



the week of  
December 7-12



DAY ONE God's Timing Read Luke 1:13, 18-25

We want things now. More than any other generation in history, we demand instant gratification: high-speed internet, two-day delivery, on-demand entertainment, and fast food. This doesn't set up well to submit ourselves to the hands of a God who works patiently and over many generations.

The story of Zechariah and Elizabeth reminds us of this. The couple waits their entire married life for a child who doesn't come. Then when Zechariah is told he will have a son, he is so old he calls this news into question. Zechariah and Elizabeth learn firsthand that God works in his own timing, which can be difficult to accept.

In the face of suffering, disappointment, and grief we might ask, "Why us? Why this? Why now?" Over time, the journey of trust turns these questions into "What now?" We realize our friend isn't going to apologize, I am not going to make the team, my mom has cancer and the chemo isn't working, I am too far behind and am failing the class.

We begin the important work of developing a faith that believes God is good and can be trusted in the middle of our mess. We learn that God is at work to bring about things we cannot see yet. **Even when God is silent, he is not still.**

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY

As you invite God into your day, copy down these words, *God, I believe you are good, you are wise, and even when you are silent, you are not still.* Begin memorizing it and remind yourself of who God is and that you can trust him in whatever difficult circumstances you find yourself.

DAY TWO Read Luke 1:34-38

Read the passage and then choose one verse/thought related to your words and answer one of these three questions:

1. What does it say about God?
2. What does it say about you?
3. What does it say about others?

As you spend time in the Chair today, think about God's words and their importance and respond appropriately to what you read.

### DAY THREE HOW LONG? Read Psalm 13

A Christian author has said, God “uses the pain of shattered dreams to help us discover our desire for God.”

For many of us, when things are tough and we don't feel like God is listening to us our temptation is to complain and become bitter to the point of resentment toward God. However, in Luke 1, Zechariah and Elizabeth show us that it is possible to honor God through deep disappointment and shattered dreams.

The writer of Psalm 13 knows this well, *How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?* You can feel the writer's confusion, pain, and suffering. Yet, instead of moving away from God our writer asks the hard questions and then closes the prayer with these words, *But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.*

This is the real gift of Christmas. God has been good to each of us in sending his son Jesus to save us. Shattered dreams are opportunities to build and reinforce our trust in God alone. What is your “How long” prayer?

#### IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY

Today, ask God “How long” but close your prayer with, *But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.*

### DAY FOUR Read Luke 1:46-55

Read the passage and then choose one verse/thought related to your words and answer one of these three questions:

- Is there a sin to avoid?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there an application to make?
- Is there something new about God?

As you meet with God today, talk to Him about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it.