

Waiting is Not Easy

Luke 2:22-38

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Background

Lord, have mercy on those who make us wait! In a world where speed and efficiency are honored as cardinal virtues and the equation of time with money is undisputed, being made to wait borders on sin. Yet the Christian life is fundamentally defined by a willingness to wait for the coming of God and the fulfillment of His promises! How do we wait when we've been trained to do anything but? Join us this Sunday - both the final Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve - for our final installment of our Advent series, "The Great Reversal".

Sermon Text: Luke 2:22-38 (NIV)

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

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. 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:

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."

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many

in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sunday questions

- a. What are you hopeful for this Christmas?
- b. Explain what it has been like waiting for Christmas this year?
- c. Eugene said the Holy Spirit was Simeon’s companion in his waiting. Would you say that the Holy Spirit has been your companion in waiting this year? Moving into 2024, what would it look like for you to have the Holy Spirit as your companion?
- d. In general, is it easy for you to trust in Jesus and wait for him to fulfill all God’s promises? What’s the hardest part for you?
- e. What was the best good news you heard in the sermon this Sunday?