

Jesus – Consolation of Humanity

This morning we are going to be looking at a passage about the baby Jesus about forty days after His birth.

Look with me at our passage found in **Luke 2:25-32**, “**And there was man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation (relief, comfort) of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.**

And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God and said, ‘Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, A light of Revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.’”

This is an amazing passage with a number of truths that can encourage and challenge us this Sunday before we are celebrating Christmas.

1. Simeon, a man who was of no **particular** stature

He wasn’t one of the leading religious leaders, he wasn’t a Pharisee or a Sadducee who were the heads of the church, the head of the Jewish religion. He was a common man although uncommon in the fact that it says the Holy Spirit was upon him. I think we can surmise the Holy Spirit was upon because he was religious in the right meaning of the word and he was devout.

That the Pharisees were religious and devout there is no doubt but their type of religion consisted of keeping laws in a very physical way but as Jesus said, their hearts were far from God.

Religion for them was just a mechanical thing not a spiritual relationship with the Creator of the Universe.

That was not who Simeon was. Simeon must have been very, very soft hearted towards the Lord, open to listening and hearing from God. He must have been because He heard from the Lord in a couple of different ways.

First

a. Simeon was looking for was the consolation of Israel.

This was no surprise as most of the Jewish people were looking for God to send a Messiah, a Savior, one who would free them from the oppression of foreign nations they had been experiencing for several hundreds of years.

Throughout their history, the people of Israel had suffered greatly, both for their own sin and because of the oppression of others. Their land was frequently overrun by foreign powers who knew the strategic significance of Palestine, which connected Africa, Europe, and Asia.

The Israelites endured the troubles of being exiled throughout foreign lands. In short, they were a people in desperate need of consolation and comfort. That there was a Messiah coming was a promise they had heard from the prophets Ezekiel, Isaiah and others. They expected a Messiah, a Savior and the kind of permanent comfort that could come when the Son of David, the Messiah would arrive to restore them not only back into their land but in their relationship with God.

Their hope was in a Messiah but unfortunately for most of the nation of Israel, including the religious and political leaders, they missed it when their Messiah did appear.

But not Simeon. He didn't miss a thing.

b. Simeon was so full of the Spirit that he was led to be in the right spot, at the right time to receive the Messiah

God noticed and blessed his devoutness and his true religion of loving and serving Him.

Think of this. Simeon was the one, possibly the only one who got to hold baby Jesus in his arms and look into the face of salvation. What an incredible privilege was afforded him.

I want you to imagine for a moment what that might have been like.

Possibly Hannah...Some of you have experienced something similar when you hold a baby in your arms. You look into the face of that child and you are filled with awe and wonder. You consider all the possibilities that can occur for that child and through that child.

A doctor, a nurse, a teacher, a mother, a father who knows what that child may become. But as Simeon looks into the face of baby Jesus he sees something that is other worldly, something that is so spiritual in nature that most everyone else misses it.

He sees the consolation, the salvation of the Israel and the world. I can only try to imagine what that must have been like.

Look with me at **verses 30-32. “For my eyes have seen Your salvation, Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, A light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel.”**

Simeon speaks truths here that he probably didn't fully understand. Not only was this baby Jesus the Messiah for the people of Israel but he also suggests for the very first time salvation is going to be available to the Gentiles, everyone who is not a Jew. This is a pretty big deal. Salvation is not just a Jewish thing anymore but a thing for all of humanity.

c. Simeon was looking for an answer to something God revealed to him

Verse 26, “And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.”

God had spoke to this man who was walking in the Spirit and talking with God. Other than Mary, Joseph and the mother and father of John the Baptist, God had been quiet for over 400 years. But sometime prior to the birth of Jesus God came and spoke to this devout man. He made a promise to him that he would not die before seeing the Messiah.

d. Simeon knew peace

After hearing from God, seeing face to face the answer to the promise of God Simeon experienced peace. Look at **verse 29, “Now Lord, you are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, according to Your word.”**

I am in awe when I think about what Simeon is saying here. Basically I think he is saying he is now ready for death. God, You made a promise, You fulfilled Your promise and now, I am at peace and ready to shed the bonds of this earth.

