

# People Who Were Ready for Christs Coming 1

by Zac Poonen

*Being ready for Christ's coming requires a heart that is pure, a spirit that is at rest in God, and a willingness to be more righteous and holy.*

**Duration:** 58:16

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:3

**Topics:** "Spiritual Readiness", "Holy Spirit"

## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being spiritually prepared for the coming of Christ, focusing on practical readiness rather than theoretical knowledge. It highlights the examples of Mary, Joseph, Zechariah, and Elizabeth who were all filled with the Holy Spirit and righteous in the sight of God, showcasing the significance of faith, righteousness, and the work of the Holy Spirit in being prepared for Christ's coming.

## Transcript

We've been thinking in these days about being ready for the coming of Christ and that's what I want to share on this morning as well. Not in any theoretical way but intensely practical way so that we are actually ready. I probably mentioned this before that when I was a young Christian and I didn't know much about the scriptures.

I used to be in an assembly where our study of the coming of Christ mainly consisted of charts and you know study of what they thought was prophecy about what would happen when.

It is all very fascinating and very intellectually stimulating but it didn't help us any of us in our daily life or in our home life and I saw that when as I grew up and I learned to study the scriptures for myself I found that even though these things are mentioned in scripture it's very difficult to be dogmatic about exactly what means what but one thing we can be sure of is how we ourselves can be ready for the coming of Christ that there's no doubt and whenever Jesus spoke about his own return people are the disciples asked him once when he when is your coming he mentioned certain signs etc but then he always told him about their personal life he said don't be deceived be ready be ready make sure that your hearts are not weighted down and we saw also that there's a lot of similarity

between those who are prepared for the first coming of Christ the second coming of Christ so I wanted to look at as few people in the Old Testament in the beginning of the New Testament who knew and were ready for the first coming of Christ there are certain things we can learn from them which can enable us to check up whether we ourselves are in that category you know that when Jesus came more than 99% of people in Israel who had studied the scriptures who knew that the Messiah would be coming didn't know he had come they just didn't know and these are not we're not talking about non-jewish people who didn't have the scriptures who didn't know about the coming of the Messiah in fact if they had studied scripture carefully not only was it written in Micah chapter 5 that the Messiah would

be born in Bethlehem in Daniel chapter 9 there were details given concerning exactly when the Messiah would be crucified or killed cut off a particular time from the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem from Babylon so they could even know approximately the period when he would be coming but nobody was bothered that's very similar to Christians today we talk a lot about the coming of the Lord but I believe the vast majority of believers are not ready I mean for example if there's one human being one human being whom you have not forgiven on the face of the earth I don't care what type of believer you call yourself you are not ready for the coming of Christ you will not meet him when he comes I'll tell you that right now if you have Mike you're making no effort to give back money that you

have cheated other people off don't fool yourself if you're ready for the coming of Christ you can know all the doctrines and theories and etc you're not ready it's like that with many other things the Bible says you should not let you let the Sun set with anger in your heart do you go to sleep every night with things settled between your husband your wife these are the things that keep us ready for Christ coming so that's what we proclaim well as you know the first person whom who knew that Jesus was gonna come was Mary and the angel appeared to her in Luke chapter 1 and I like the message translation here in Luke chapter 1 and verse 28 an angel appeared to Mary was a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph the Virgin's name was Mary and the Living Bible says Mary God's got a

surprise for you I tell you God is a God of surprises for his people he has pleasant surprises for his children he's a God who's waiting around the corner with a surprise gift Zephaniah 3:17 says he silently plans in love for his children you know how sometimes children silently plan a birthday party for their dad or mom or dad and mom plan some surprise for their children God is like that God's a loving father Mary God's got a surprise for you it's a good surprise it's the most wonderful thing that you can ever think of and I've thought why did God choose Mary in those days I think girls would get married when they're 18 or 19 young girls she wasn't 50 years old or something she was a young girl about 18 or 19 engaged to be married and from a very simple poor family in a village which

