

## God's Royal Invitations Luke 1

### Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>

Since God tells us that we're "laborers together" with Him (1 Cor 3:9) We've been learning how to recognize and respond to God's invitations. (Jn 10:27) In Luke 1 we meet two people who were invited by God to partner with Him in His plan for redemption.

The first was the priest Zacharias, ("*God has Remembered*") who had faithfully served God all his life, but lived with the disappointment of thinking God had forgotten Him and Elisabeth. (*God of the promise!*)

The second was a young girl named Mary (*From marah: bitter Lk 2:35*) who was engaged to a simple carpenter named Joseph. Vs. 26-38

### Observations about God's invitations.

#### 1. They Are A Great **Honor!** Lk 1:

**A. Zacharias:** Vs 1:13,14,19 *"Fear not: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. "I am Gabriel, (geber: Valiant and El: God) that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings."*

**B. Mary 28** *"thou that art highly favored, (charito'o: endued with special honor! from Charis! Phil. 2:13! the Lord is with thee! blessed art thou among women."* (Euloge'o: eu: good/great logos: word/message!)

**C. US! 1 Jn 3:1** *"Behold (eido: recognize/ perceive) what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"*

#### 2. They often come in difficult/disappointing/ inconvenient times. Lk 1

##### A. Zacharias

- 1) Disappointed over his wife's barrenness. 6,7
- 2) He would only serve here (Holy Place) once. 8,9

##### B. Mary Recently engaged but still unmarried!

**C. Mary and Martha John 11:28** *"The Master is come and calleth for thee!"*

#### 3. They All Require Faith. Heb. 11:1, 6

##### A. Faith is **Proactive!** (It starts with God, but requires a Response)

- 1) God's invitations always come with an RSVP! (repondez s'il vous plait)
- 2) The encounter may have been awesome, but the orders still had to be acted upon.
  - a) Moses had to face Pharaoh. (Ex. 3,4)
  - b) Gideon had to face the Midianites. (Jud. 7)
  - c) David had to face Goliath. (1 Sam. 17)
  - d) Zacharias had to face Elizabeth (Lk 1:23-25)
  - e) Mary had to face her family and her fears. Vs 38 *"Behold the handmaiden of the Lord!"*
- 3) We Can't stay on the mountain and serve God! Lk 9:33-42

##### B. Faith is **Progressive!** They were all preceded by other "faith" encounters.

- 1) Moses chose the people of God over the pleasures of the palace. (Heb. 11:25)
- 2) Gideon made the offering to the angel and destroyed the grove. (Judges 6)

- 3) David slew a lion and bear. (1 Sam 17:37)
- 4) Zacharias continued to serve God in spite of his personal disappointments.
- 5) Mary had proved her faithfulness in the little assignments. (Luke 1:28) *"the Lord is with thee."*  
**God had been watching! See Luke 16:10-13**

### C. Faith Is Presumptuous.

- 1) Abraham was told to father a nation at 99.
- 2) Moses was called to deliver slaves out of the strongest nation in the world at 80!
- 3) Gideon faced odds of 450 trained soldiers to every one farmer!
- 4) David faced a killer that was twice his size.
- 5) Mary was told she'd conceive without a man!

**None of God's assignments could be rationally handled by the people and resources available.**

**Faith presumes that God must work with us to accomplish His will!** 1 Cor 3:9

***"Attempt Great things for God; Expect Great things from God!"*** William Carey

### D. Faith Is a Partnership. God's looking for people through whom He can work. (2 Chron. 16:9)

- 1) **This partnership is personal.** It's in the Person of God, not a program. John 5:17
  - 2) We tend to be self-centered VS God-Centered. (We try to accomplish "God's plan" our way.)
    - a) Abraham (famine → Go to Egypt!)      b) Sarah (Childless → Go to Hagar!)
    - c) Moses (Sees Injustice → Kill the Egyptian!)      d) David's men (Saul's wrong → kill Saul!)
- Mt 11:29 *"Take my yoke ... learn of me..."*

### E. Faith Is Practical: It's confidence; Followed By Cooperation!

- 1) God's invitations require adjustments that reveal what we really believe! Lk 6:46; Jn 13:17
- 2) Obedient Adjustments produce Fellowship. (John 14:21; 1 Jn. 1:3-7)
- 3) Failure to cooperate Robs God (2 Chr. 16:9; Mal 3:8) and **us** of His fellowship & Resources! (Lk 9:23-26)
- 4) Failure (or success) often sets up patterns of thinking and response. Compare Acts 10:14 with Mt. 16:22

## 4. How we respond Prepares us For The Next stage Of Our Journey. (Ro 1:17)

### A. The crisis (invitation) was not an end, but rather a paving stone in their journey.

- 1) Moses went on to face Pharaoh, and then led Israel for 40 more years.
- 2) Gideon went on to destroy the Midianite army and became a judge in Israel for 40 years.
- 3) David went on to become one of Saul's generals learning to lead and preparing him to **rule**.
- 4) Mary went on to face her fears and become the mother of our Lord!

### B. What we learn through one faith experience prepares us for the next.

- 1) If we rush or Miss the process, we end up lacking something God intended us to have.
- 2) This means we either repeat the lessons or forfeit the future opportunities God has for us. Jer 29:9  
 Jms 1:3,4 *"the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect (telios: complete) work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting (leipo: lacking) nothing."*

## Conclusion:

- 1) **God still sends "angels" (angelos: messengers) today:** Heb. 13:2; 7,17; Rev. 1:20)
- 2) **We're all called to be God's "messengers"** 2 Cor. 5:18-20

**How have you Responded to God's invitation For Salvation (Jn 3:3,16) and Service (Ro. 12:1,2)?**

2 Cor. 5:18-20 *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation... we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."*