

Luke 2:36-38

**Today: Tis the season to be grateful!**

*“And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.”* **Luke 2:36-38**

**Main Idea:** The Birth of Jesus stirs up a grateful heart.

**A Grateful Heart is Expressed in Three Ways in Luke 2:36-38**

**1. A Grateful Heart Waits Patiently for God (2:36-37)**

*“And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.”*

**Luke 2:36-37**

Anna – “Grace; Favor”

- Phanuel – “face of God” or “vision of God”
- Tribe of Asher – means “Happy”

Anna was primed and ready for this moment in the temple! She was the epitome of an Israelite who was waiting for God’s promised one!

Anna had her own story of waiting on the Lord with a grateful heart. She was married for 7 years before her husband died. She could have remarried and started over, to rebuild her life. But what do we see here?

She remained unmarried and wrapped her life up in the things of God. She found her sustenance and her contentment in the Lord her God.

*“Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.”*

**Psalms 33:20-21**

This Christmas season, regardless of what’s going on around us, you and I can be grateful because God is enough!

**Gratitude comes from being content with what you’ve already been given.**

*“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”* **Hebrews 13:5**

**A grateful heart trusts what God is doing even when we don’t see it!**

*“but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint”* **Isaiah 40:31**

Anna got to see the baby who would grow up and change the world for all mankind!

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## **2. A Grateful Heart Thanks God Eagerly (2:38a)**

*“And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God...”* **Luke 2:38a**

This was a moment when more than 2,000 years of Old Testament prophecies were being fulfilled.

**Isaiah prophesied this 700 years before Jesus’s birth:**

*“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel”* **Isaiah 7:14**

**Micah prophesied this 800 years before Jesus’s birth:**

*“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.”* **Micah 5:2**

God Himself was giving the greatest gift the world could ever imagine, in this little baby in His mother’s arms.

Our Christmas season is not always easily defined by gratitude.

We can miss the blessings of God too when we are so focused on what we lack.

*“And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a **debased mind** to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.”* **Romans 1:28–31**

*“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God **or give thanks to him**, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”* **Romans 1:21**

Ingratitude is like an infection that corrupts our heart. The birth of Christ allows us to pause and reflect on the **magnitude** of the moment and the eternal blessing we have in Him.

**It takes practice for us to remain grateful.**

*“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”* **1 Thessalonians 5:18**

*“giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”* **Ephesians 5:20**

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### 3. A Grateful Heart Speaks of God Passionately (2:38)

*“And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.” Luke 2:38*

How are you speaking about what God has done for you?

If your heart needs stirring, look to Jesus, and think about where He’s brought you from. Or think about what you might be today apart from His work in your life. Then share that with someone!

Maybe you feel like you lost the passion, it’s missing this Christmas season. Don’t pull back, but surround yourself with the community here that God has blessed you with, who will encourage and lift you up.

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25*

**Main Idea:** The Birth of Jesus stirs up a grateful heart.

Do you want to grow in gratitude this Christmas time?  
Tis the season for it! Spend time with the Giver!  
That’s Jesus who gives us the greatest gift.

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23*

Not a holiday to pass you by. This is the moment to place your faith in Jesus today and receive the gift with gratitude!

#### Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *The Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *ESV Study Bible* – Crossway (2008)
- *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* – Walvoord & Zuck (1983)
- *Addresses on the Gospel of Luke* – H. A. Ironside (1947)
- *Exalting Jesus in Luke* – Thabiti M. Anyabwile (2018)
- *New American Commentary: Luke* – Robert H. Stein (1992)
- *Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature* – M. G. Easton (1893)
- <https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/sermon-thanksgiving-living-attitude-gratitude-psalm-100>