

Objective: We can always have **hope** because God keeps his promises. We can trust what God says, and God's promises are worth waiting for.

Elementary Video

Tom I shared my google drive folder because I can't figure out how to attach video or activity pages.

Preschool video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_CUPS10Wi48

Activity Pages

Activity Page 1 See shared drive

Activity Pages set. See shared drive

Sunday School Lesson: Hope: God does what He says.

Scripture

Luke 1:5-25 (The Angel's Promise to Zechariah)

Lesson Overview

Objective: We can always have **hope** because God keeps his promises. We can trust what God says, and God's promises are worth waiting for.

Opening Activity (5-10 minutes)

"The Waiting Game"

Have students share about something they've had to wait a long time for (a birthday, a special trip, an answer to prayer, etc.). Discuss how waiting can be hard, especially when we really want something.

Game: The rule of the quiet game is you cannot make a noise. Beyond that, the kids are not to touch each other. Have your children sit across from one another. If you are in a classroom setting, make sure everyone has a partner.

The goal of the game is to make the other person make a noise - laugh, snicker, talk, etc.

They can try and make the other person laugh, but they must stay absolutely silent in the process.

If a person made a noise, the other player would receive a token (gem). The first person to five won. These little gems delight kids and are an inexpensive and fun reward system for kids.

Bible Story Introduction (5 minutes)

Today, we're going to hear about a couple who had been waiting and praying for something for many, many years. Their names were Zechariah and Elizabeth, and they lived during the time when King Herod ruled Judea, just before Jesus was born.

There was an old man named Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth. They loved God very much and always tried to do what was right. But they were sad because they had always wanted to have a baby, and they never did. Now they were too old to have children. One day, Zechariah went to work at God's temple. It was his turn to do a very important job - burning sweet-smelling incense inside the holy place. This was a once-in-a-lifetime honor!

Suddenly, an angel appeared! Zechariah was SO scared. But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have GOOD NEWS! God heard your prayers. You and Elizabeth are going to have a baby boy! You should name him John."

The angel kept talking: "Your son will be very special. He will help people get ready to meet Jesus!"

But Zechariah said, "How can this happen? We're too old!" He didn't believe it was possible.

The angel said, "I am Gabriel. I stand right next to God! What I'm telling you is TRUE. But because you didn't believe me, you won't be able to talk until the baby is born."

When Zechariah came out, everyone was waiting for him. They wondered why he took so long. But when he tried to talk, nothing came out! He could only make hand motions. The people knew he had seen something amazing.

Soon after, Elizabeth found out she was going to have a baby! She was SO happy! She said, "God remembered me! He answered my prayer!"

And everything happened exactly as the angel promised!

Video: [Zechariah and Elizabeth](#)

Teaching Points

1. God Sees Faithful Hearts (verses 5-7)

Read together: Luke 1:5-7

Discussion Questions:

- What do we learn about Zechariah and Elizabeth's character?
- They were "righteous in the sight of God" and followed all His commands "blamelessly." What does this tell us about them?
- Even though they were faithful, they still had something that caused them pain. What was it?

Key Truth: Being faithful to God doesn't mean life will be easy or that we'll get everything we want right away. Zechariah and Elizabeth loved and served God faithfully even though they were hurting inside.

Application: Sometimes we pray for things and God's answer seems to be "wait" or even "not yet." This doesn't mean God doesn't care about us or hasn't heard our prayers.

2. God Works in Unexpected Moments (verses 8-10)

Read together: Luke 1:8-10

Background Information:

- Zechariah was a priest, one of thousands in Israel at this time
- Priests were divided into 24 groups that took turns serving in the temple
- Burning incense in the Holy Place was a once-in-a-lifetime honor chosen by casting lots
- This was Zechariah's big moment in his priestly service

Discussion Questions:

- Why was this day special for Zechariah?
- Where were the other worshipers while he was inside the temple?
- Do you think Zechariah expected anything unusual to happen that day?

Key Truth: God often shows up in our ordinary moments and routine responsibilities. Zechariah was just doing his job, serving faithfully, when God interrupted his normal day with something extraordinary.

3. God's Answers Are Worth the Wait (verses 11-17)

Read together: Luke 1:11-17

Discussion Questions:

- How did Zechariah react when he saw the angel? (Would you react the same way?)
- What was the angel's first message to Zechariah? ("Do not be afraid")
- What amazing news did Gabriel bring?
- What special things did the angel say about the son they would have?

Key Points about the Promise:

- Their son would be named John
- He would bring joy to his parents and many others
- He would be great in God's sight
- He would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth
- He would prepare people's hearts for the coming of the Lord

Key Truth: God hadn't forgotten Zechariah and Elizabeth's prayers. He had been preparing something far more significant than they could have imagined. Their son John would become John the Baptist, who would prepare the way for Jesus!

4. Doubt vs. Faith (verses 18-20)

Read together: Luke 1:18-20

Discussion Questions:

- What question did Zechariah ask?
- Was it wrong for Zechariah to have questions?
- How did Gabriel respond?
- Why do you think Zechariah was made unable to speak?

Deeper Discussion: Compare Zechariah's response to Mary's response later in the same chapter (verse 34). Both asked "How?" but their hearts were different:

- Zechariah asked from doubt: "How can I be sure?"
- Mary asked from wonder: "How will this be?"

Key Truth: It's okay to have questions, but there's a difference between asking questions while trusting God and asking questions because we don't believe God can do what He promises.

5. God Keeps His Promises (verses 21-25)

Read together: Luke 1:21-25

Discussion Questions:

- How did the people outside know something had happened to Zechariah?
- What did Elizabeth say when she discovered she was pregnant?
- Why had being childless been a "disgrace" in her culture?

Key Truth: Everything happened exactly as Gabriel said it would. God's word is completely trustworthy.

Application & Life Lessons

For All Ages:

1. **Keep praying, even when answers seem delayed.** Zechariah and Elizabeth didn't give up on God even after years of unanswered prayers.
2. **God's timing is different from ours.** What seems "too late" to us is often exactly the right time in God's plan.
3. **Our prayers matter to God.** The angel specifically said, "Your prayer has been heard" (verse 13).
4. **Trust God even when circumstances seem impossible.** Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were past the age of having children, but nothing is impossible with God.
5. **Our story might be part of a bigger story.** Zechariah and Elizabeth's son played a crucial role in God's plan to send Jesus into the world.

Discussion Questions for Reflection

1. Is there something you've been praying about for a long time? How does this story encourage you?
2. Why do you think God sometimes asks us to wait for answers to our prayers?
3. How can we stay faithful to God even when we're disappointed or confused about His timing?
4. What can we learn from Elizabeth's response when God finally answered her prayer?

Closing Activity

Prayer Wall

Provide paper and markers. Have students write or draw prayers they've been waiting for God to answer. Create a "prayer wall" display and commit to praying for these requests over the coming weeks. Remind students that God hears every prayer and His timing is perfect.

Alternative Activity (for younger children):

Create "John the Baptist" craft figures with the caption: "God answers prayers in His perfect time!"

Closing Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Help us to trust You even when we have to wait. Remind us that You hear every prayer and that Your timing is always perfect. Give us faith to believe Your promises, even when they seem impossible. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Take-Home Challenge

This week, write down one prayer you've been waiting for God to answer. Each day, thank God that He hears you and trust that He will answer in His perfect time. Share with the class next week how this practice affected your faith.