didn't even have a good name Nazareth as far as we read in scripture didn't have very good reputation I don't know why because Nathaniel once said can any good thing come out of Nazareth so here was a young girl and remember that the promise of the Messiah was way back in the Old Testament from I mean God told Adam and Eve the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head so I can imagine that nobody knew when exactly he would come but I can imagine that a lot of young girls wish that they would be the mother of the Messiah a lot of young girls oh if I could be the mother of the Messiah how wonderful it would be but there was only one whom God chose now I want to speak especially to young sisters first because Mary was a young sister if you were living in Israel 2,000 years ago you

think you would have been chosen that's the thing you need to ask yourself the values you have which God sees the longing you have in your heart which God sees the way you conduct yourself especially with

men the way you behave in college in office would God pick on you and say that's the type of girl I want to be the mother of my son that's a very good question to ask yourself if I had a daughter that's what I would have told her right from the time she could understand compare yourself with Mary I sometimes fear that Protestants have reacted against the Roman Catholic worship of Mary to the extent that they've just thrown her overboard and feel that it's not good to think too much about her character now we don't worship her but it's very rare to find a 18 19 year old gold girl in

Scripture who could whom God Almighty could pick searching all over Israel with all these people longing to be the mother of the Messiah that God picks on one there's no partiality with God no when he picks on someone to serve him and he doesn't pick on you that could be a reason maybe he's seen something in that person he never saw in you not cleverness I don't think Mary was the cleverest I don't think she came first in her class I don't think she was the prettiest no God wasn't conducting a beauty contest what do you think he looked for in Mary you know the Bible tells us if you compare Scripture with Scripture the Bible says there's something in women that God looks for which is very precious in his eyes you read it in 1 Peter and chapter 3 1 Peter chapter 3 it speaks of an eternal

imperishable quality of course it's a great quality to be found in men too but especially in women where he's talking about women in 1 Peter chapter 3 he says don't let your verse 3 1 Peter 3 verse 3 don't let your adornment be external you know with your hair and jewelry and dress you know hair and jewelry and dress are very important for a lot of women it was true 2,000 years ago it's true today but the Bible says don't let your adornment be that primarily but an inner thing your adornment should be hidden he's not saying that you shouldn't comb your hair or you shouldn't wear any you know expensive clothes I think most of us have clothes that are far more expensive than what poor people in the villages have and we're not here to be legalists to make rules on that but I would say this

that do you place more value on the state of your spirit than on your clothes then you're okay you know when you are careful about the selection of your shoes and your clothes and careful about the way you make yourself attractive with your hair and all that's okay but are you as careful with your spirit do you spend as much time before God as you do with making up your face it's a pretty searching question and that will reveal to you what your true values are nobody knows that but you then you ask yourself you think Mary was spending so much time more time I'm sure that Mary was neatly dressed I'm sure she combed her hair she wore decent clothes and etc but I think God was more important to her than all these things and then compare yourself and ask yourself dear young sisters are you

ready for the coming of the Lord he was one of those young women was ready God saw there's the type of young girls God wants in the last days I believe all women married and unmarried must be neatly dressed it must be attractive and because God's made us to be like that I don't believe in being shabby or ugly or anything that helps you in that is okay but make your inner adornment more important then ask yourself are you more like Mary or are you more like one of these models that appear on television or in the newspaper advertisements who do you seek to fashion yourself after you can be religious you may be very good at singing and there are people who are choir leaders women in different churches who have a lot of prominence I don't think my God would have chosen any of them but

here it says 1 Peter 3 the imperishable quality verse 4 of a gentle and quiet spirit which is precious in the sight of God I believe that's what Mary had it's always been precious in God's eyes throughout the centuries I think when he made Eve he wanted Eve to have this precious quality of a gentle and quiet spirit quiet spirit doesn't mean she never talks there's some people some women who don't talk who don't have

