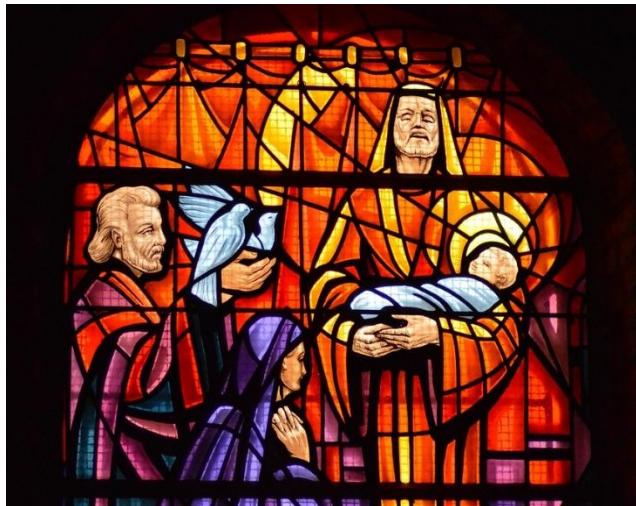


Christmas Part 4: A Picture of Old and New

Luke 2:21-35



Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." 25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the comfort of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 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. 27 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, 28 then he took Him into his arms and blessed God, and said, 29 "Now Master, You are releasing Your slave in peace, According to Your word. 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation, 31 Which You prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 A Light for revelation to the Gentiles, And for the glory of Your people Israel." 33 And His father and mother were marveling at the things which were being said about Him. 34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed— 35 and a sword will pierce through your own soul as well—that the thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Luke 2:21-35 And when eight days were fulfilled so that they could circumcise Him, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days for their cleansing according to the Law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought Him up to

On the very first Christmas Eve, as the newborn Jesus lies wrapped in cloth in a manger, God sends forth His angel to bring a special message to a group of shepherds. These shepherds hear the news, see the Savior, and glorify God in all they experienced. Amidst this angelic encounter, Mary is found, "treasuring all these things, pondering them in her heart." It is in this statement that we can consider in our day for how we too can experience the treasure of Christmas in our hearts.

1) Treasuring Christmas Starts With a Glorious Announcement. When the angel appears to the shepherds, the encounter is underscored by the glory of God. God's glory shone around them and appeared in the sky above them. This glory served to amplify the good news of the angel's message, that a Savior has been born for all of humanity. God's peace and goodwill is now found in Jesus and among all mankind. There is no better announcement than this, a true treasure in our lives.

2) Treasuring Christmas Brings Forth a Marvelous Experience. After hearing this good news the shepherds go, see, and tell others about their astonishing encounter. The shepherds did not experience the fullness of the angel's message until they went and saw Jesus for themselves. In meeting Jesus for the first time these shepherds believed in everything they heard. This belief and testimony produced a marveling for those who heard. The true treasure of Christmas comes when we believe in the announcement of Christmas. For Jesus to be the Savior means we must be saved by Him. This is the marvelous experience that Christmas represents. Our salvation in Christ is the treasure that we store up in our hearts.

3) Treasuring Christmas Results In a Heartfelt Worship. Once the shepherd's concluded their visit in Bethlehem they were found, "glorifying and praising God," just like the heavenly host. This is a heartfelt worship, one that praises God for what He has done in Jesus and magnifies His greatness in our lives. Treasuring Christmas in our hearts does not mean we keep these things hidden inside us, but that we let this treasure burst forth in a heartfelt worship of God for who He is and what He has done in our lives.