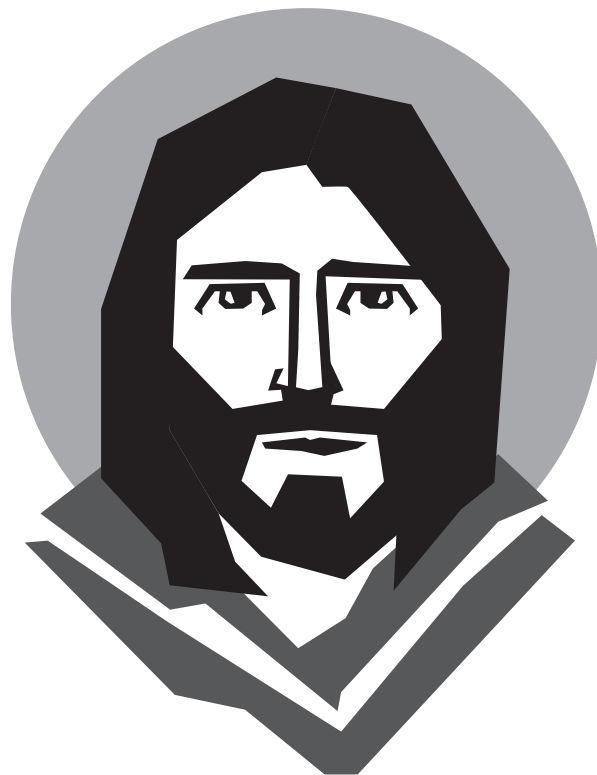
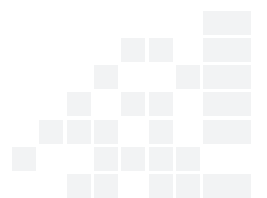
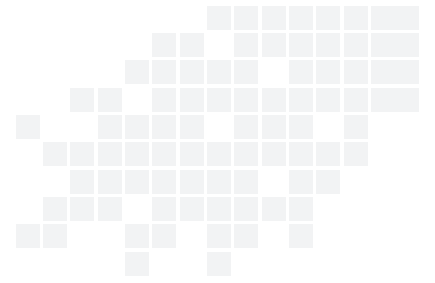


