

Advent 2011

Intro: Thursday there was a scene played out millions of times across the Country. Someone was at the window waiting... Every time a car came down the street, every time phone rang, every time someone knocked on door, there was anticipation Someone was EXPECTANTLY waiting...looking forward to welcoming someone into their presence...into their home Finally, it happened: A mom, or a dad, or a brother, or a sister...someone special arrived. Hugging, Laughing, Kissing

That is the story we are looking at today in Luke 2. Two people are expectantly waiting, anticipating, looking forward to But they were waiting for someone much different. There was a spiritual anticipation...spiritual expectation... They were waiting for the Promise of God in their life to be fulfilled...and they had been waiting for a LONG time!

Luke 2:21-40 Pg 725

Continue to think with you about the topic we have been talking about: JWAR: Sharing Jesus in a Natural, Normal Way

- Choice of the Heart: Being Willing to reach out to People in Need
- Developing A Heart Like Jesus: Going, Seeing, Being Moved with Compassion
- Opening Others Heart to Jesus: Importance of Seeing and Hearing the Good News
- Making Room In Your Heart: Allowing God to ReSchedule/ReCalculate Your Day

What Do Those Look Like In Everyday Life? How Do We Apply Them?

Next 4 Weeks I want To Help You Explore That...

Christmas/Holiday Season is a Time When People are Spiritually Open

Look Today At Two People: People In Waiting

People Waiting For God to Do SOMETHING in Their Life...Wondering If He will

ALONG THE WAY OPEN OUR EYES TO PEOPLE IN OUR LIFE THAT ARE WAITING FOR GOD AS WELL

1. Simeon Was Waiting For the "Consolation of Israel." Vs 25

~A Title for the Messiah

~One of many different titles (Lamb of God, Holy One of Israel, Lion Of Judah, Prince of Peace)
Different titles focused on different aspects of His ministry and work

~Remember the Culture

- >Strict religion which no one could live up to
- >Hundreds of laws, and rules and regulations that became an iron collar of slavery
- >Religious leaders redefining everything for the benefit...detriment of the everyday man
- >What was intended as a blessing The Law Had become an incredible burden

~Simeon: A man that was doing all he could to fulfill the Law...KNEW the burden

- >Righteous: Good character, lived correctly
- >Devout: Religiously careful to keep all the Laws
- >Waiting: Looking forward with anticipation to welcoming into His Presence!!!!

~Consolation of Israel Focused on the Shepherding Work/Caring Work of Christ

- >Comfort, Encouragement, Solace
- >Help and Hope for those that were helpless and hopeless
- >Reminds of Harassed and Helpless, like Sheep w/o a shepherd

~He Knew the Promise: Isaiah 42:1-9

Simeon's hope was for the Messiah to come and lift the heavy burden of religion gone wrong from the hearts of the people, and bring word of a God that TRULY loved and cared for them. He believed when the Consolation of Israel arrived he would meet the deepest needs of their heart and heal the deepest wounds of their soul. He knew when that happened his Hope would be realized...not disappointed. When he held Christ, it was.

2. Anna Was Waiting for the "Redemption of Jerusalem." Vs 38

~Another Title for the Messiah

~Focused on the Redemptive Work of the Messiah

- >Redeem: to buy something back, to pay a price, to purchase and set free

~Spiritual Reality:

- >God is Holy >We are not >Separated from Him
- >All of history tells our story >We could not work our way to Him
- >The Messiah will come, do for us what we cannot do for ourself

~Psalm 130

Anna's hope was for the Messiah to come and redeem His people. She knew her people were in spiritual bondage, sold as slaves to sin...and yet her hope was for something better. She anticipated the day when God Himself would pay the price for the sin of the people, and relationship would be restored. When she held Christ she knew that day had come.

3. Many People Today are STILL Waiting!

~People waiting for Spiritual Encouragement and Comfort

- >Hurt by Others
- >Hurt by Church
- >Hurt by Circumstances
- >They Think Hurt by God!!

~People waiting for Redemption

- >Feel alienated from God...because they are...sin separates them
- >Don't know God desires a relationship with them
- >Don't believe there is any way back from where they are into connection with Him
- >Feel spiritually lost, alone, w/o hope

They need SOMEONE to do for them what Mary and Joseph did for Simeon and Anna...

The need us to bring Christ to THEM...because they aren't going to come to us!

They have no idea where to even start looking

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| • Choice of the Heart: | Being Willing to reach out to People in Need |
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CONCL: This Christmas season I want to challenge you to pray a prayer with me, make yourself available

God,

I know there are people in waiting all around me,

I ask you to open my eyes so I can see them.

I ask you to give me the courage to go...and LOOK for them.

I ask you to give me the words to speak, and the actions to take that make your love clear to them

God, give me the courage to walk across the room...to people that are waiting.

With all my heart I say to you Here I am, send me.

And God when you speak...I will be quick to hear...and quick to go.

Amen