a gentle spirit or a quiet spirit they're pretty agitated they just have the ability they're good at yoga to keep it all in sight doesn't mean a thing I'm talking about a spirit that's at rest in God a meek and a quiet spirit I would urge you to value that God has got many pleasant surprises for such young girls you'll be ready for the coming of Christ and you know she had

this she was given a promise which of course no other woman can ever had yet that she was going to be the mother of Messiah and she was a simple girl she said how can this be I mean I've never known any man she kept herself pure and said how can this be see what the Holy what the angel said the Holy Spirit will come upon you dear young girls seek for that we can't have Christ you can't have Christ physically born through you that's already done but you can Christ can be born in you in your character Paul when writing to the Galatians he said I'm like a mother in travail until Christ is formed in you so it's right for us to use that expression spiritually as well that like the body of Jesus was physically formed in Mary's womb that the character of Christ can be formed in your heart how

will that be it's not gonna be by your determination or your gritting your teeth it's gonna be when the Holy Spirit you allow the Holy Spirit to come and fill you take control of you completely and you say to him Lord get rid of for my life everything that displeases you anything in my life that's more valuable than Jesus I lay on the altar yeah God can do amazing things he wants young girls in these days to be ready for his coming and when he has found such young girls very often if it is his will he will also have some young man ready to marry he had Joseph ready to marry Joe to Mary she was he wasn't a very rich man or a clever man he was just a carpenter I mean socially economically equal to Mary and that's usually how God does it God usually unites people who are more or less on the

same level economically educationally socially etc but the thing I appreciate about Joseph I'm the thing that strikes me isn't that's the second person we see was read who knew about the coming of Christ and we looked at Mary let's look at Joseph in Matthew chapter 1 it says here the first thing mentioned about Joseph in the New Testament is I like that the Holy Spirit says verse 19 he was a righteous man Matthew 1 19 he was a righteous man now I want to speak to young men that's what must be said about you you want to be ready for the coming of the Lord and the Holy Spirit can look at you and say not you're a clever man you want that reputation you want a reputation in the church that you're a clever man you want a reputation that you're a great preacher Joseph I don't think he could

preach better than most of us here many of you are better preachers than Joseph and if you know more of the scriptures than Joseph but he was a righteous man the Holy Spirit says first person mentioned in the New Testament is a righteous man long for that blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness they will be satisfied they'll be filled and if you're not more righteous and more holy today the reason is that God saw you didn't desire to be more righteous or holy all of us are going to be as holy as we want to be if I'm not more holy today it's because God seen that I'm not so desirous to be more holy every one of us will acquire as much holiness as we passionately desire because of God's Word blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness they'll be filled you

know you go to the petrol station petrol bunk and ask them to give you five liters they'll give you five liters you want to pay only for that you go and say I want 20 liters okay they put your 20 liters in your car somebody else says go and fill her up he gets filled up it's like that you get from God you say Lord I'm willing to pay the price only for five liters okay you get five liters that's all you have and somebody else says Lord fill me up I'm willing to pay the price I know it's gonna cost a lot but I'm willing to pay the price Jesus said sit down and count the cost blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness they'll

be filled I'll tell you this that's why I say we're all filled according to how much we're willing to pay the price you're not more righteous you don't

overcome certain sins in your life still it's because deep down you're not willing to pay the price to overcome that anger or that lust or something else Joseph was a righteous man according to his level in the Old Covenant now I want you to notice the context in which he says he was a righteous man it says here in verse 18 that before he was married to Mary he discovered that she was pregnant I don't know how he discovered it maybe just observed and after a few months after the baby was beginning to be formed in her womb he discovered him this girl I'm engaged to is pregnant now you know whenever we hear or observe according to our understanding we use when we see something or hear something we all have a tendency like the children of Adam to judge according to what our eyes have seen