THE REAL JESUS



A study through the Gospel of Luke

BOOK 6: HIS PREPARATION





BECOMING A CHRISTIAN



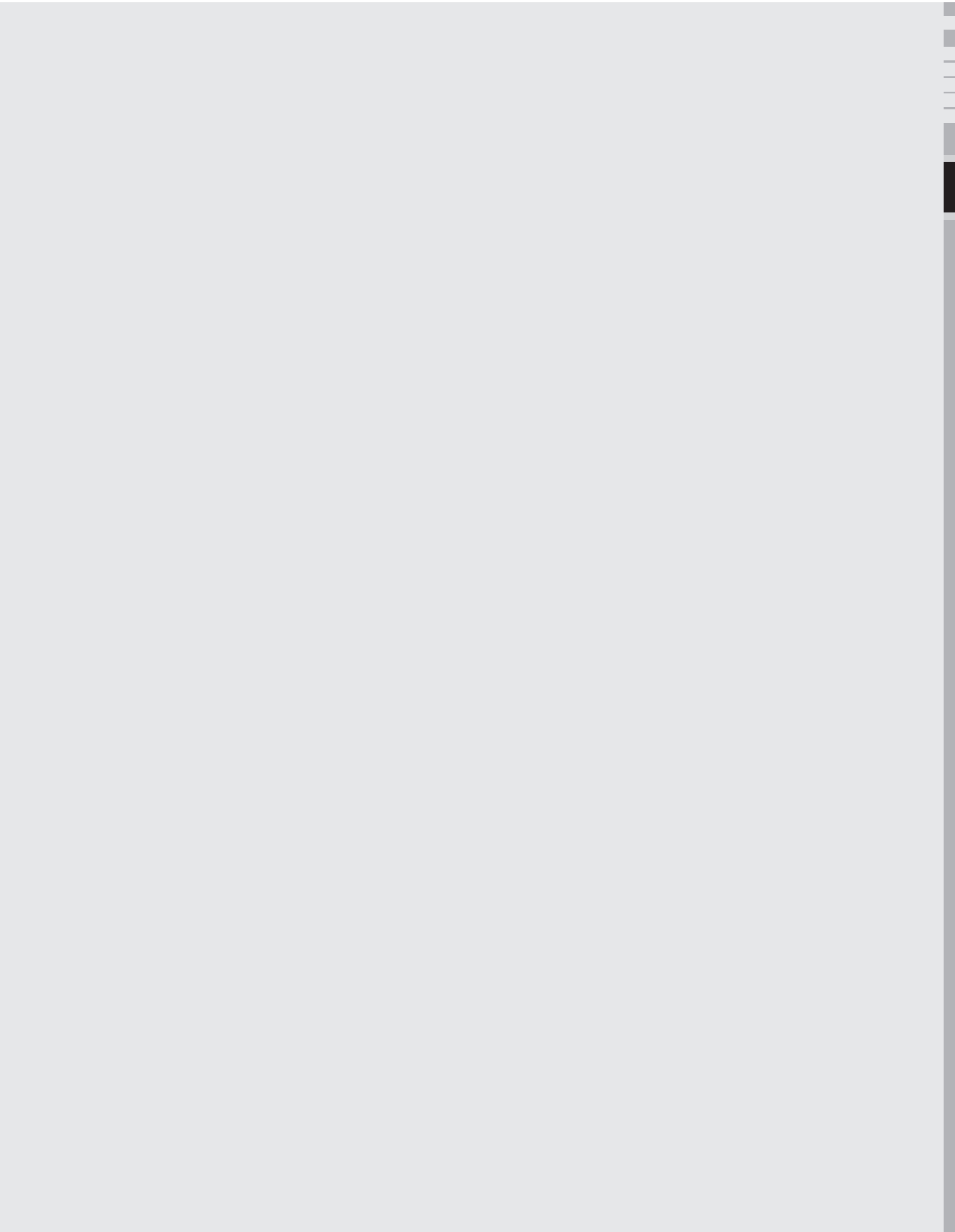
In the Bible, God reveals His truth about how to have eternal life by becoming a believer in the finished work of Jesus Christ. The believer is a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ, a true child of God, and one who has been saved by God according to God's grace (undeserved favor). *"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast"* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

How does one become a Christian?

- The Bible, God's word, says that eternal life (salvation) is a free gift of God which cannot be earned or deserved (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9).
- However, we also find in God's word that all people are born sinners and cannot save themselves from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death and separation from God. God's requirement is perfection and no one is perfect (Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:3-23; Ephesians 2:1-3).
- God tells us in His word that He is holy, meaning that He is perfect and that He is also just, meaning that He gives to sinners what is deserved, and because of His holiness and justice He must punish sinners. But thankfully, the Bible also says that God is loving and merciful and does not take pleasure in punishing sinners (Exodus 34:6-7; Ephesians 2:4-5).
- God has mercy on sinners by not giving them what they deserve. This is only possible because He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the God-man, to be the substitute for sinners bearing the penalty for their sin and satisfying God's justice (John 1:1,14; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 5:8).
- Jesus said that in order for anyone to have eternal life there must be repentance of sins and faith placed in His substitutionary death on the cross to pay for the penalty of one's sins. This faith must be in Jesus Christ alone not depending on anything else including "good works" (Mark 1:15b; Acts 20:21; Ephesians 2:8-9).

What then is the response to these things if one desires to have eternal life and become a Christian?

1. Pray and ask God to forgive you. The Bible says that you must repent of your sins, being ashamed of them, genuinely regretting and grieving over them, and firmly deciding to make an about-face and turn away from sin and your old lifestyle (Acts 3:19-20).
2. Pray and tell God that you place your faith in Jesus Christ alone to save you. The Bible says that for you to become a Christian, you must place your faith and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ who died on the cross to become your substitute and who took the penalty for your sin upon Himself once and for all (John 3:36).



