



Home Worship Guide – Luke 1: 68-79

Complement to sermon on December 16th, 2012

MEMORIZE

Luke 1:78-79

“Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

READ

Read Luke 1: 57-79

Notice two remarkable things from the words of Zechariah in Luke 1.

First, nine months earlier, Zechariah could not believe his wife would have a child. Now, filled with the Holy Spirit, he is so confident of God’s redeeming work in the coming Messiah that he puts it in the past tense. For the mind of faith, a promised act of God is as good as done. Zechariah has learned to take God at his word and so has a remarkable assurance: “God has visited and redeemed!”

Second, the coming of Jesus the Messiah is a visitation of God to our world: “The God of Israel has visited and redeemed.” For centuries, the Jewish people had languished under the conviction that God had withdrawn: the spirit of prophecy had ceased, Israel had fallen into the hands of Rome. And all the godly in Israel were waiting the visitation of God. Luke tells us in 2:25 that the devout Simeon was “looking for the consolation of Israel.” And in Luke 2:38, the prayerful Anna was “looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.” (first two paragraphs taken from page 5 of John Piper’s free e-book “Good news of Great Joy)

Notice in verse 69 the use of the word “horn.” This word signifies strength. God has raised up a strength for salvation. This strength will come in the form of “rescuing us from the hand of our enemies (v74)” and “enable us to serve God without fear (v74).” This is all due to the “tender mercy of our God” (v78) and will result in His light shining “on those living in darkness to guide their feet into the path of peace” (v79).

These were days of great expectation. Now the long-awaited visitation of God was about to happen – indeed, He was about to come in a way no one expected with results that no one expected. The Jewish people were expecting this to be just for the people of Israel, BUT this promise is for all of humanity. God’s mercy and grace far exceed what we come to expect. (paraphrase p6 – Good News of Great Joy)

Discussion: (Use these questions as guidelines for discussion with your family. Share your experiences as they relate to the question and then ask the question to the rest of the family.)

1. Jesus came to redeem all people. How should that change how we view others?
2. We sometimes respond as the Jews did here, that God is only for us. Who have you possibly written off from the grace of God?
3. What can you and your family do to reach those who do not know Jesus?

Bottom Line: God has visited and has redeemed not only Israel, but all of creation! And we are called to work with him in redeeming all people!

SING

O Come, O Come Immanuel (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP4iyJqrPvY>)

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created for specific age ranges as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's word and worship Him together.

Preschool (up to 5)

- Gather 10 or so stuffed animals, dolls, cars, blocks, etc. Tell your child that the first one you name is the only one they need to remember and then tell them it is named "Matthew" or any other name. Then go on to tell them every other animal's name, having them repeat the animals names. When you finish naming all the animals, ask them to tell the name of the first animal again.
- If they are unable to recall, focus on that
- If they can recall the name, praise them for keeping the focus. What you told them to remember, they did! Relate this to the coming of Jesus.

Children (K-5th)

- Share the following riddle with our child.
- You are a bus driver. At the first stop of the day, eight people get on board. At the second stop, four get off, and eleven get on. At the third stop, two get off, and six get on. At the fourth stop, thirteen get off, and one gets on. At the fifth stop, five get off, and three get on. At the sixth stop, three get off and two get on. Did you get all that? Ok, now what color are the bus driver's eyes?
- Were they able to answer? Did they forget the answer? If so, explain that just as the details took the focus off the answer you gave them, details in life take our focus off of Jesus. If they remembered the answer and could answer properly, praise them for keeping the focus.
 - We know the answer is Jesus. We need to hold firm to that. The answer to everybody's question, everybody from all tongues, tribes and nations, is Jesus
 - We need to be willing to share the answer with all people, even those who have hurt us, are different than us, are seen as outcasts. We can't let the details distract us

Students (6th-12th)

- Read 2nd Samuel 11
 - Did David keep God as his main focus? Or did he allow himself to get distracted?
 - Distractions are everywhere. Talk openly about what distracts us. Share with what distracts you. (and the solution is to focus back on Christ!)
- Now Read 2nd Samuel 12:1-14
 - There are consequences when we allow something else to take our focus. In this case, a child died. (And note the devastation of this sin is seen in the rest of David's life!) How does this relate to us keeping Jesus as our focus?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, we want to keep you as our focus in life. Help us to keep our eyes on you in spite of the details of life and be ready and willing to share your Gospel with anybody that you bring into our life.