

DECEMBER 1 & 2

Fear Not: Zechariah

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Introduction

Our first message in the Advent series *O Hear the Angel Voices* focuses on the words the angel Gabriel brings to Zechariah in Luke 1:5-25. Through Gabriel's message, which starts with "Do not be afraid," Pastor John reminds us God knows our names, knows our mess, has a plan for us and wants us to believe and trust in Him.

Discussion

1. Why is it important to you that God knows your name? Share some nicknames people have given you throughout your life. Also share your favorite names for God and what they mean to you. Which of God's names casts away fear for you? Why?
2. Gabriel spoke God's words to Zechariah, proving God heard and finally answered his prayer for a child after decades of praying and walking in righteousness. Share with the group a prayer you held [or are still holding] for years without an apparent answer. How could this passage help take away the fear of unanswered prayer?
3. **Read Jeremiah 29:11.** What do the words "God has a plan for you" mean to you? What kind of emotions do you feel or thoughts do you have when you apply this phrase to your life?
4. Like Zechariah, have you ever doubted an answer you know came from God? What was the result? What did you learn from that experience?

Do Something

1. As we enter the Advent season, we know many people are walking in fear and doubt. Pray for God's prompting to invite someone who needs to hear "Do not be afraid" to one of our Advent or Christmas Eve services. Be sure to make a personal invite, and if possible, bring them with you!
2. As a group, decide on a way to bless someone in your community. Some family-friendly ideas are caroling in your neighborhood, bringing cookies/snacks to friends or helping at a homeless shelter or food pantry.
3. **Read Luke 1** using the COMA method to prepare for upcoming Advent messages.

Resources

1. *Because of Bethlehem, Love is Born, Hope is Here* by Max Lucado
2. *From Heaven: A 28-Day Advent Devotional* by A. W. Tozer
3. If you are curious about angels and would like a biblical explanation of their purpose and actions, watch *Angels* by Jack Graham on RightNow Media.