THE REAL JESUS: HIS PREPARATION

Week Five | December 9, 2018 | *The Wait is Over*

PREPARATION

GETTING READY

Before your group meets next time, spend some time alone in God's Word reading through this week's text, Luke 2:21–38, 2 Corinthians 4:13, and Luke 6:45. Pray that God, through His Spirit, would bring to life the truth of this text and how it applies to your life.

THIS WEEK

KEY BIBLICAL TRUTH

The long-expected Savior came to earth to fulfill God's plan to redeem His people.

THEOLOGY APPLIED

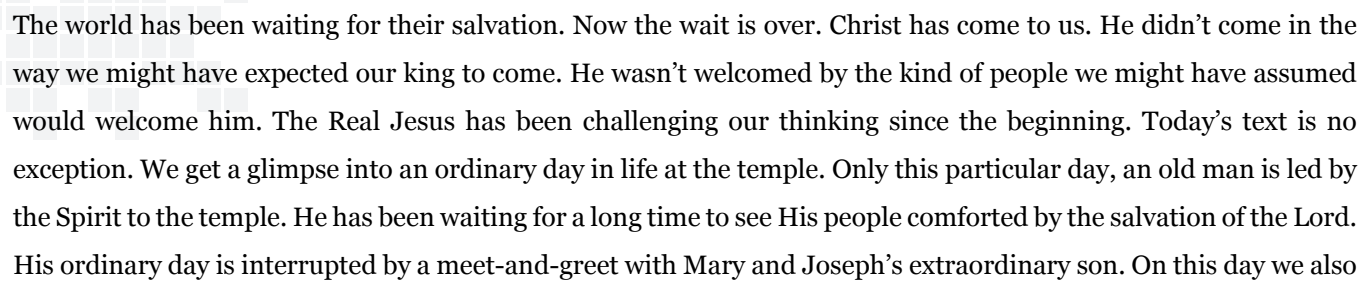
The reality of Jesus' coming should cause us to share the good news.

MEDITATE

"For my eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel" (Luke 2:30–32).

GETTING STARTED

+ *Use this section to prepare your heart and mind for the truths of this week. This section will help to introduce the focus of this week's lesson.*



The world has been waiting for their salvation. Now the wait is over. Christ has come to us. He didn't come in the way we might have expected our king to come. He wasn't welcomed by the kind of people we might have assumed would welcome him. The Real Jesus has been challenging our thinking since the beginning. Today's text is no exception. We get a glimpse into an ordinary day in life at the temple. Only this particular day, an old man is led by the Spirit to the temple. He has been waiting for a long time to see His people comforted by the salvation of the Lord. His ordinary day is interrupted by a meet-and-greet with Mary and Joseph's extraordinary son. On this day we also see a very old woman doing what she does every day. She's at the temple worshiping and waiting for the redemption of her people. Her devoted worship is interrupted as the object of her worship arrives.

Jesus appeared. He visited His people. He came to comfort and redeem us. And on this day, His parents brought Him to the temple to be presented to the Lord, like all first-born sons at that time. Mary and Joseph brought Him to the temple in Jerusalem to offer a poor man's sacrifice of two pigeons (v. 24). Do you think they understood the irony of bringing their son to the temple to offer an insufficient sacrifice, when one day He would be the all-sufficient sacrifice for God's people once and for all? These two pigeons represent an imperfect sacrificial system that their son would nullify through His perfect sacrifice.

The Real Jesus came to interrupt our ordinary days. He came to redeem our brokenness. He brings His sufficiency to our insufficiency. He involves Himself in our lives because of His great love for us and for the great glory of His Father. He comes to us so we can go to the Father. This is the good news. This is what we've been waiting for. Praise God, our wait is over because He sent His Son to us. This good news is ours to share. We need to speak up so others can know the Real Jesus, too!

Q: *Do you live like you're still waiting on salvation, or do you live confident that your salvation has come? What evidence could you give to support your answer?*

Q: *What stops you from speaking up about the good news that Jesus came for our salvation? How can we reorient our thinking to reject these obstacles?*



❏ UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

In today's lesson we will study the examples of faithful saints who saw the salvation they had been waiting for and spoke up to others about Jesus. We will find encouragement to take our place among those who wait on the Lord and tell others about Him.