Jesus said this of Himself. **John 14:27, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”**

Peace. Sometimes peace in our lives is an illusive thing isn't it? Jesus said we could have it. The angels declared it, peace on earth, good will to humanity. Simeon experienced it and so too can we experience it.

2. Like Simeon, we can experience the revelation of the Christ in our lives

So how can we, in the midst of celebrating the greatest peacemaker and peace giver ever to be born and walk on earth and in the heavens, how can we experience the revelations Simeon experienced?

a. We look to God for our consolation in Christ

Just as there were many, many promises throughout the Old Testament about the coming Messiah, there are many, many promises of what Jesus offers to those who seek Him the biggest of which is stated in the following verse.

Romans 10:13, “For whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

We can experience salvation but salvation from what? The first thing I think we consider about this verse is salvation from eternal damnation.

Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned and fell short of the glory of God.”

Revelation 20:15 “If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”

Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death...”

Matthew 13:50 “furnace of fire...weeping and gnashing of teeth”

Mark 9:48 “where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched”

Revelation 14:10 “he will be tormented with fire and brimstone”

Revelation 14:11 “the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever and they have no rest day and night”

This is the first consolation we can expect. Our sins and the punishment for them have been taken care of by Christ. This is part of the consolation, the salvation Simeon spoke of when he saw Jesus. It the same salvation we can experience when we not only see Jesus but we call upon His name for salvation.

But the consolation we can experience doesn't stop there.

Consolation comes in many other different ways.

Of His ministry Matthew said, **Matthew 4:23, "Jesus was going throughout all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people."**

There is a healing for us that we can expect. Maybe not physically, possibly that, but there are many other types of diseases and sickness in this world aren't there?

There is the tragedy that sin creates. Pride, greed, lust and many other damaging things to our soul. There is sicknesses that can occur in the form of abuses, physical and mental abuse as well as drug and alcohol abuse. There is depression, anxiety and all sorts of fears and difficulties in this world. Jesus said He came to heal every kind of disease and sickness among the people. Every kind. He came to set us free from all these things.

This is good news, we can be delivered from the snares of this world, the snares of our own flesh.

b. We can be filled with the Spirit so that we are led to be in the right spot, at the right time to receive the Messiah

Because Simeon was walking with God, because the Spirit was upon him, speaking with him, prompting him, Simeon didn't miss the opportunity when the Christ showed up at a certain time in a particular way.

This can be true of our lives as well. We can be filled by the Spirit, led by the Spirit. We can be in a position like Simeon that, when Jesus shows up in a particular way at a certain time, we will see Him, feel Him and be ministered to by Him. We will shout out like Simeon, For my eyes have seen your salvation.

We can also expect, like Simeon, for God to reveal things to us.

c. God reveals things to us

1 Corinthians 2:9-10a, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed through the Spirit."

There are things God wants to reveal to you. About Himself, about you, about the spiritual gifts He has given you, about the life He has for you, about the things He wants you to accomplish during your stay here on earth.

d. We can experience the peace Jesus came to provide

As I said before peace can be an allusive thing but that is what Jesus has come to offer you. Peace, real, lasting peace. A peace the world doesn't know, a peace that resonates deep within your soul. A peace that will be with you through your life here and into eternity.

Think again what Simeon said in **verse 29**. **"Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, according to Your word."**

Simeon spent his life waiting for the Messiah to come and redeem His people. He had been given a unique promise that he would not die before he saw the Christ—the Messiah—with his own eyes. When he was an old man, this promise was finally fulfilled, and he marveled at the glory of God in the face of the infant Christ. Thus, he was prepared to die and meet His Creator.

Only when we have seen the Messiah—when we have acknowledged Jesus for who He is and bowed in worship—will we be ready to meet our Creator.

This is just a few of the reasons we celebrate Christmas, the giving of the Christ – Child.

Have you seen Him? Have you come to trust Him at His word? Are you experiencing peace in this life and peace into the next life?

You can by surrendering you life to Him and by spending time looking deep into His face.

Let's pray

As we are keeping our eyes close, let's take a few moments this morning. I ask you that you try and visualize Jesus' face. Tell Him you love Him and listen for His response. Say I love you Jesus...

Did you hear a response? I bet you did. I bet you heard I love you too.

These quiet times are more of what we need, especially in these days of celebration.

Let's sing our closing song together.