

Sermon Application and Discussion Guide

12.13.15

Sermon Series

Christmas Hope

Sermon Title

The Forerunner of Hope

Sermon Text

Luke 1:5-25

Content

Last week we began a series of sermons on the topic of Christmas hope. We said that the hope of Christmas was God's commitment to send His Son into the world to set everything right. As the Old Testament anticipated this hope the New Testament unfolds its fulfillment. And this morning we want to look at the forerunner of that hope in the person of the birth of John the Baptist. John the Baptist was truly a great man and his greatness prepares the way for the ultimate fulfilling of hope in the person of Jesus Christ. We will explore this forerunner of hope, drawing applications from three perspectives on this hope and his greatness. We will see how this hope is (1) Out of the box. (2) Out of this world. And (3) Out of the Ordinary. In other words, it is unexpected, supernatural and other-centered.

Gospel Connections

John is great, and John is the forerunner of hope because his entire life is one of pointing to Another. As he put it himself in John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease." The consuming passion of John's life was Jesus Christ. He truly lived his life for another and in that he was not only great but also prepared us for the hope to come. That hope is never in ourselves. If it were it would not be hope. It would not be secure. It is only to the degree that we are consumed with the greatness of Another, namely Christ, that our lives will be filled with hope.

Application and Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
 - a. What insights did you learn?
 - b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don't understand?
 - c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to change as a result of this passage of Scripture?
2. What do you learn about Zechariah and his wife from vv.5-7? Why do you think Luke stresses the fact that Elizabeth was barren? What do you know about the social status of barren women in the ancient world? How do you think Zechariah and Elizabeth felt about their situation?
3. Read John 3:30. How can you decrease and have Jesus increase more in your life? How does this give you hope?

