

You Will Be Silent Until... (Part 2)

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 1:20

→ “And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.”



Big Idea

The doubt and silence of Zechariah, while meaningful on their own terms, also embodies a larger problem affecting all mankind: we cannot keep the Law of God in our own strength. The movement of Zechariah towards the Messiah also becomes the movement of mankind as we allow the silence of the Law to lead us towards the songs of His grace.

(2) The Discipline of Grace (vv. 19-23)

The Angel Responds

Zechariah may be disciplined with silence but he will still be carried along by grace. God doesn't need us to fulfill His plan. It marches forward anyways. And though it marches forward, in one sense, without the help of Zechariah, surely it marches forward for the good of Zechariah. He is not silenced because God is done with him. He is silenced so that he might sit back and watch how God alone will work now to save Him!

The Heart of Doubt

This I think is the essential difference between the doubt of Mary and the doubt of Zechariah: are we struggling with God from *faith to faith* or from *doubt to doubt*? There is a humble doubt that comes under God and begs: “I believe, help me with my unbelief!” But then there is a proud doubt that stands over God and demands: “I doubt, prove it to me or I won't believe!” With the former, God has no problem giving assurance and signs. With the latter, while they demand signs, even if a sign comes it is never enough.

From a Story to The Story

The Law of God was never intended to be a ladder by which we climb up to Him but a muzzle by which we are silenced and lowered before Him! We are meant by the law not to be fueled in our pride but emptied of it. But His end goal is not to leave us in the silence of our unbelief and sin, but to lead us to faith in Christ and His grace. The Law is not opposed to grace but subservient to it, it takes us by the hand and walks us to the foot of the cross!

(3) The Destiny of the Saints (vv. 24-25)

We see again in this couple a foreshadow of what God is doing for us all. He's a reproach-bearing and reproach-removing God. The only proper response is, with Zechariah and Elizabeth: joy and song!



Critical Action

If you've never been silenced by the Law, you will never sing to and with the Christ! Let the Law humble you before God that, in Christ, He might exalt you!



Reflection Questions

- Have you ever doubted God? Have your doubts been more like Zechariah or Mary? What's the difference? How has God responded to your doubts in a helpful way?
- Read Rom 3:19-26 again. Why did God bring in the Law? How have you experienced the movement of this text in your own life? Has your mouth been stopped by the Law? Has your tongue been loosed by His grace?
- Read Exo 14:13-14, how is this first exodus like the second exodus worked for God's people in Christ? What does the exodus event in Exo 14 lead to in Exo 15? Why would God model the second after the first? How is the second greater than the first?