and our ears have heard some it is worse than that we go by hearsay some information that came secondhand or third hand or 50th hand we heard it and usually twisted and warped by the time that information came to us we believe it and if we are stupid people we will be the 51st person to go and tell somebody else that that's how a lot of believers are but some others are a little better they say I heard it with my own ears or I saw it with my own eyes you know Jesus was even better than that says about Jesus in Isaiah chapter 11 a wonderful verse which I would recommend all of you who want to follow Jesus seek to follow I'm not saying this as one who has never made a mistake in this area I've made numerous mistakes in this area but I've learned a lesson Isaiah 11 and speaking about the

prophecy of the Spirit resting upon Jesus in verse 2 and he would fear the Lord and one of the marks of the fear of the Lord in verse 3 how do we know whether you reverence God or not here's a good test he would never judge by what his eyes saw or make a decision by what his ears heard but with righteousness he would judge we can judge by what our eyes see and our ears hear that's one way of judgment the whole race of Adam does it like that I said some are worse than that they go by hearsay but Jesus would judge with righteousness and say yeah I saw that I heard it but it may not be exactly as I saw it may not be exactly as I heard there may be another reason which I don't understand you know that our eyes deceive us you know that our senses are deceiving us all the time we don't even

realize it have you heard the story of the two little boys who were watching the sunset and one boy the older boy the clever one 10 years old they're usually quite clever when they're 10 said to his four-year-old younger brother see the Sun was there in the east now it's here in the West the Sun has moved and the little boy said no you remember what daddy told us that the Sun doesn't move it's the earth under our feet that's moving and the older boy the clever one the ten-year-old he said no I saw with my own eyes the Sun is here now and I never felt the earth moving under my feet I believe what I see the four-year-old said I believe daddy you know who was wise listen to your heavenly father he's always right don't judge by what your eyes see or your ears hear but Joseph he was not in

that level yet the Holy Spirit hadn't come upon him like it comes upon us so you couldn't blame him for judging this girl is pregnant it's only one way that women get pregnant from the time of Eve that's when they have had a relationship with a man but it's an absolute scandal you know in the Old Testament I don't know whether you know the rule the law was if a woman was engaged becomes pregnant she has to be killed that was a law the law of Moses that's the way God kept Israel pure in those days she has to be killed you got to bring her to the elders talk about her Joseph didn't do that he had something of the Spirit of Christ who when a woman caught in adultery was brought before her him he said no don't whoever's without sin throw the first stone here was a woman whom Joseph thought

had been in adultery brought before him and he wouldn't throw a stone that's why he's called a righteous man when you don't throw stones at people being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her what's the mark of a righteous man first mention of a righteous man in the New Testament what is the mark of that man he does not want to disgrace other people he does not want to expose other people's sins love covers a multitude of sins Joseph did it before that verse was written in 1 Peter 4 wonderful and he wanted to send her away secretly he said well okay maybe she slipped up remember he's got no idea this is the Holy Spirit he's okay maybe she slipped up I always knew she was a good girl I've known her for some time and she's really God-fearing I don't know maybe she was raped or I

don't know what happened but I don't want to disgrace her I want to cover up the whole thing and send her away secretly so that nobody knows about it I don't feel it's right for me to marry her but maybe somebody else can it's okay maybe the man who had a relationship with her maybe she can go and marry him because this is not my child you see the mark of the first righteous man mentioned in the New Testament and that's a good thing for all of us men and women to ask ourselves is this how we behave when we hear what we think is the truth about somebody else something evil you know we have a nature that would rather spread bad things we hear about other people than good things we hear about other people that's part of Adam's nature Jesus has come to change all that he's come to change all

that so that we rather speak about the good things that we hear about other people what does it mean to turn the world upside down like we read in Acts 17 Christ has come to turn actually the world right side up the world is already upside down right side up means that we behave the opposite way that everybody else behaves everybody else is going to spread bad stories of others we're going to spread good stories about others and of course as we long as we live in this world we will hear a lot of evil things we will see a lot of evil things and we just let it die with us it's good to be like that you know in my position as an elder in a church there are many many people who come and told me things not even my wife will hear about it not even my fellow elders will hear about it it dies with

