

w/b 24th January 2016 (Ben Davies)

BUMPING INTO JESUS / SIMEON MEETS THE MESSIAH - LIFE APPLICATION

PASSAGE: Luke 2:22-40

INTRODUCTION

It's nearly impossible to live our lives in isolation. We need to be surrounded by others for encouragement and support, but we also need role models to spur us on to be all who God desires us to be. Role models form within us a belief the impossible can be made possible if we are faithful and committed. In our passage, we have two powerful examples of faithful living in Simeon and Anna. In Luke 2, we meet a man and woman in the temple, Simeon and Anna. Simeon is waiting for God to comfort Israel. Anna is praying and longing for the redemption of Israel. They are both living in a world of patient hope

LAUNCH:

- Go around the room and share about a person you know who has lived a long godly life.
- How do you suppose these people go about making their decisions?
- What was it about their life that made them so memorable to you? What do you suppose kept them going?

DISCOVERY AND UNDERSTANDING

Read Luke 2:22-40

- In his sermon on Sunday Ben noted that by presenting Jesus for purification, they were carrying out their religious duty. The term 'religious duty' has a bad press today – why do you think this is? In what ways is 'religious duty' bad for Christians and in what ways might it be good?
- An Anglican Eucharistic prayer describes it as being 'our duty and our joy' to give thanks and praise to God. How can these two concepts be reconciled? In what other areas of life should duty be combined with joy?
- As a result of his years of faithful obedience, Simeon had the amazing privilege and reward of being among the first to publically declare Jesus was the Messiah. What does Simeon mean by referring to Jesus as a light for revelation to the nations, and glory for God's people Israel in v. 32?
- What does he mean by saying this child will make many in Israel fall and rise again, and be a sign spoken against so that many hearts will be disclosed?
- Have you seen hearts 'disclosed' recently in response to the good news of Jesus Christ? What was revealed and is there anything you can do about it?
- What might Joseph and Mary be feeling after hearing Simeon's words?
- Ben also talked about finishing well in the Christian life. What are the factors or attitudes that might prevent us from doing this? What positive action should we be taking to deal with these things?

APPLICATION

- Meditate on the stories of Simeon and Anna this week. Put yourselves in their shoes, think about how they must have felt to see the Messiah they had been waiting and longing for. How can your life reflect this kind of hope and commitment?
- Ask God to give us more faith, in our personal lives, families, small groups, and church. Pray this faith will motivate us to become pure and to obey Christ more fully. Pray we will tender-heartedly encourage others toward more faithfulness.

Ref: IVP study guide on Luke & White River Church study guide on Luke (some questions have been amended).