

Scripture Text

Luke 2:22-35

Context

God had been silent for approximately 400 years when finally, the saviour arrived in the form a baby born to a virgin in Bethlehem. His name was Jesus and in this passage, his parents Joseph and Mary presented him to the Lord in the temple at Jerusalem according to the Law of Moses.

Observation and Meaning

- What did Mary and Joseph do in Jerusalem? 2:22
- What was Simeon waiting for? 2:25
- Describe what the Holy Spirit did to Simeon in verses 25-27
- What did Simeon see with his eyes? 2:30
- Who would benefit from Jesus' ministry and what was this benefit? 2:31-32
- Why did Mary and Joseph marvel at what Simeon said? 2:33
- What will the child do according to Simeon? 2:34
- What difficulty does Simeon warn Mary to expect for herself? 2:35

Big Idea

God is alive. He is an active agent in human history and uses his Holy Spirit to move God-fearing people to work together as part of his salvation plan. He is not silent, not absent, not powerless to accomplish his purposes but rather does so in his perfect time. He has provided a one way of salvation, through his Son Jesus Christ, to save the entire world from sin. We cannot be neutral towards Jesus and our attitude reveals whether we believe him or not.

Connecting to Bible Storyline

Jesus Christ is the messiah who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies regarding God's salvation plan for the entire world. The scene of baby Jesus being presented in the temple shows that the God came in the flesh and was subjected under the Law of Moses, just like the ones he came to save. Jesus Christ, fully man and fully God, had now arrived into human history to fulfill the righteous requirements of God's law in order to save sinners who acknowledge him as Lord and Saviour.

Sermon Outline

1. Christmas invites us to explore our hope of salvation (v22-25)
2. Christmas gives a child who brings God's salvation (v26-32)
3. Christmas' gift reveals the thoughts of our own hearts (v33-35)

Applications

- What am I hoping for? How do my hopes line up with Simeon's? How is Christ superior to all the things I'm tempted to put my ultimate hope in?
- How does Simeon's patience encourage me to wait on God when he takes his time to act?
- How does Jesus' insistence on a response towards his gospel challenge me in my faith?
- Knowing that people will reject Jesus, how do I plan on persevering in sharing the gospel?
- How can I encourage a fellow believer who is facing persecution due to following Jesus?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?
What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.