



Unit .19

Session .04

Jesus is Dedicated

Scripture



Luke 2:21-38

21 When the eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus—the name given by the angel before he was conceived. **22** And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were finished, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord **23** (just as it is written in the law of the Lord, **Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord**) **24** and to offer a sacrifice (according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, **a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons**). **25** There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel’s consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord’s Messiah. **27** Guided by the Spirit, he entered the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him what was customary under the law, **28** Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said, **29** Now, Master, you can dismiss

your servant in peace, as you promised. **30** For my eyes have seen your salvation. **31** You have prepared it in the presence of all peoples—**32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel. **33** His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them and told his mother Mary: “Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed—**35** and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” **36** There was also a prophetess, Anna, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well along in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, **37** and was a widow for eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayers. **38** At that very moment, she came up and began to thank God and to speak about him to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

What does it say about God's character that He kept His promise to Abraham after all of those years?

How do you think Simeon felt during this moment?



99 Essential Doctrines

God is Faithful

God's faithfulness means He keeps His word and always fulfills His promises (1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Tim. 2:13; 1 Pet. 4:19). God's faithfulness is demonstrated in His fulfillment of the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The apostle Paul linked the attribute of "faithful" to God's coming through on His word: "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24). We reflect God by keeping the promises we make to Him and to others.

Main Point

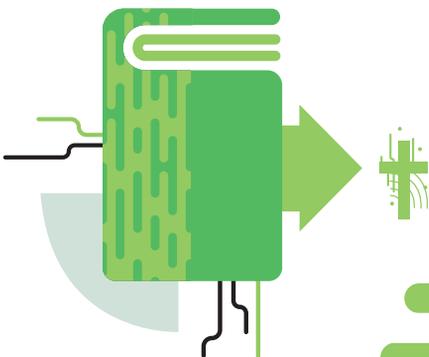
**Jesus is God's promise
of hope to the nations.**

Recall how you were led by God's providence and Spirit to come to faith in Jesus. How did the Holy Spirit open your eyes and heart to Jesus?

What are some areas in your life where you tend to forget that the purpose is to bring God glory? What usually happens when we forget that each aspect of life is worship?

Christ Connection

Simeon praised God when he saw Jesus, recognizing Him as the consolation of Israel for which he had longed. Simeon also prophesied that many would oppose Jesus. Jesus came to His own, however, His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God (John 1:11-12).



If the aim and focus of worship is God, how does this change the way we worship God with others through song at church?

In Defense



“The title Lord Jesus Christ summarizes all of His redemptive work. Lord describes His sovereign deity; Jesus (the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Yeshua; “God Saves”) describes His saving death and resurrection; Christ (“anointed one”) describes Him as the King who will defeat God’s enemies and rule over the redeemed earth and the eternal state.”— John MacArthur, *2 Corinthians*, Moody Publishers, 2003, p. 19.



Head

How do you think Mary and Joseph felt after hearing Simeon's words regarding the future ministry of Jesus?

What should our response be when we can't fully understand all that God is doing through the circumstances of our lives?



Heart

What was the connection between Anna's heart for God and her actions of telling others about the Messiah?

If speaking truth into the lives of others is an indication of our love for God, what does this say about your own life? Does something need to change?



Hands

Why should we be comforted by the fact that our efforts in sharing Jesus with others is ultimately dependent on the power and will of God?

Who has God brought in your life for the purpose of evangelism? Would you commit to share the joy of Christ with this person or group of people in the next few weeks?

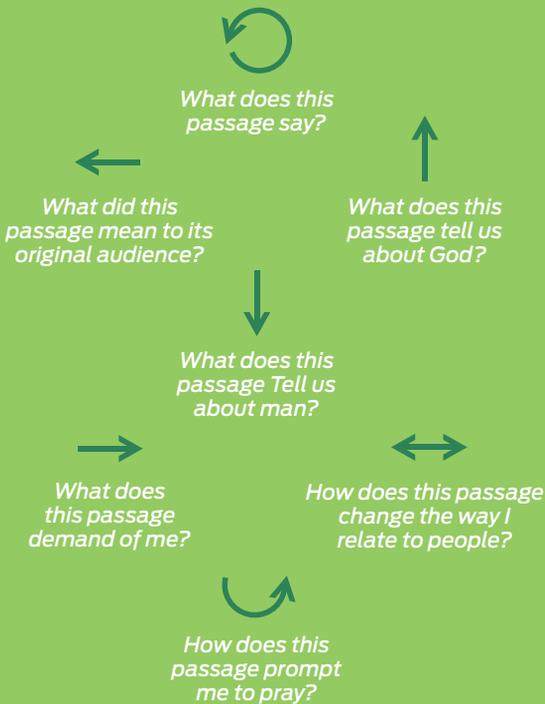
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Luke 2:8-14

