

Simeon's Song – Luke 2:25-32

“When the Spirit Leads”

We are at the end of our 4-week series “Heaven and Nature Sing.” Together we looked at the Christmas story from the songs sung in the Gospels before, during and after Jesus’ birth.

In week 1, we learned from Mary’s song that we can turn our worry into worship.

In week 2, we learned from Zechariah’s song that God is faithful to keep his promises.

And in week 3, we learned from the angels’ song that the Good News is for all people.

Today we are going to study the song of a man named Simeon.

In Simeon’s story, we are going to see what can happen in a person’s life when they listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The title of today’s message is “When the Spirit Leads.”

The song of Simeon is found in the book of Luke, chapter 2. We are going to start reading from verse 25.

Luke 2:25-26

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.”

This is our first introduction to Simeon, but notice already how the Holy Spirit is mentioned three times in relation to this man.

Simeon was waiting for something called the consolation of Israel.

The consolation of Israel referred to the coming of a promised Messiah who would bring comfort, salvation, and restoration to Israel.

We have to imagine what this situation was like for these people at this time.

At one point, they were their own nation. Then they fell to the Assyrian Empire, and then the Persian Empire, and then the Greek Empire and now in Simeon's time, they are under the Roman Empire.

Most scholars will say that Simeon was an old man that day the Holy Spirit led him into the temple courts. He may have been alive the day the Roman soldiers came. He may have seen the subjugation of his people firsthand from childhood.

Now with this in mind, he waits every day for the consolation of Israel – for the coming Messiah. For the one who will save them from this situation. He might start asking, God when is this going to happen?

God, when will you turn things around like you said you would?

I think everyone here, no matter what you believe or what your relationship with God is like, have what you might call a yearning, or a prayer request for the believer, or a wish for someone else.

That someday that sickness will go away, that financial situation will change, your job situation will get better, or your mental health, your family, your relationships.

You may know what it's like to believe and want for something that hasn't happened yet.

Every day, you wait. Just like Simeon.

But here is the deciding factor: the text says that the Holy Spirit was with Simeon.

And the Holy Spirit gave him hope. The Spirit revealed to him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

This leads us to our first truth today:

1. The Holy Spirit is Present in the Waiting

I get it, it's hard to wait. We can feel hopeless, frustrated, angry, bored.

But waiting doesn't mean that God is absent. It doesn't mean you're alone. We just saw in the text that the Holy Spirit guided Simeon into and through his waiting.

I looked up the name of Simeon, and I found out that his name means he who is listening.

He listened to the voice of the Holy Spirit in his life, and what the Holy Spirit says gives hope in the waiting.

King David wrote Psalm 27 as he was running for his life and said:

Psalm 27: 13-14 (NLT)

Yet I am confident I will see the LORD's goodness
while I am here in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait patiently for the LORD.

Be brave and courageous.

Yes, wait patiently for the LORD.

When we run out of hope, we can call out to God. We can say "yet I am confident I will see His goodness."

Hope looks forward to what will happen. And hope is found in the Spirit and it's found in scripture.

During our waiting, let's slow down and be reminded that God is still with us.

Let's pray and read the Bible, because it's there we will find the promises of the Lord that will give us life.

Simeon believed in his promise.

Luke 2:27-28

²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

All that waiting leads up to this moment.

On that day, the Holy Spirit led Simeon into the temple at the right time, to the right couple, to the right child, and he held in his arms the Messiah he had waited his whole life for.

Luke says that Jesus's parents, Mary and Joseph, brought their child to the temple to do what the custom of the law requires.

We know that they were there for a purification offering, because of the verses earlier.

Mary and Joseph came, following the practices in the Scripture, and Simeon came, following the voice of the Spirit. The Scripture and the Spirit meet in the middle.

Luke 2:28-32

²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”

The Holy Spirit revealed the promise to Simeon, revealed the child to Simeon, and now He is revealing the future to Simeon.

