12-13, Mark 9:11-13, and Luke 1:12-17

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9 compared with Matthew 3:1-6 and John 1:29-34

* 1. How did God use the prayers of His servant, Zechariah, to accomplish His divine will in sending a forerunner to herald the coming of the Messiah?

1. How is your prayer life?

* Do you believe God hears your prayers?
* If yes, do you believe God will answer your prayers?
* If yes, then why do you struggle so much with the discipline of prayer?
* How do you plan on changing your prayer life?

1. Read Luke 1:67-80. The Song of Zechariah!

Zechariah’s joy overflows in an inspired song (known as the *Benedictus*\*\* from its opening word in the Latin). It may be divided into four strophes: thanksgiving for the Messiah (68-70), the great deliverance (71-75), the place of John (76,77), and the Messianic salvation (78, 79). Farrar speaks of it as ‘the last Prophecy of the Old Dispensation, and the first of the New’. Some see the song as primarily political with an emphasis on the overcoming of the Lord’s enemies (71, 74), and add that a Christian at the end of the century would not have composed so Jewish a poem. We may agree that there is an authentic Jewish note, but it should not be overlooked that the deliverance from enemies is specifically related to serving God (74). The song is religious rather than political.

Zechariah’s words must be understood as the result of the Holy Spirit’s coming upon him. They are words of prophecy, words which express God’s revelation.

\*\* An invocation beginning *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini* (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord) forming a set part of the Mass.

From NIV Commentary: This hymn is called Benedictus (“Praise be”) because the opening word in the Latin Vulgate translation is *Benedictus*. Whereas the *Magnificat* (In Mary’s song, verses 46-55, this hymn of praise is known as the Magnificat in the Latin Vulgate or glorious.) is like a Psalm, the Benedictus is more like a prophecy.[[3]](#endnote-3)

* 1. What do you think it means to be ‘filled with the Holy Spirit?’ (See Isa. 61:1-3 and Luke 4:14-19.)
  2. Read Ephesians 1:13-14.

1. How does salvation occur?
2. Have you been sealed with the Holy Spirit?
3. Is being *sealed* with the Spirit the same as being *filled* with the Spirit   
   (See Article below)?

**How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?** from Got Questions.

An important verse in understanding the filling of the Holy Spirit is John 14:16, where Jesus promised the Spirit would indwell believers and that the indwelling would be permanent. It is important to distinguish the indwelling from the filling of the Spirit. The permanent indwelling of the Spirit is not for a select few believers, but for all believers. There are a number of references in Scripture that support this conclusion. First, the Holy Spirit is a gift given to all believers in Jesus without exception, and no conditions are placed upon this gift except faith in Christ (John 7:37-39). Second, the Holy Spirit is given at the moment of salvation (Ephesians 1:13). Galatians 3:2 emphasizes this same truth, saying that the sealing and indwelling of the Spirit took place at the time of believing. Third, the Holy Spirit indwells believers permanently. The Holy Spirit is given to believers as a down payment, or verification of their future glorification in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 4:30).

This is in contrast to the filling of the Spirit referred to in Ephesians 5:18. We should be so completely yielded to the Holy Spirit that He can possess us fully and, in that sense, fill us. Romans 8:9 and Ephesians 1:13-14 states that He dwells within every believer,   
but He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30), and His activity within us can be quenched   
(1 Thessalonians 5:19). When we allow this to happen, we do not experience the fullness of the Spirit’s working and His power in and through us. To be filled with the Spirit implies freedom for Him to occupy every part of our lives, guiding and controlling us. Then His power can be exerted through us so that what we do is fruitful to God. The filling of the Spirit does not apply to outward acts alone; it also applies to the innermost thoughts and motives of our actions. Psalm 19:14 says, "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer."

Sin is what hinders the filling of the Holy Spirit, and obedience to God is how the filling of the Spirit is maintained. Ephesians 5:18 commands that we be filled with the Spirit; however, it is not praying for the filling of the Holy Spirit that accomplishes the filling. Only our obedience to God’s commands allows the Spirit freedom to work within us. Because we are still infected with sin, it is impossible to be filled with the Spirit all of the time. When we sin, we should immediately confess it to God and renew our commitment to being Spirit-filled and Spirit-led.[[4]](#endnote-4)

1. In verse 69, who is the horn of salvation and what does the word ‘horn’ imply regarding this One.
2. What was the holy covenant the Lord made with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:1-8; 22:16-18)?
3. According to Luke 1:71-75, what were some of the promises included in this   
   holy covenant?
4. Does this holy covenant include anyone outside the descendants of Abraham, outside the nation of Israel? If yes, who?
5. How do Gentiles become partakers of these promises? (See Rom. 4:16-17;   
   8:14-17; Gal. 4:26-29).
6. According to Luke 1:76-77, what was John the Baptist’s sole purpose in life?
7. What is the primary purpose for any one person’s life according to the   
   following verses?

Isaiah 43:7

Psalm 100:2-4

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

1 Corinthians 10:31

1. How are you doing? What changes should you make to more fulfill the sole purpose of your life?

According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism:

Q. *What is the chief end of man?*  
A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.[[5]](#endnote-5)

1. According to Luke 1:78, what attribute of God stirred His heart to offer salvation   
   to the world?
2. Define the mercy of God in your own words?
3. Read Micah 7:17-18. What do these verses mean to you?
4. What is the most meaningful truth you have learned from this lesson?

1. J. Vernon McGee, THRU THE BIBLE COMMENTARY SERIES: LUKE, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 34. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.gotquestions.org/prayer-of-faith.html [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Edwin H. Palmer, *The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 1537. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.gotquestions.org/Spirit-filled.html [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. https://www.opc.org/sc.html [↑](#endnote-ref-5)