me and not only dies with me I asked the Lord Lord I know I can't forget this thing I heard by tomorrow but in a couple of years can you take it out of my memory as well or let it sink so low in my memory that I won't even know what this person came and told me I won't remember it and many a time I found God's answered my prayer somebody comes and tells me brother Zach you remember I told you that two or three years ago I said did you I don't even remember it I said Lord you answered my prayer you know why because if I don't keep my mind pure I won't be able to receive God's Word and that's so important for me because the Bible says man shall live by the Word of God and in my position it's also important for other people to whom I have to give that word so I don't know about you I've got

to keep my mind absolutely pure and I'll tell you this keep your mind pure too you can bless the people who come to your home you can bless the people you talk to in your office with a word from God the word in season this is how we're going to be ready for the coming of Christ we're talking about people who knew about the first coming of Christ we're people talking about people to whom God speaks and reveals himself we're talking about people to whom for whom God has pleasant surprises around the corner I want to be one of those he was a righteous man he didn't want to disgrace her will you pray a little prayer I'm not asking you to take a decision you can take a decision you've taken many decisions in your life and which you have never kept resolutions etc it's much better instead of

taking a decision to pray a prayer Lord help me never to disgrace anybody by my words by my gossip if I gossip something let it be something good about someone I've spent enough years gossiping bad things

now let me put something on the other side of the balance which is so heavily tilted in the wrong direction right now let me put some good gossip on the other side of the balance so that I can make up for all the years where I have been spreading bad things not wanting to disgrace her and trying to hide up hide the whole thing God wants to reveal reveal its let him do it that's been my position even concerning people whom we've had to discipline in this church in the past it's fortunately it's only been two or three in 33 years but I wouldn't tell people about the reason fully even when

they have accused me of being hard towards them I told them I'm a Christian and I will not disgrace you I will not hurt your family no I'm a Christian even if you don't behave like a Christian I'm still a Christian so I tell you God's blessed me because God treats us as we treat other people please remember this God will treat you the way you treat others and God's been very good to me I want to be very good to others he is hidden my sins I want to hide the sins of others hasn't he hidden your sins my brother sister things that you did in your life which you'd be ashamed if other people knew about how good God is that he's hidden it all be like that to others yeah and to such a person it says the angel appeared in a dream the Lord of the angel of the Lord verse 20 appeared in a dream and

said Joseph don't be afraid because it's not as you thought this is of the Holy Spirit I know it's never happened before it was the first time in history it's happened but it has happened the most unbelievable thing your Joseph had to believe it because God told him now wasn't it good that he didn't put her away wasn't it good that he thought about it that he didn't immediately act how many mistakes we have made when we think something immediately go and do something instead of waiting it's a good thing Joseph waited it's it says here that you know this is something the Lord spoke to me once when I was reading Matthew chapter 5 chapter 1 I think it's the Living Bible or somewhere where it says or even in the message Bible it says he was trying to he was trying to figure a way out it

says verse 20 he had considered this he was trying to figure out now how shall I cover this whole thing up and how shall I put away Mary with least exposure with zero exposure and he was he was thinking about that and thinking about that and thinking about doing good to Mary and went to sleep and he had a dream and what the Lord spoke to me is in those last moments before you go to bed what are you thinking about think about doing good to somebody then you'll have some dreams like Joseph had a good dream I really spoke to my heart because I know in my past years how my foolishness I'm just like you being a child of Adam with a flesh like anybody else's many a time we lie down in bed and before we go to bed we're not thinking good thoughts about somebody else maybe somebody harmed you

don't you think Joseph thought Mary had harmed him cheated on him what is worse than a woman engaged to be married cheating on your fiancée with another man and here was this man before the day of Pentecost a man who didn't know the New Testament or any of those things thinking as he went to bed how can I cover this whole thing up he was a righteous man and such and he had a dream a dream where God revealed something to him and I said Lord I want to have dreams at night dreams of the kingdom dreams where you speak to me but then if you want dreams like that before you go to bed you have to think good thoughts about others take that as a word from the Lord and if you don't believe me try it out do some homework and see if it works I tell you it does what do you gain what have you gained in

