

Sermon Outline

“Simeon’s Bucket List”

Luke 2:22-40 – Joshua Harris – Dec. 19, 2010

Introduction

1. From before his conception to his birth, Luke gives us a combination of heavenly and human testimony to Jesus’ unique identity: Jesus is great. He is the Son of the Most High. He is the promised King descended from David who will reign forever. He is the Son of God conceived by the Holy Spirit. He is the Lord. He is the Messiah. He is the Savior. The following are Luke “references” to Jesus’ unique identity:
 - a. Luke 1:26-35 – The angel Gabriel announces Jesus’ miraculous conception to Mary.
 - b. Luke 1:39-45 – Mary’s cousin Elizabeth rejoices over the baby in Mary’s womb.
 - c. Luke 2:6-14 – The host of angels announce Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem.
 - d. Luke 2:15-20 – The shepherds confirmed the heavenly proclamation.
2. After Jesus’ birth, two more people give testimony to Jesus’ unique identity and purpose: Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:22-40)
 - a. Simeon and Anna, two people at the end of their life, two total strangers who have never seen Joseph and Mary, are led by the Holy Spirit to testify that Jesus is the longed for salvation of God.
 - b. The passage drives home our awareness of just how special Jesus is. But it also serves to highlight the example of Simeon and Anna’s faithfulness. From them we learn: 1) what it means to watch and wait for God’s purpose to be fulfilled, and 2) how we should see and receive Jesus.

What Will You Grow Old Waiting For?

1. Verse 25 tells us that Simeon was *waiting* for the consolation of Israel that the Messiah would bring. The longing of his heart was for the comfort that only the promised Christ could bring. He wanted to see God’s purposes and promises fulfilled.
2. This brief glimpse of Simeon’s life is given to us as an example of what it means to be watchful. Simeon was watching for the first coming of Christ. In like manner, we are called to be watchful for the second coming of Christ. Matthew 25:13 says, “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

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3. Aging, like nothing else, reveals the true hope of our hearts. Time strips away all the temporal things that prop us up and give us a sense of security or meaning. In Simeon's old age, he wasn't angry, bitter or hopeless. His heart was set on the eternal, for something far better than what this world offers. He was waiting for the salvation of God.
4. The same is true of Anna. She was a widow and a prophetess. Luke tells us in verse 38 that Anna was among those who were waiting for the redemption of Israel. She was 84 and yet daily she was in the temple spending herself in spiritual pursuits.

What Do You See When You See Jesus?

1. What do you see in Jesus? A good man? An inspiring teacher? A victim of injustice? A prophet? Jesus claims so much more for himself. He claims to be God himself who entered into our humanity to save us.
2. In verse 28, Simeon saw Jesus for who he was. He held the eternal Son of God, who had clothed himself in humanity, and blessed God that he was holding God's promised salvation.
 - a. *"To see Jesus is to see God's salvation. They are inseparable. There is joy, even in the face of death, when one has seen the source of life."* —Darryl Bock
3. God has so loved the world that he sent SALVATION. This salvation isn't economic, political or environmental. It is salvation from what we deserve as guilty sinners before a holy God—namely, judgment. And this salvation comes in a person—Jesus Christ who was born to die in our place. In love, he laid down his life and took our judgment.

What Is on Your "Bucket List"? (i.e., What do you hope for before you die?)

1. Simeon had just one thing on his bucket list. He wanted to see Israel's Messiah before he died. In other words, he was waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. Simeon understood that salvation wasn't something man accomplished; it was something God gave freely.
 - a. Then Simeon said in verse 29 ... "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace." In other words, he was saying, "I can die now, I can depart in peace because I've experienced what is most important ... my bucket list is complete. I've seen the reality of your promise to save your people."
2. We may have many hopes of things we would like to do or see on our "bucket list" before we die. But as Christians, can't we echo Simeon's words? We can depart in peace

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because we've seen God's salvation. God has rescued us from our sin. We've been redeemed, forgiven and adopted by God through Jesus my Savior.

- a. This is the glorious truth we celebrate at Christmas. Salvation has come in Jesus Christ.

Fellowship Starters

1. Josh shared, "What you wait for reveals where your hope lies." What are you waiting for? What do you look for as the comfort in your life?
2. Into their old age, Simeon and Anna spent their lives in spiritual pursuit and waiting for the hope of Israel. How does their example provoke you to do the same as you grow older?
3. When Simeon held Jesus, he saw the fulfillment of God's promised salvation. What do you see when you look at Jesus?
4. What is on your "bucket list"? What do you hope for before you die—eternal things or things of this world? Can you say like Simeon, "I can depart in peace because I've seen God's salvation"?