

Title: What Does Christmas Reveal About Your Heart?

Passage: Luke 2:25-35

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Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation 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 do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Exposition

Luke 2:25

Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

Simeon

- One of two witnesses that see Jesus after His birth (and before the Magi)
- Likely a layperson (not a priest) because he was where women were permitted

Righteous and devout

- Unique during this point of history
 - Israel's conditions were poor (evil King Herod, oppressive Pharisees, silence of prophets)

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

- Righteous = Right before God
 - Contrast: Pharisees strictly keeping the law on their own effort
- Devout = Cautious / Conscientious
 - A man sensitive to God's law. Directed towards God
 - Man's righteousness leads to sanctification (desire to be more holy)

Psalms 42:1

As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.

Waiting for the consolation of Israel

- Waiting = waiting for expectation, eagerly
 - Meaning: waiting in faith for God to come through with His promises
- Consolation = comfort / Comforter
 - Reference to Old Testament prophecy:

Isaiah 40:1 (Israel to be comforted)

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

Isaiah 40:10 (who? Messiah = Jesus)

Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

Isaiah 40:11 (how comfort?)

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Isaiah 66:13

As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

the Holy Spirit was upon him

- *Before Pentecost:* the Holy Spirit only came temporarily on people (priests, prophets, or only certain people for certain tasks)

Psalms 51:11

Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

- *After Pentecost:* the Holy Spirit dwells within us through faith in Christ.

Ephesians 1:13

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

- How know the Spirit is within you?
 - Are we wanting to obey Jesus more or not?
 - Are we exalting God or ourselves?

Luke 2:26-27

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 do for him according to the custom of the Law,

when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law.

- Old Testament: a woman had to wait at least 40 days before able to go to Temple

Luke 2:29-32

“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”

Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace

- peace? Before had been eagerly seeking the Savior.
- Now having seen Jesus, one can die in peace, looking forward to eternity
 - Without Jesus, we will live in fear of death
 - With Jesus, can have peace regardless of circumstances
- Peace before God - how?
 - by believing in who Jesus was (Lord)
 - By believing in what Jesus will do (Savior)

Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.

- The Gospel of Jesus is global = for all the nations.
 - Basis for world evangelism

Darkness of the world

Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' light

John 8:12

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 12:46

I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:5

This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

Luke 2:33-35

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed

Matthew 10:34

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

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- Jesus will cause conflict with others around you because they don't like Jesus.

John 3:19-20 (Why people don't like Jesus?)

And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

- the Gospel of Jesus Christ exposes people's sin (the inward condition of each of our hearts)
- Otherwise, our heart is a motor of self-justification
 - We blame other factors

Romans 1:18-20 (No one is without excuse)

- all will go to hell apart from Jesus.
- but God is still sovereign and good to allow salvation through Jesus Christ

a sword will pierce through your own soul also

- Jesus causes conflict within people
 - Contrast between self-expectations vs. reality/truth
- When believe in Jesus, you will experience a piercing sword as well
 - Peace = relationship with God

Christian has both 1) inward warfare and 2) inward peace

- Warfare = fighting sin and flesh

- Sanctification of growing through increasing holiness
- What fight? Put off flesh, put on Christ

Application

What's your response to Jesus?

- Either with Jesus, or
- Against Jesus

Come to Christ

- Fall down recognize your sin and need for Him as Savior, then
- Rise up with the forgiveness of sins and your new identity of Christ.

Ephesians 4:22-24

to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Peace through the sword

Genesis 3:24

He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

- Genesis 3 = the garden is protected by the sword
 - meaning: only way to come to heaven is that someone would have to die

Isaiah 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

- Jesus died for us. Now, we can come to God