all these years of dreaming when you ever go gone to bed thinking bad thoughts about others you haven't gained much have you you got only one life brother sister coming of the Lord is near don't waste it let's be ready for the coming of Christ this is a man to whom God revealed Jesus is going to be born the Messiah you've been waiting for all your life Joseph he's going to be born and he's going to be born to the woman

whom you chose to be your wife why did God choose Joseph why does God choose young people today he sees something in them of uprightness of goodness and righteousness as a result of the whole in other words they've responded to the Holy Spirit not in their unconverted state and the unconverted state we're all evil we could be as bad as the thief on the cross it doesn't

matter we could be like prostitute like some prostitutes were converted we could be evil in so many ways but we're cleansed and forgiven and God says I don't remember your past anymore but after we are cleansed and after we have given ourselves to Christ how is it then God's looking for young people who are righteous who treat other people the way God has treated them who are kind and gracious and merciful to others and when they go to bed at night they're thinking of how to do some good to somebody else what a blessed way to live imagine if from today onwards every single night you went to bed thinking about how to do some good to someone I tell you between now and the end of this year you'll have some pretty interesting dreams mark my word you'll hear God speaking to you he will and it

won't be like the dreams that a lot of these false prophets go around saying it'll be God himself you know so that's the second person is a lot we can think about it but again you find a mention here of the Holy Spirit that's the point with a number of these cases of people who are ready for the coming of the Lord you see a reference to the Holy Spirit that's what I want you to notice Mary the Holy Spirit will come upon you here the angel tells Joseph that this which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit and he's going to save his people from their sins the first promise in the New Testament was given to Joseph the first promise in the Bible that somebody would not only forgive your sin but give you victory over sin was given to a young man Joseph who treated other people the way God

treated him you can hear that word from God Jesus can save you from your sins when you are like Joseph and it says here when he got up verse 24 he just did as the Lord commanded him he said that's fine I won't ask any more questions Lord I'm not even going to ask Mary how did this all happen I want to check up no need to check up no need to check up anything he got up and said Mary we're gonna get married I accept you isn't that wonderful now another example I want to show you now is of those who were informed about the coming of the Lord number three is Zachariah and Elizabeth in Luke chapter 1 again we read about these you see these they were informed of the that they would have a child and that would be John the Baptist who would be the forerunner for the coming of the Messiah so they

knew the coming of the Messiah is pretty soon and it says here that in Luke chapter 1 there was this priest verse 5 named Zacharias and her and his wife was Elizabeth and again see what it says about them they were both righteous in the sight of God these are the people to whom God spoke and prepared them for the first coming of Christ and we can learn something from them these are the type of people whom God will have on earth will be ready and alert for the second coming of Christ they were righteous not in the sight of men oh that's worthless not even righteous in their own eyes the Pharisees were like that it says here this wonderful phrase they were righteous in the sight of God I want that to be said about me at a much higher level than Zacharias because he was under the Old

Covenant righteous in the sight of God Almighty God my father please certify that about me pray that prayer blessed are those who hunger and thirst and they'll be walking blamelessly that doesn't mean they were perfect blameless means they were not consciously making a mistake and there according to the level of light they have which is much less than what we have according to their level of light they got a hundred percent it's like a student in first standard gets a hundred percent in mathematics but his knowledge of mathematics is less than 1% of all the knowledge of mathematics in the world but he's got a

hundred percent according to his understanding he can't get a hundred and one he got a hundred out of a hundred and according to the light that Zachariah and Elizabeth had they got a

