



Sunday, December 31, 2017

Pastor Keith Sová

Introduction to Luke 2:21-40

The story of Mary and Joseph's encounter with Simeon and Anna is not one that is commonly re-told during the Christmas season. Yet it has great significance (as all stories in the Bible do), because it further reveals truth about Jesus that is necessary not only for knowing Him, but also living in obedience to Him as Lord/King. Unlike most passages that are recited at Christmas time, this passage doesn't deal with messages of peace and salvation, but rather conflict and division.

Why is it important that we think on these things? If we don't understand the conflict that Jesus causes between people and within people, we won't have a proper understanding of our own experience in the world. When we hear that Jesus brings peace on earth, we might be surprised to find out that mentioning Jesus' name doesn't bring a peaceful sentiment out of most people. Or, we might be tempted to think that the salvation Jesus offers is a deliverance from trials and temptation here and now, when in fact, the salvation He offers is His promise of a future when we won't face those and His peace in the meantime to sustain us in the midst of them.

Context

Luke's Gospel is primarily concerned with demonstrating how Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. So, it is fitting that immediately after the birth of Jesus, Luke demonstrates how faithful Mary and Joseph were to the Old Testament Scriptures and then introduces us to two people not mentioned in the other Gospels—Simeon and Anna. These people were waiting for the fulfillment that God had promised, and so Luke highlights their part in the story as a way of demonstrating God's faithfulness to His purposes, which He set in motion from before time began.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

“After Christmas”

Read Luke 2:21-40

Jesus Brings Peace By Causing Conflict

I. He causes conflict between people (v. 34; Matt. 10:34)

II. He causes conflict within people (v. 35)

Discuss

- 1) Can conflict ever be a good thing? If so, how?

- 2) What kinds of things are going on in our culture today that are directly opposed to Jesus/Christianity?

- 3) Have you ever had a relationship with a non-Christian strained because you were a Christian? How did that come about?

- 4) In your experience, how has Jesus brought peace in the midst of an internal conflict (temptation, doubt, etc.)?

- 5) In what ways do you want to grow closer to Jesus in 2018? (One of the spiritual disciplines like prayer/Bible reading/meditating on Scripture, deeper obedience in a particular area/relationship, etc.)