

You Will Be Silent Until... (Part 1)

Sermon Series: Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Key Text

Luke 1:18

→ “And Zechariah said to the angel, ‘How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.’”



Big Idea

Since Adam, humanity had been careening in the current of unbelief towards destruction, but now the Second Adam has entered the water, and He is, even here this morning, pulling us against that current back towards His Father!

(1) The Drift of Doubt

Talking Back to an Angel

We might be prone to immediately sympathize with Zechariah here. After all, the words of this angel would be a bit hard to believe, and Zechariah’s question seems reasonable to us given the years and years of praying with no answer. But we must not follow this line first. For there is a stubbornness here, a hardness of heart, a drifting doubt that mustn’t go unnoticed.

How Did Zechariah Get Here?

Over the years, as calluses start to form on his knees—prayer after prayer with seemingly no answer, so too calluses start to form on his heart. “What’s the point?!” Doubt has settled into his heart and he’s accepted another interpretation of reality, of YHWH.

Drifting with Doubt towards Atheism

(1) *Traditionalism*: Stop expecting. (2) *Naturalism*: Stop believing. (3) *Liberalism*: Stop obeying. (4) *Atheism*: Stop altogether.

What seems at first to be a mere innocent question, truly has within its compass the very seed of a full-bodied atheism. Isn’t that how the world went wrong at the beginning? “Did God really say?” A seemingly innocent question that has now a world of sin, sorrow, suffering, and death in its debt! This drift is nothing new. It’s as old as humanity. O Mercy Hill, beware of the drift of doubt.

Zechariah’s Silence Gives Way to Song

Christ will absorb the full drift of our doubting all the way to its atheistic end and turn it on its head. Atheism in its ultimate expression is not just the denial of God but the killing of Him. “Get out of my universe!” And Christ says, “Okay, come on. Kill me. And I’ll make it my means of saving you. I will not leave you in silence. I will loosen your lips in song!” He takes the atheistic principle and makes it subservient to a full-bodied Christian faith.



Critical Action

Expect God to be on the move; believe God for the miracle; trust and obey His Word; but more than anything, rest in your Anchor, your Forerunner, who will not let your heart go.

Reflection Questions

- Is all doubt sin? What would be a right way to handle doubt? What would be a wrong way? How have you experienced these things?
- Why do you think men refuse to acknowledge God as He reveals Himself to us in nature and in Scripture? How did we get so bold, so foolish, so insane?
- Have you experienced the drift of doubt? Where would you say you are now? Which phase best describes your struggle? What would faith look like in contradistinction?
- Considering Traditionalism in particular, what are some ways you are tempted to go through the religious motions without really expecting God to move? Where do you have the form of godliness but lack the faith and power? How can Christ meet you in this and help?

