

Life Disrupted - Mary and Elizabeth
Select verses from Luke 1; Isaiah 40:29-31, 41:10; Hebrews 10:24-25

So, what are you thinking after watching this video?

“Disrupted” might be a good term to describe the lives of these folks. None of these would have expected these events to happen, let alone the way they happened.

Can you relate?

Luke 1:26-28 – Elizabeth and Mary have entered a “Life Disrupted.”

1. Untimely Timing

Luke 1:5-7 – Luke describes an older couple beyond child-bearing age. He describes them as “righteous people.” Zechariah and Elizabeth were living a life of faith. We learn Zechariah was a priest...a man of God. Yet, something was missing in their life. In a culture that placed value on a couple having children, they had none. In fact, it was believed in that day, that God was punishing those who had no children. Couples, especially the woman, felt disgrace, whether real or imagined.

Luke 1:11-13 - Elizabeth was beyond her child-bearing years, yet, God answered her and Zechariah’s prayer by allowing her to conceive and become a mother! But why now? Because *God’s timing is always perfect, even when it seems untimely to us!*

Elizabeth trusted God that He was doing the right thing for her.

Can you relate with Elizabeth? Can you, or will you trust God in the predicable as well as in the disruptions of life? Isaiah 41:10

We have no idea how Elizabeth first responded with the news that she would conceive and give birth to a child. This is a woman of incredible faith. She may have been shocked at first (what woman would not be), but her prayers were answered! Who cares how old she was! She saw God working in her life and, simultaneously, preparing her to be a significant voice in the ear of a young, likely worried, teenage girl.

If you are experiencing an “untimely time” today, please hear this: God is for you. God is with you. He lives in you. You are not alone. He is doing what is best for you and He is doing what will give Him glory. If you don’t understand His plan, trust His heart.

2. Unexpected Encouragement

The angel, Gabriel, told her that she, a virgin, will conceive, and she will give birth to a son, who is to be called Jesus. Also, that her much older relative, Elizabeth, will give birth.

Luke 1:39-45 - *You are witnessing the power of community and encouragement.* Elizabeth’s exclamation of “Blessed are you...” may have been the first positive words Mary heard in days or even weeks. In a world (not unlike ours) often obsessed with judging others, the relationship of these two women shows us the strength that comes from supporting and uplifting one another.

The beauty of Elizabeth's words is that she keeps Mary focused on God and what He is doing in her and through her. And she reminds Mary that her strength comes in trusting God and His God's word. Isaiah 40:29-31

The greatest gift you can give someone this Christmas season and every season of life is the gift of community, that is the gift and your presence, and encouragement.

Hebrews 10:24-25

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. **Let us not give up meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing, **but let us encourage one another**--and even more as you see the Day approaching.*

Do you see what the highlighted words are saying? To meet is to encourage each other. Community and encouragement go together.

And may we not overlook the words from Isaiah: *In our weakness, God is our strength.*

3. Unmatched Miracle

In our ever-disrupted lives, may we pause this Christmas season to embrace the untimely timing that life brings our way. May we look for opportunities to be that source of unexpected encouragement among those we encounter. May we not miss the unmatched miracle that unfolded in the lives of those two babies born six months apart all those years ago.

One, will be that voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight His path."

The other, will be the one for whom the way was prepared. John 1:24-26 and 29.

The unmatched miracle is this:

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Jesus is "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Do you know Him-personally? Have you received Him, so that He lives in you? "There is JOY in saying YES to God!" Joy comes from being obedient to the God who created, redeemed, and loves you!