

Luke 2:25-38

Awaiting The Promise

This was Jesus' first public appearance. And it went nearly completely unnoticed. The only reason that we are given this story is because these 2 aged saints had been waiting... waiting is hard, it is painful, it is something that we are usually not very good at! There is something to be learned here about the waiting that will do our souls good!

I. THOSE WHO WAIT

a. Simeon

- i. Just - to see accurately and to think and guide your thoughts according to what is true, right and honorable before God.
- ii. Devout - to live always with the knowledge of God's presence so that all thoughts and acts are done before Him, so that they are in tune with His character.

iii. These 2 character traits must be taken in balance, to be just without being devout is to be a slave to the minutia of the law. To be devout without being just is to be ruled by the heart and fall into all sorts of folly.

iv. Trusting in the promise of God

1. Don't know what he was expecting when he was told that he would not die before he saw the Christ. Maybe he too expected to see the King arriving in glory and splendor...
2. Don't know how long he had been waiting, but all tradition and the flow of the passage indicates that he was old
3. Don't know what anyone thought about him, before or during this encounter. But we do know that he was willing to do what God told him to do, willing to trust in God despite all appearances, willing and made able to see the shape of the promise in truth instead of getting caught up in the externals and the façade.

v. Led by the Holy Spirit

1. Revealed that he would see the Messiah
2. Led on that day to come to the temple.

a. Not as often is thought, that he went daily scanning the faces

b. He was led this day and to this family, he was obeying the voice of God

b. Anna –

i. Daughter of Phanuel –

ii. Of the tribe of Asher - as thy days, so thy strength shall be-

Deuteronomy 33:24–25

iii. Widow of 84 years (either 84 years old, or married 7 then widowed 84) so either 84 in age or about 107

iv. Prophetess –

Joel 2:28–29

v. Persistent in her waiting. Did not depart the temple

vi. Vocal in her delight and in the expectation of the promise.

II. WHAT THEY WAIT FOR

a. For consolation –

Hebrews 6.13-20

b. For redemption

c. For Salvation

d. For Jesus Christ

e. Relying on God's Word

f. In the temple

i. Special blessing from the house of God?

Isaiah 56.7

ii. Perhaps because of prophecy –

Malachi 3.1

iii. The Spirit never alters or overwrites scripture, but leads us to trust it, and to look for the promised blessings with faith stirred by trust in the testimonies of God

iv. Waiting also teaches us to look for blessings among the people of God, in church

III. HOW THEY WAIT

a. Expectantly

i. Not in defeat

ii. Not passively

iii. Not broken hearted over the wait

b. Engaged –

i. Doing what God puts in front of them to do

ii. Being a blessing to those around them

c. Trustingly

i. Not seeking to "Make it happen"

ii. Not attempting to force God's hand

iii. Not anxiously with worry

iv. Not filled with hopeless negativity

d. Obediently

i. Living out life according to God's word

1. Just and devout

2. In the temple

3. Not struggling against the
restrictions that time and circumstance place
on them

- ii. Hearing the voice of God and following it
- iii. Knowing the scripture - preparing the soul for the time of its reward

IV. WAITING REWARDED

a. Now I may die in peace

- i. We all have this promise in the receiving of Jesus
- ii. We all already have more peace than Simeon ever had
- iii. All of the promises of God are yes and amen in Jesus
- iv. We have the sure promise of hope in this life and in the next!

b. The strange and wonderful manner in which God fulfills His word....

The aged man holding the Savior, Jesus resting in His arms for the safety of His life at this moment, the aged man resting his whole being

in the child he holds, trusting his soul to the one in his arms...

c. The gospel focus of the testimony

- i. Jesus is given for the rising and falling of many
- ii. He is the salvation God prepared
- iii. He is the light to the Gentiles promised
- iv. He is the glory of (and purpose of) His people Israel
- v. He will make the hearts of men plain.

d. The cost of the gospel to those who carry it

- i. Simeon waited his whole life for this
- ii. Mary would find her soul pierced
 1. At the cross
 2. As she had to trust and believe in the One she carried
 3. As she had to repent of her own unbelief –

Mark 3.20, 31

- iii. Anna spent her entire life a widow, serving and trusting for this one instant... and this moment of significance is beyond all her expectations.
- iv. The unexpected shape of the answer does not put him off. We must be willing to see what God is doing in the midst of our expectations. We are not free to simply try to shape our life and our solutions to what we want, what we think it's going to look like.