

## Lovers of God

(Luke 1:1-38)

### Introduction

[Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to amplify the gospel in your life & church, and to impact the culture.

1. Love is more than a feeling (which may go up & down); it's a choice of the will to love.
2. What type of lover of God are you?

### God lovers choose to seek the truth about Jesus [Luke 1:1-4]

1. [1:1-2] Dr. Luke
  - a. [1] An educated, articulate non-Jew, compiling a narrative of all the information about Jesus available.
  - b. [2] Luke investigates & verifies oral tradition, written documents & eyewitnesses.
2. [1:3-4] "Most excellent Theophilus"
  - a. [3] Not Jewish; official of high standing; wealthy enough to sponsor Luke's research project for years.
  - b. In his position, he has a lot to lose if he commits to following Jesus.
  - c. Theophilus: "Lover of God", just like you.
  - d. [4] Purpose of research: "that you may have certainty concerning the things you've been taught."
3. Application: Are you a lover of God who seeks the truth about Jesus? [cf. Luke 11:9-10]
  - a. On your own: Explore, study, pray through the gospel of Luke.
  - b. Supplemental reflection material: <http://thecrossing.cfchayward.org/sermons1009.htm>.
  - c. Commit to coming weekly: Learn & explore together.

### God lovers choose to patiently trust Jesus [Luke 1:5-25]

1. [1:5-7] Zechariah & Elizabeth
  - a. Small town priest; they are old & barren. But [6] they are also lovers of God.
  - b. They patiently trust God, even when they don't get what they want, without bitterness or complaint.
  - c. Application: Are you a lover of God who chooses to patiently trust Jesus, even in hard seasons of life?
2. [1:8-17] Zech wins the lottery of priestly service!
  - a. Pattern: [11] Angel appears; [12] Zech is troubled; [13] angel comforts: "Do not be afraid."
  - b. Answered Prayers: [13] For a child & [17] for the Savior King (Messiah) to come.
  - c. Application: Are you a lover of God who patiently keeps praying? God always answers.
3. [1:18-25] Zech's question: "How shall I know?"
  - a. [18] Zech just had to continue patiently trusting & waiting, but requests a sign: "Prove it, God."
  - b. [20] His request for a sign showed his faithless unbelief, so he gets a sign... in the form of discipline.
  - c. [24-25] Liz is blessed & worships for 5 months, as her "reproach" is taken away by Jesus.
4. Applications:
  - a. Are you a lover of God, like Zech, who needs to turn from your sin to prepare for Jesus?
  - b. Are you a lover of God, like Liz, who needs your shame taken away by Jesus?

## **God lovers humbly serve Jesus [Luke 1:26-38]**

1. [1:26-33] Mary
  - a. Peasant girl; probably illiterate; teenager between ages 12-16 [age of betrothal].
  - b. [28] She is a recipient of God's grace/favor through Jesus, just like everyone else.
  - c. We love God because we are recipients of unearned, undeserved love & grace through Jesus, just like Mary.
  - d. Same pattern as Zech: [28] Angel appears; [29] Mary is troubled; [30] angel comforts: "Do not be afraid."
2. [1:34-38] Mary's question: "How will this be?"
  - a. Not unbelief, but: "I believe that can happen; how's it going to work?"
  - b. [35-37] Through the power of God's Spirit; nothing is impossible with God!
  - c. [38] Mary's legendary response: "Behold, I am the Lord's servant; may it be to me as you have said."
  - d. She had a script for her life, but God gave her a new script, & she responds to humbly serve Jesus.
3. Application: Are you a lover of God who seeks, trusts, follows & serves God's script for your life?

## **Part of a great story**

1. Like Theo, Zech, Liz & Mary, we all have a vital part to play in God's great redemption story for people through Jesus.
  - a. Divine moment of being pursued by Jesus & joining His family.
  - b. Divine prayers answered by Jesus to see, celebrate & testify to His goodness.
  - c. Divine appointments to impact others' lives for Jesus.
  - d. Are you willing to choose to respond in faith to that?
2. What kind of lover of God are? Which resonates with you? What choices do you need to make?
  - a. Like Theophilus, choose to seek the truth about Jesus?
  - b. Like Zechariah & Elizabeth, choose to patiently trust & wait for Jesus to answer a prayer?
  - c. Like Mary, choose to humbly love & serve Jesus?