hundred out of hundred I want to tell you the good news that God does not ask you to live according to the light somebody else has you don't even have to live according to the light your wife or husband have you certainly don't have to live according light I have you have to live according to the light of your own conscience and you'll be declared blameless and that's I'll tell you when I've understood this truth it's helped me stop me from judging other people I sometimes sees a brother or sister doing something which my conscience will not permit me to do or say I say I don't judge them because I may be in sixth standard and he may be in the first standard and if a first standard student if a sixth standard student goes to a first standard student and asks that first standard student

why don't you know anything about geometry who is the fool tell me definitely the sixth standard student but that is the foolishness of many believers who expect their wives to live according to their conscience their own conscience who expect their husbands you must live according to my conscience do you know the amount of conflict particularly religious minded people you must pray as much as I pray you must read the Bible as much as I read the Bible you must get up and I read and get up you must not do this you must not do that and these people think they are holy they are not holy they are humbugs religious hypocrites and Pharisees who mess up their marriages because they think if I'm in this standard you must be in that standard and I'll tell you another thing if you got light on

something and the other person doesn't have light don't think you're superior that person in every area you may be in sixth standard in physics and the kindergarten in mathematics that's how it is in the kingdom of God is something like that you get light in one area and you don't have light in another area and that person whom you despise may be in the first standard in physics but maybe maybe in the tenth standard in mathematics if you understand the illustration that there are things which you know all of this is not just one subject there are different areas some people may have a little more light in one area a lot of people are very who've got a lot of light in the area of money but not very don't have much light in the area of their speech and vice versa so growth is not equal in

all areas blameless means according to your conscience don't condemn allow yourself to be condemned by somebody trying to make you live according to their conscience in any area you go by your conscience and don't judge other people by your conscience he was blameless it's a wonderful we need to understand this word blameless blameless is different from perfect perfect means you know everything about mathematics in the world no you're not nobody's perfect blameless means according to your level your class you're in they walked in the commandments and requirements of the Lord they were obedient but they had no child because they were both advanced in years now here we saw about young men like Joseph and Mary now here we see about an old man how do you think it says in verse 7 they were

advanced in years how old do you think they were I'm nearly 69 do you think I'm advanced in years you young people tell me what do I talk to you no I'm pretty young I think these folks must have been probably 80 or more they were advanced in years 80 year old people 85 walking with God blameless upright and being told about the coming of Christ God loves old people he loves young people he wants all of them in his kingdom he wants them all to be ready for his coming I like this some of the first people who knew about the coming of Christ was one young couple and one older couple isn't that great it's no partiality with God Joseph and Mary and Zachariah and Elizabeth wonderful but there was something good about them they were righteous according to their understanding I'm sure Zacharias

had more understanding on righteousness than Mary and Joseph so he was he had to be at a higher standard have you ever wondered why question God told Zacharias you're gonna have a son and he said how can this be God told Mary you're gonna have a son and she said how can this be Zacharias was struck dumb Mary was not struck dumb why what's the answer is there partiality with God no to whom more is given more is required if you are in the tenth standard God expects more from you than if you're in the first standard so two brothers do the same thing and God punishes one more severely than the other why because that person's been a believer for 50 years this person's converted yesterday they both did the same thing it's not the same thing if an elder brother certainly in our churches if he

falls into adultery I would never allow him to be an elder for the rest of his life he can be forgiven come back break bread but never again in eldership no not in his whole life but if an ordinary young brother falls into adultery after being born again being part of a church one day he can grow up to be an elder brother why learn from Zachariah and Mary they both said did the same made the same mistake one was struck dumb and the other was not remember this my brother sister the more you know of God the greater your responsibility that's why we have to take it seriously Elizabeth what do we see about Elizabeth it says here even about Zechariah I want to say this later on as you read in chapter 1 verse 67 he was filled with the Holy Spirit and he prophesied again you see this emphasis on