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Let us not allow the familiarity of the Christmas story involving the shepherds to numb our hearts to the absolute wonder of God’s grace. It should still strike our hearts that God chose to announce this glorious message to poor shepherds—to peasants, the outcasts of society.

In the narrative, there are several points of which we need to take note. First, in the presence of the angels, the shepherds moved from the dark coldness of night into the brilliant light of God’s glory (2:8-9). In the proclamation of the good news, the Shepherds traded in their “great fear” for “great joy” (2:9-10). The great joy is a response to the good news of Jesus Christ, good news “for all the people” (2:10,14).

God’s salvation moves us from the darkness of sin into the glorious light of his righteousness! His salvation moves us from being outcast peasants in fear to experiencing the riches of joy in fellowship with God!

In what ways has believing the gospel moved you from fear to joy?

Luke 2:15-20

The narrative of Jesus' birth is a striking account of twists and turns. At the beginning of chapter 2, the story begins with Caesar Augustus, a world ruler announcing a decree from his high and lofty throne. However, there is another announcement in chapter 2. And this time, it came from messengers of God. The angels declared with great joy that Christ, the King, had come!

It is interesting how God works. On one level, it was a man's schemes (Augustus) who brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem; but it was God—working through Augustus, Joseph, and Mary—who orchestrated the whole event of Christ's birth in order to bring about His will.

Jesus has come, and He has come to deliver His people from the burdensome rulers of this world, rulers greater than Caesar—sin and death. God works out His will in order to allow for the good news to be made known to those humble enough to search and find Jesus.

How does the birth of Jesus the Messiah shape and influence the way we see world leaders and events today?

Luke 2:21-24

One may find it odd that Luke includes a mention of Jesus' circumcision in the narrative of His childhood, even if in passing. However, modern readers must understand that during the Old Testament period it was customary for males among God's people to be circumcised on the eighth day according to the law as a covenant sign (Gen. 17:12).

What does a covenant sign signify? In Genesis 17, God promised that Abraham would become the father of many nations. Circumcision was a sign to remember God's promise to Abraham, and the covenant that God made with Israel.

How does Luke's recording of details like Jesus' circumcision instill confidence in you about the reliability and historicity of Luke's gospel?

Luke 2:25-32

Up until this point Simeon was restless, yearning for the comfort and salvation of his people. Simeon had waited his whole life to see the Messiah. And then, at last, the Christ-child was handed to him. In this one breathtaking moment, all of his longings were fulfilled; he held the life of the world in his arms.

As you read this, Simeon is now at rest. Simeon was like a watcher who has now left his assigned post. His duties have been fulfilled. As the passage tells us, Simeon's life came to an end with him at peace because he had seen the fulfillment of God's long-awaited promise.

Isn't it amazing that Luke includes this little narrative in his Gospel account, like a personal note? Consider the testimony of a faithful man who searched his whole life for the Savior whom He was eventually allowed to hold in his arms.

In what ways should our longing for salvation be similar to Simeon's?

Luke 2:33-38

Simeon made a prophetic announcement to Mary in verse 34. It was a prophetic word. As we learn later, Jesus would divide Israel.

Jesus lifted the humble and brought down the self-righteous. The contrast between Simeon (a devout man) and the religious leaders later on in the Gospel accounts is astounding. Simeon accepted Jesus in his arms with joy, whereas many in Israel would reject Him in their hearts (Isa. 8:14-15).

Jesus causes division because Jesus compels us to make personal decisions about Him. In Israel, those who rejected Him saw to it that He was crucified, then dismissed accounts of His resurrection. Those who accepted Him ultimately understood why He was crucified and were later thankful for His resurrection. One day, He will return to separate the righteous and unrighteous, once again causing many to rise and fall.

How will we face division with the culture on some level with respect to who Jesus is and what we believe about Him?