

Dec 18, 2016



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks  
Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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**Lesson Leaders:**

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**Class Leaders:**

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

Christians are ordinary people who are committed to the extraordinary person of Christ

**COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:**

John didn't perform miracles as Jesus did. He didn't talk about himself but came to "bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe" (John 1:7). He said of Jesus, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true."*

(John 10:41 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 22, 2012)

**Series: Creation & Salvation**

**UNIT: The Savior is Born**

**NEXT WEEK**

**NO CLASS**

**CHRISTMAS BREAK**

## **The Forerunner of the Savior Luke 1:8-20**

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson reviews God's work in Zacharias's life in bringing about **The Forerunner of the Savior**. The **study's aim** is to realize that God will work in much the same way to help us understand and receive His Word. The **study's application** is to learn to respond to God's Word, in faith quickly and consistently.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

Our text concerns the birth of John the Baptist, who was another important part of God's messianic plan. God determined that the Savior would benefit from a forerunner who would prepare the world for His entry. Our text points to two mighty effects of John's ministry—first in the lives of his family and then in the lives of the wider world, since many would rejoice over his birth. Obviously, John's parents, Zacharias and Elisabeth, were greatly blessed to have a role in the fulfillment of God's promise to send the Savior. Joy and gladness came to them; this was personal. We cannot look at these Bible characters merely as passive instruments in the hand of a sovereign God. They were real people, and they personally received the grace of God in their lives. Let us always take the grace of God to heart in our lives so that it might instruct us in God's love and hold us strong in His mercy. But the wider concern here is the joy and rejoicing that John's birth would bring to the many. His birth would have a widespread impact. His whole life and ministry would have a powerful role in preparing the way for the Lord Jesus. John's ministry exalted Christ, and the blessing of God's salvation came to many in those days. John preached Christ, always making a clear distinction between himself and Jesus. He pointed others to the Lord, saying that he was not worthy to untie the sandal of the One who would come after him. In his day there was no greater preacher in the land than John, but his only intent was to point to the greater One. John served Christ, even though it ended up costing him his life. He willingly dropped back into obscurity after the Lord came on the scene, and then he was willing to pay the ultimate price of his own life for the sake of the truth. After John's death, the Lord eulogized him as the greatest man ever born of a woman (Matt. 11:11). His was a life of willing service to Christ. Our world has many ideas of greatness, but in God's kingdom the greatest are those who willingly and sacrificially serve, as John did. So John's whole life was consecrated to Christ. This is what led him to deemphasize the marks of earthly success. His modest diet and rough clothing were only reflections of a life that turned away from worldly success. He was unwavering in living for Christ. John the forerunner teaches us what being a follower of the Lord Jesus is all about. It is about consecration to the things of Christ, leaving in our wake a compelling and countercultural statement of the necessity of salvation and the ultimate futility of devotion to earthly attainments. Let us be like John, a bold and burning light for Christ in the world (John 5:35). This is how to bring joy to a troubled and sad world. John pointed people to the joy of salvation. So today we are challenged to be lights to the world, bringing the joyful news of salvation to as many needy souls as we can.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### God's Hand in Ordinary Life (Luke 1:8-10)

#### *Through service (8)*

Service that has as its foundation the precept that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)

Service that bears the failings of the weak and tries to strengthen them (Rom 15:1-2)

Service that carries other's burdens (Gal 6:2)

Service that meets the needs of others (James 2:15-17)

Loving service that has action, not just words (1 John 3:16-18)

#### *Through election (9)*

An election that is according to God's purpose (Rom 8:28-30)

An election accomplished through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess 2:13-14)

An election accomplished through the foreknowledge of God (1 Peter 1:2)

An election whereby God makes me holy and beloved (Col 3:12)

#### *Through prayer (10)*

Prayer that is continual (1 Thess 5:17)

Prayer for the spreading of the gospel (Eph 6:19)

Prayer in faith and the Holy Spirit (Jude 20)

Prayer that waits in expectation (Ps 5:3)

Prayer about everything with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6)

A heart that is devoted to prayer (Col 4:2)

### God's Message at the Perfect Time (Luke 1:11-17)

#### *From a Divine source (11-13)*

From a Divine source because God promises to teach, counsel and watch over His people (Psalm 32:8)

From a Divine source because God guides with His counsel (Ps 73:22-25)

From a Divine source because God teaches what is best and directs in the right way (Isa 48:17)

From a Divine source because obedience to it results in blessings (Acts 8:26)

#### *With joy (14)*

Joy expressed in praise and song (Ps 33:1-3)

Joy expressed in our soul (Isa 61:10)

Joy expressed in spite of circumstances (Hab 3:17-19)

Joy expressed because the Bible tells us to do so (Phil 4:4)

Joy expressed because we believe and love God (1 Peter 1:8)

#### *Seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit (15-16)*

Filled with the Holy Spirit so that the word of God can be spoken boldly (Acts 4:31)

Filled with the Holy Spirit as part of living wisely (Eph 5:15-18)

Filled with the Holy Spirit to serve (Acts 6:2-6)

Filled with the Holy Spirit as evidence of the grace of God (Acts 11:22-24)

#### *Seek to be prepared for Jesus' coming (17)*

Prepare by letting our light shine before men (Matt 5:14-16)

Prepare by being watchful because the day is nearer than believed (Rom 13:11)

Prepare by being watchful because we don't know the day or hour (Matt 25:13)

Prepare by making the most of every opportunity (Eph 5:15-17)

Prepare by being putting on the armor of God because the time is near (Rom 13:12)

### God's Proof to Help Doubt (Luke 1:18-20)

#### *Believe without knowing everything (18)*

Abraham is an example of one who believed without knowing the results (Heb 11:8)

Believe without knowing because one should hope without regard to seeing how it will turn out (Rom 8:24)

Believe without knowing because doubt causes disobedience because it causes one to waffle (James 1:6)

Believe without knowing because belief should be by faith not by sight (2 Cor 5:7)

Believe without knowing because belief should be looking toward the unseen, not the seen (2 Cor 4:18)

Believe without knowing because Jesus says that those who believe without seeing would be blessed (John 20:29)

#### *Believe because God says it (19)*

Believe because when God says it, it is trustworthy (Rev 21:5)

Believe because God cannot lie (Heb 6:18)

Believe because God's testimony is the greatest (1 John 5:9)

Believe because God's word is holy and righteous (Rom 7:12)

Believe because God's word is good (1 Tim 1:8)

Believe because God's word gives freedom and blessings (James 1:25)

#### *Consequences of unbelief (20)*

A consequence of unbelief is sin (Rom 14:22-23)

A consequence of unbelief is condemnation (John 3:18)

A consequence of unbelief is that we are not one of Jesus' sheep (John 10:26)

A consequence of unbelief is rebuke because of doubt (John 20:24-29)