the Holy Spirit in relation to those people who were ready for the coming of the Lord Mary the Holy Spirit Joseph the Holy Spirit Zachariah the Holy Spirit now let's look at Elizabeth it says when the angel came to Mary and told her and the Holy Spirit will come upon you and you'll have a child he she he gave her a little help also to have faith and that help was verse 36 of Luke 1 said behold your relative that was her auntie Elizabeth was her auntie your aunt Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age and she's already six months pregnant so you see nothing is impossible with God then Mary had said Elizabeth my aunt's pregnant at the age of 90 that's amazing there was another reason I believe why Zachariah was struck dumb because what was he what was prophesied to Elizabeth that

already happened once before there was another woman who was 90 years old who had a child and that was Sarah and Zachariah knew it so there was no need to ask how when this be whereas when Mary said I'm a virgin how can it be it had never happened before so there is a difference but coming to Elizabeth it says Mary got up when she did the Holy Spirit had spoken to her and she went immediately verse 39 Luke 139 and came to the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth and Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting and little John the Baptist leaped in Elizabeth's womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit you see again those people were all filled with the Holy Spirit that's the way to be ready for Christ coming the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit Mary Joseph

Zachariah Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit and she cried out with a loud voice and said blessed are you among women blessed is the fruit of your womb how has it happened that the mother of my Lord would come to me and the sound of your greeting came in my ears the baby leaped in my womb and blessed are you Mary for believing because that'll be fulfilled in you you know something I like about this old 90 year old lady she can look at a young sister 19 years old and respect her admire her how many of you older sisters talk to young sisters like this respecting them admiring them if they're godly I tell you most old sisters I've met are experts they are here to set right all the young sister you mustn't do this you mustn't do that you mustn't do that and if Elizabeth was like you as

soon as Mary came she'd have had a list of instructions for Mary but Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and that's the difference between you and her she could appreciate that God had done something in

a young sister and she could encourage her and I want to give a little bit of advice to all of you who think you are experts older sisters and older brothers encourage these younger people and if they've got something better than you don't you think Mary got something better than Elizabeth Elizabeth was only getting John the Baptist Mary was getting Jesus and if you find some of those younger sisters have a better anointing and a greater something more blessed than you have just rejoice can you leap for joy when you see some young sister developing or are you there to with your

shrewd eyes and to find fault with this and find fault with that and her clothes and her shoes and this and that and the other thing shame on you you're not ready for the coming of the Lord I'll tell you that you know what you need older sisters to be filled with the Holy Spirit older brothers to me I like that about Elizabeth oh he says I'm excited something good's happened to you are you excited when something good happens to somebody something better than what happened to you are you excited it's a mark of godly people they rejoice when God does something good for other people why can't we all be like this these are written in Scripture these are the people to whom God revealed Jesus is going to be born I want to be one of those who want to be who's ready for the coming of Christ and I

tell you I learn a lot from the examples of Mary Joseph Zechariah and Elizabeth many many many things in relation to God revealing the coming of Christ not everybody in Israel knew that the Messiah would be born why did God pick one here one there one here one there one young man one young woman one old man one old woman God cannot be fooled he's not fooled by religious language he's not fooled by loud singing he's not fooled by long prayers he's not fooled by fasting he's not fooled by any of those things he sees our heart he knows us through and through do you want to be a man of God in these last days do you want to be a woman of God doesn't matter your age you may be 90 or 19 does make a difference with God you can be ready for Christ's coming what a need there is in our time to have

a large heart towards young people and to tell them what God has spoken to you Luke 1 45 will be fulfilled be a brother sister who can give faith to those around you to speak a firm word to people what God said to you it'll be fulfilled sister don't let anybody say anything else don't worry about what people say Mary but God has said it'll be fulfilled can you imagine the encouragement Mary got she got so encouraged that she began to prophesy a little later wonderful I like that well there's a lot more you can meditate on yourself scripture is such a deep well if you stop your gossip and stop spending your time thinking about all the evils of others maybe you'll get some revelation in scripture it's far more profitable and you'll be ready for Christ's coming it's bar heads and prayer

Heavenly Father help us to learn lessons that transform our lives and make us ready for your coming we humbly ask in Jesus name Amen

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