

Beaverton Foursquare
Sunday A.M. 12-20-15
Stand Alone Christmas Sermon
Pastor Randy Remington

The Long Awaited Messiah

Today people anticipate some many different things; it may be the new "Star Wars" movie or the latest technological device. During this season many of us may have a growing expectation for Christmas..."only three more days".

Whatever we're anticipating or waiting for, when it finally comes do we feel that it was all we had hoped for? When it finally arrives do we feel like, "okay now I can die"...in our passage that is exactly what we see in the person of Simeon.

"On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived. 22 When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, 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 upon him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 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 now dismiss your servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the sight of all people, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to 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." (Luke 2:21-35)

"It came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled. ... And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn"

(Luke 2:4-7)

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For Simeon everything he had been anticipating found its fulfillment in the Christ child.

It is interesting to see what Simeon prophesied over the child and his mother. The controversial impact and effect he will have in Israel and the world will not all be pleasant. Additionally, Mary's soul would be pierced with a sword. As Randy pointed out not your typical baby dedication, but it is nice to be prepared for the difficult times ahead.

Over time many gave up on the promise of the messiah. There had been 400 years of prophetic silence, but (as there always is) there was a remnant of people who continued to watch in anticipation of the promise.

Simeon was representative of that remnant never stopped coming to the temple watching, wondering if this was the day. Remember 99% never saw the fulfillment of the promise.

Today people have lost hope, they have given up waiting time has elapsed and Christmas hasn't come.

Growing older and Growing in faith

Simeon is like a sentinel of sorts with fresh expectations, yearning, longing for the fulfillment of the promise. Make no mistake; there were people that thought he was strange, that his best days were behind him.

But when he "laid eyes on him", he was looking through different eyes, he had "spiritual perception". Yes he was old, his outward body was perishing but his inward man was being renewed and matured that only comes with time.

On her tombstone Billy Grahams wife had written "End of construction, thanks for your patience".

Devotion and Expectation

Simeon was not a Priest a Scribe or a Pharisee but he was called a righteous man. We are called to be devoted to the little things and to take him at his word.

"What impresses me about Simeon is the powerful mingling of righteousness, Spirit empowerment, and faith to take God at His Word."

The question you need to ask yourself; is it worth it to wait for his promises and to walk in righteousness before him? We are faced with the same question that Simeon was, but for us it is his second coming or for him to fulfill his promise in our lives.

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"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. 11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells." (2 Peter 3:10-13)

"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. 26 People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. 27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:25-28)

"So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." (Hebrews 9:28)

"Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:8)

"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure." (1 John 3:2-3)

Being a Simeon is to be watchful, faithful, full of hope, persevering never giving up, committed and never allowing yourself to become cynical.

Discussion Questions

- 1) In your lives what has been the things that you anticipated the most? Once you received them, was it all you had hoped for and was the end result "okay I can die peacefully now"?
- 2) For Simeon he had been anticipating this moment his entire life. What do you think it was like for him waiting for the promise? Think back on your own experiences, what were you (or what are you feeling) feeling as you waited? Did you have doubts; did others encourage you or discourage you?
- 3) There had been 400 years of prophetic silence and yet there still was a remnant that believed and continued to watch. Simeon is our example in scripture, what are some of the promises of God in

3) was a remnant that believed and continued to watch. Simeon is our example in scripture, what are some of the promises of God in your life that demand this kind of perseverance? (These can be personal promises all the way to the second coming of Jesus)

- 4) Look again at the section called "*Growing older and Growing in faith*". Discuss the fact that although we are growing older yet we can still have a fresh anticipation about God's promises. Also how our outward body may be perishing but something of a maturing is happening in us that can't happen any other way.

- 5) Under the "*Devotion and Expectation*" section above, please discuss the following quote; "*What impresses me about Simeon is the powerful mingling of righteousness, Spirit empowerment, and faith to take God at His Word.*"

- 6) As it turns out we are faced with the same decision that Simeon was faced with. Do I walk righteous before him and although I may be in the minority will I take God at his word despite what's going on around me? Pray for one another to be empowered by the Holy Spirit encouraged and committed to persevere and believe God!