

Hi Everyone- I write these notes in case you are a little intimidated to lead a study. These are merely insights that may be helpful. I also try to anticipate questions that may come up in your group discussion for the week's lesson. They are only meant to serve as a tool- take them or leave them! XOXO Alisa

Week 1 Unexplainable Jesus

Day 1

In this first day, Erica (the bible study author) sets up the backstory of Luke, the author of both Luke and Acts. Most scholars believe that Luke was a companion of the apostle Paul. Some believe Luke was a Gentile, others believe he was a Jew. But, it is clear that his biographical account of Jesus is apologetic in nature. He is setting out to prove to Theophilus- a man of wealth and social standing- that Jesus was the promised Messiah of the Jews- spoke of in their Scriptures. Luke "followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account so Theophilus may have certainty concerning the things he was taught" about Jesus. (Luke 1:4).

Luke was heavily invested into writing these two books of the bible. It took a significant amount of his time, energy, and intellect- some may have made Luke feel like his efforts were a waste of time. I am sure Luke did not anticipate the significance of what God had set before him to accomplish. Here we are, 2,000 years later, still studying his account of Jesus. What has God set in front of you to accomplish? Are you obeying the call? Don't worry about what impact your efforts will have- that is up to the Lord. Just obey! It is easy to lose motivation and assume your efforts do not matter. They do!

Day 2

The life of Jesus starts with the life of John the Baptist- His cousin. Zechariah- John's dad is a priest and is serving in the Holy of Holies- where one priest is allowed to go, once a year (due to the Laws surrounding the Day of Atonement- see Leviticus Chapter 16). He was all alone in the most scared part of the temple, and an angel met him there to give Zechariah God's plan. There are a lot of takeaways from this passage:

- Even when you feel completely alone- you are not. Zechariah was in a place that everyone else was forbidden to be- and yet God was with him there. God is physically with you, even if you are physically alone.
- Even when you feel completely misunderstood- you are not. God understood Zechariah's heartache from being childless. God understood Zechariah's deepest desire to have a child.
- God works out of the impossible- so that He alone gets the glory. Elizabeth was barren. Sarah- the mother of Isaac who was the first descendent of Israel was also barren. Mary was virgin. All three women were ostracized by society. And yet they served a critical role in God's plan for humanity. God will do what He sets out to do. Circumstance cannot thwart God's plan. God does not play by the world's rules.
- God is patient with us even when we doubt.

- God sees us in the ordinary. Our job is to be obedient to what He has called us to do today- no matter how mundane it may seem sometimes. God honor's our obedience.

Day 3

John was called to big, yet hard things for God. How can we prepare our children to fulfill the purposes God has for them- even if it means they may face loneliness, or will need courage or perseverance? Are we being good examples of that to them as their mothers? Or do we crumble when things get hard?

As a result of his meeting with the angel, Zechariah could not speak for nine months. What do you think it would be like if you could not speak for nine months? How would this change you? How would it affect your listening skills? Your prayer life? Your body language? Your attention to others? The bible tells us to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger James 1:19-20. We live in a society where everyone shares their opinion, on everything, to a faceless audience. What if we prayed for God's direction and discernment as much as we spoke our opinion? What if we listened to someone else's experience or perspective without always needing to argue our side?

Day 4

I like what Erica said on the first page of this day, finding favor with God does not mean the absence of fear. God calls us to do hard things- we can be accomplishing His will for our life, and it can still be hard. That does not mean that God is not pleased with us. God is more concerned with the condition of our heart than our physical comfort.

God gave Mary practical direction- "go to Elizabeth." Do we pray to God for practical direction? Do we trust Him when He gives it to us? Elizabeth served a vital role in Mary's life. The Session 2 Video goes into a lot on the importance of relationships between Christian women.

Day 5

When Zechariah could finally speak- he blessed God. He told others of God's plan for his son. Do we conduct our lives in such a way that God is the main character of our lives, and we merely serve as a supporting actress? Is it possible to let our lives unfold progressively (not having to have control over all aspects of our lives) while trusting that God is going to use us to serve His kingdom as John did?