



Near and Now

When I doubt my calling – Zechariah
By Rev. Ollie Bergh

Warm-up Question
To what are you called?



Photo by Rafik Wahba on [Unsplash](#)

Discussion Questions

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

How will I know that it is so?

Read [Luke 1:5-25](#)

Bible Story Reflection

God uses mediators to tell us about our callings. For Zechariah, he had the angel Gabriel, who stood in the presence of the Lord. But Zechariah had many other mediators, too: he had his lineage, which made him a priest in the order of Abijah; he had the lot, which showed him that he was chosen to offer the incense that day; he also had the community, offering their prayers as he did what he was called to do in that moment. Gabriel's appearance was God making it as clear as possible for Zechariah what his calling was to be: a father to the great forerunner of the Lord.

Zechariah had all these things, yet he still doubted his calling. Zechariah wanted more words, but God had already spoken the Word that needed to be said: your prayers have been answered. No other words are necessary. Maybe that is why God muted Zechariah—it's as if God said, "My Word is enough, Zechariah! Be still and know for a while."

The ministry gives us a lot of little words to mediate our calling to us. We have our internal call, whatever it may be; another verifying that call; spiritual conversation partners; call committees; bishops; ordinations; letters of call; affirmations of vocation; cards and letters from other Christians; and so much more. Yet we still doubt our calls, don't we? It's not always hard to hear what God has to say, but it is hard to accept.

Whoever has ears, let them hear. God has called us with big words and little ones. Whatever word God has given you, it is your task to listen to it. God's word is sufficient—are your ears?

Discussion Questions

1. How did God call you to your vocation?
2. How do you wish God called you to your vocation?
3. Think back to when your calling felt its strongest, whatever that may be. What little things were present to help you hear that calling?
4. When do you hear God best?
5. What do you need to stop doing to hear God better?
6. Why do you think God silenced Zechariah?
7. What do you think would've satisfied Zechariah's doubt?
8. Who are important people that helped you in your call process?

Activity Suggestions

With your dominant hand, write down what you want to say to God. Flip the paper over. With your non-dominant hand, write how you think God would respond.

With a group of people, take turns complimenting each other. Nobody is allowed to respond in any way, shape, or form. If anyone does, everyone has to shout, “Come, Gabriel!”

Using a [random object generator](#) on the internet, write down 10 ways in which the object is your absolute favorite thing in the world—even if it isn’t.

Prayer Concerns

Those with speaking or hearing loss; angels; incense manufacturers

Closing Prayer

Sometimes your call seems too good to be true, O God. Give me a discerning heart to know and understand what is truly your call. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.

