

12-31-23

Sermon- Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

Scripture- Luke 2:22-40, CTW Ps 148:1-5

Hymns- 173, 182, 193

Theme- The story of Simeon shows that with patience and perseverance, we will all be brought to understand the nature of this greatest gift! Through Simeon we are given the gift of wisdom.

I. Introduction:

Well, it is the Sunday after Christmas. Many pastors have a hard time figuring out what to preach this particular Sunday. Often, we'll hear a year-end message – a summary of all that God has done, and how we should be thankful.

Other times, we'll hear a year-beginning message – looking forward to the following year, and how we should have faith and hope. And I think both of these ideas are very good, and I've done both of them before, but this year I feel led in a different direction.

Last week both on Sunday and at our Christmas Eve service, we read parts of the Christmas story. And now, I want to continue it. I'd like to take a week or two to move on to the "what happened next" in the life of Jesus. And so we're going to examine some texts and truths that may not be traditionally associated with the Christmas message, but happened immediately following it.

A. This week, we're going to talk about when Jesus was still a baby.

We don't know too much about Jesus' childhood. There are only a small number of passages. Today, we're going to examine one of these passages.

And so with our focus on Christ, I'd like to also examine this very old man. We have a very young Christ – by Jewish customs, only 40 days old, and Simeon, who we have inferred is near the end of his life. 2 different generations, and a remarkable meeting orchestrated by the Holy Spirit.

And so the theme of our sermon today is "Waiting." Do you ever have to wait?

II. Simeon – He knew how to wait

He was a righteous, devout man, blessed by the Holy Spirit. Yes my friends, even good people wait. And the righteous and devout know that the world doesn't revolve around them – that we waiting upon the Lord, and upon others. There often is no "front of the line" on earth.

A. Righteous people know what to wait upon. Face it, if we think we call the shots, or even proclaim that God is in control with our lips and actually try to be in control of our own life, we'll find that it is right up there with waiting in traffic or the doctor's office, or worse.

Folks, we're not in control of this life. But the righteous person should already know that. Simeon didn't know exactly what He was waiting on. He didn't know when it would arrive. He didn't know the answer that his waiting depended on.

But he was a righteous man, and He knew how to wait upon the Lord. To Let God be in control.

Waiting is a topic often talked about in the Bible. Let me just read a few verses of the many that mention it -

Lamentations 3:25

The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.

Isaiah 40:31

but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Micah 7:7

But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

B. And so, from this passage, we might ask the question: "what are you waiting on? What are you waiting for? Who are you waiting for?"

Many of us live from event to event, from occasion to occasion in this life, from happiness to happiness, or as we might say Biblically, from fountain to fountain. But what we discover is that all of the fountains run dry.

There is only one which will give you wisdom And that was where Simeon was! Simeon was a righteous devout man who was waiting on God. So let's continue talking about His waiting some more...

III. Simeon – He knew what He was waiting on

So we don't know much about Simeon – this particular fellow is only mentioned here in this Scripture. We don't know how much prophecy He knew about. We don't know if He had any preconceptions about what this Messiah would look like.

All we knew was that this man had the Holy Spirit in his life, was righteous and devout, and was likely an older person. We've already established that this is a guy who knew how to wait.

So, what was he waiting upon? Who was he waiting for? Let's talk about both...

A. First, what he was waiting for- He was waiting for the consolation of Israel. We're talking about the new

covenant, the messianic age, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. We're talking about the great event that was happening that hopes could be reborn, that sin could be forgiven, that souls could be atoned for. These are some of the greatest times to be alive in the history of mankind. It was worth waiting for!

For Luke and for his readers, it might've been easy to assume that this would involve being delivered from their enemies- obviously, **Rome**. It might would mean getting a King from David's line who would free Israel and rule them again. It would've been easy for Simeon, and for Luke, and for Israel, to get a picture in their heads of what they ought to wait for, instead of what God had promised.

B. Do we ever do that? Do we get it in our heads what we ought to wait FOR, instead of simply waiting UPON God's promises? What do some believe we should wait for? A good family, A nice job, A stable career, A financially solid retirement. And praise the Lord, some of us receive those things.

But those things aren't necessarily Gods will for everyone, and they are certainly not all that God **would** accomplish in my life and in yours. Sometimes waiting upon God isn't peaceful. It requires much trust and faith and, **yes**, strength, as we read in Isaiah, that those who waited would renew their strength.