This baby in his arms would be salvation not only to the people of Israel, but to the Gentiles. Gentiles are non-Jewish people, and they were not thought to be a primary focus in the salvation plan.

Most Jewish people were expecting a deliverer for Israel alone, but Jesus is a light for revelation to the Gentiles.

Jesus is salvation for all nations.

Jesus is salvation for you and me.

2. The Holy Spirit Reveals Salvation Through Jesus

It is beautiful when Simeon holds Jesus and he's looking at him and he says my eyes have seen your salvation.

If he was speaking in Hebrew when he said that, because they were in the temple, Simeon would have said “for my eyes have seen your Yeshua”

Salvation is not found in a place, or a system or a plan, salvation is found in a person.

But Simeon only had a glimpse of what was to come. He didn't see Jesus as an adult preaching, casting out demons, healing people, performing miracles.

He wouldn't see him die on the cross for our sins.

And he certainly wouldn't have seen him raise to life again.

But seeing the face of Jesus was enough.

This January as we head into the new year, we always start with 21 days of prayer and fasting. The theme for January is “show us your face, Lord.”

We can turn our eyes and ears and hearts to the Holy Spirit. We can see Jesus as if we were face-to-face.

If we believe in Jesus, if we confess our sins and follow him, we are given something that not even Simeon had.

The Holy Spirit was over Simeon, the Holy Spirit guided him, and the Holy Spirit revealed knowledge to him.

But the Holy Spirit did not live inside of him.

Anyone who has given their life to Christ has been given the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1 describes the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of your inheritance in heaven.

Jesus is not only revealed as salvation for one day, but every day He reveals himself to us. Every day He can sustain us.

I don't want to miss seeing the face of God, and look for salvation in something else.

Let's read these verses again.

Luke 2:28-29

²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

This is the pinnacle of Simeon's life, the one moment he lived for. And it was worth it.

He didn't equate the measure of his life with his accomplishments.

It didn't come from a title he carried or a salary.

Simeon's peace didn't come from anything his hands could or did produce.

If we based our peace and satisfaction on what we do, we might regret it. We may get into a rhythm of trying to proving ourselves to someone, anyone. We may wonder "was it enough?"

Simeon reached the end and he didn't say look what I did. He said look at who I have seen. I have seen the face of God.

3. Seeing Jesus is Enough

A life centered on Jesus leads to a peace that nothing else can provide. Simeon said my eyes have seen you. And it was worth it.

What do our eyes see?

The new year is right around the corner, and with it brings goals and resolutions.

Nothing is wrong with that. These are good goals to have. But God doesn't call us just to *do*.

This doesn't have to be another year of trying to reinvent ourselves. 2 Corinthians says that if anyone is in Christ, you are already a new creation. The old things have passed away.

Christ has already made us new.

His voice speaks louder than the chaos or the striving. His voice brings hope. It brings truth - if we can hear it.

I have a story to share.

About two weeks ago, Jacob and I went to a resort with my family.

As we were walking, we saw my mom far ahead. We waved at her, and Jacob starts calling her name, but she doesn't hear us. And then I shout "mom!" and she turns and sees us.

She knows my voice, because she knows me.

Our father in heaven already knows our voice like that. You can call out to Him, and He immediately hears you and knows that's you.

His eyes are already on you; His face is turned toward you. Today, we can turn toward Him and see His face.

I want to recognize the Holy Spirit like that. I want to know His voice because I have a relationship with him.

During this next month, as we enter into our 21 days of prayer and fasting, let's be present and intentional. Let's ask to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

And trust that even in the waiting, He is with you.

We always end the service asking what is the Holy Spirit saying to you right now?

Maybe you need to be reminded that God is with you in the waiting, and He brings hope. Maybe He is reminding you that your salvation is found in the person of Jesus, and He wants to reveal Himself even more to you.

Or maybe He is assuring you that wherever your life goes, Jesus is enough.