Simeon was waiting for the amazing... some would say the impossible. His goal was to follow God and **to see the Christ**.

IV. Simeon knew who He was waiting For!

A. He was waiting for the Christ. WHAT he was waiting for was fulfilled by the WHO, that he was waiting for.

It is important to note this. We get a lot of what's and when's that we want to wait upon. They are usually tied together. "When" I get older, I'd like to travel the world – that's a what...

and a when! Some Christians make lots of empty promises and follow those up with a life full of excuses.

A. Simeon understood that to see the what... He'd have to meet the "who." That waiting for the consolation of Israel was only possible through the Christ. Seeing Israel achieve all of those things that was promised for in the Old Testament wasn't the goal of Simeon. Meeting Jesus was. Do you see?

None of the goals in our lives hold any weight at all if we haven't met the Lord Jesus Christ. It all starts with Him. The Holy Spirit led Simeon not to a time in which Rome was conquered, not to a time in which Israel had a General-King upon a white horse, but to a time in which He met a **lamb of God**, even still as a baby. **(the lamb of God that would taketh away the sins of the world!)**

Let me state it plainly – none of my goals matter, none of your goals matter – they are all worthless, unless we first meet Jesus. He is the one worth waiting for.

In our lifetime, according to current statistics, we may spend a year or 2 in a bathroom or 4 years in a vehicle or 10 years at a job, but a life lived waiting for Christ is a life in which the waiting has been worth it!

B. Simeon was anticipating death but found life!

The slow march of time goes onward for us all. We've now all lived through another Christmas.

The older we get, the more we realize that we are each mortal. Our bodies don't work quite like they used to. Neither do our minds.

Let's face it – Some folks are waiting to die. And you can insert other words in here – some companies. Some churches. Some whoever – many are waiting to die. They've given up to the rapid

advance of time and are just waiting out their days, trying to make do.

Do you know folks who feel like this? I remind you of the age that God used and called people in the Bible – Moses and Aaron were called to lead the people out of Israel from Egypt at the **ages of 80 and 83, respectively.**

Joshua was given charge of leading the conquest of Canaan around the **age of 80**, and it lasted for a few decades after that. **Daniel** was over 80 years old when he was thrown into the lion's den.

Luke 1:7 tells us that **Zachariah and Elizabeth** were “well advanced in age” when they had John the Baptist. And the list goes on...

So, my friends, the older we get, the more we wait on God. The more we can be used by God. The more we can influence others with godliness. Some people, even Christians, are waiting to die and are doing nothing, having given up being a warrior for God – **but Simeon was waiting to live.**

It's ironic that the last thing Simeon saw before His physical death was the sign of His eternal life!

Whether we are young or old, when we wait upon Christ, we have peace! We can depart in peace – that is, peace in our relationship with our Father, through **His son Jesus!**

We can have salvation. Because it is in Christ and Christ alone that we are saved from eternal death into eternal life.

We can witness the fulfillment of His promises and his preparation, and we can go to that place He went to prepare for us.

Simeon was an old man. He was an old man who was waiting. But he knew how to wait. He recognized that being devout and righteous were tied to waiting upon God and His Word, His promises, and His will.

He also knew what He was waiting on – the consolation of Israel, those promises of God coming to pass. God’s promises never fail – they have either all come to pass or will one day.

He knew that **what** He was waiting on was dependent upon **who** He was waiting on – Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior, the fulfillment of God’s plan and the author of the New covenant between man and God.

Yes, Simeon was old, but He wasn’t just sitting around, waiting to die. He was at the temple, waiting upon the Lord, waiting to live! He met Jesus Christ, He saw with his own two eyes the same one who would later announce: **“I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me.”**

Simeon, at the end of his days, when we would normally think about death, found life. And we have that same choice before us today...**Some of us physically need to find life again.**

We need to find purpose in waiting upon God’s will and calling for our life. We can realize that God can do anything with anyone at any time, and we should always seek to make ourselves available to Him.

Others are spiritually dying or dead here today. We need to meet Jesus Christ and see God’s Word come to pass in our own hearts and lives.

Instead of a half-hearted admiration of a man, we need to do a full-hearted surrender to the Son of God and one day behold the same eternal wonderful life with God that Simeon found that day in his old age. **Amen? Let us Pray...**