1. SIMEON SEES THE SALVATION HE'S WAITED FOR
2. ANNA SHARES THE GOOD NEWS WITH THOSE WAITING FOR REDEMPTION
3. IT'S OUR TURN TO SPEAK UP

GOING DEEPER

+ *This next section will help show what God's Word says about this week's particular focus. Read through the Scripture passages and connect the text to this week's biblical truth.*

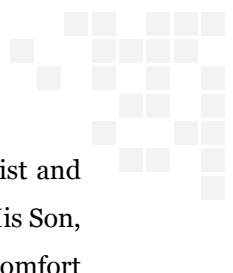
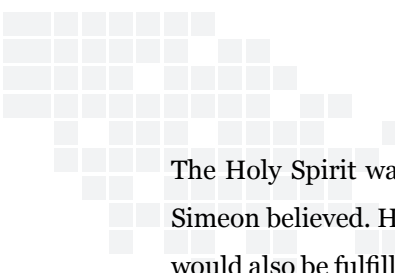
SIMEON SEES THE SALVATION HE'S WAITED FOR

❏ LUKE 2:21-35

Q: *What was Simeon waiting for?*

Q: *How did he know he wouldn't die before seeing the Christ?*

We are not a people known for waiting well. We've all witnessed the person in the car in front of us in the drive-through losing their mind because they're asked to wait more than sixty seconds for their hamburger. Children think it's torture having to wait until Christmas morning to open the presents that sit under the tree. We value instant gratification and quick fixes. But our text today shows us a man who is known for his waiting. The Bible says Simeon, a righteous and devout man, was "waiting for the consolation of Israel" (v. 25). Basically, he was waiting for God to come rescue His people. This day, Simeon would learn that the wait is over.



The Holy Spirit was upon Simeon (v. 25). The Spirit told Simeon he would not die before seeing the Christ and Simeon believed. He waited for the Lord to fulfill His promise to show him Jesus. God, in showing Simeon His Son, would also be fulfilling His promise to bring salvation to His people. Simeon believed God would rescue and comfort His people, so he waited. When Jesus was about six weeks old, the Holy Spirit came upon Simeon and led him to the temple to see his salvation (v. 27). In the same way, the Holy Spirit leads us to Jesus in our day. He leads us to our salvation.

Imagine Simeon's joy upon seeing his Savior. Surely, he played over and over in his mind how God would reveal the Christ to him. Did he imagine he would be bowing to his king? Maybe he thought his Lord would spot him in a crowd as He taught the multitudes and call him forward. However Simeon thought God would fulfill His promise to show him Jesus, I doubt he envisioned his elderly arms cradling an infant Savior. Often, the Real Jesus reveals Himself to us in unexpected ways. We must be prepared to meet Him on His terms, not ours.

Like everyone else surrounding the birth of Christ, Simeon wastes no time in blessing the Lord for revealing His Son. He says he can die in peace now because God has done what He promised and shown him His salvation. Simeon's concern is not only for himself, but for the whole world. He sees in the face of Jesus a light for the Gentiles and glory for the Jews. Jesus is the light (John 3:19), and the light exposes darkness. He exposes our sins. Simeon wisely warns Mary and Joseph that their son will be opposed, because He is the Light and we love the darkness.

We naturally rebel against anything that threatens us. The light threatens our darkness. We want to keep dancing in the dark while we seek the benefits of the Light. But the Real Jesus won't allow us to dwell in both spaces. He wants us all in. He rejects our half-hearted attempts at Christianity, asking, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you" (Luke 6:46)? He tells the Church in Laodicea, "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16).

We need to be rescued from our rebellious ways. Simeon waited to see the face of his Rescuer, and Jesus was his reward. Jesus overcomes our rebellion. He invites us to lay down our weapons and cling to our Father. He welcomes former rebels as sons and daughters into His kingdom. This is what Simeon waited for. God showed Simeon His salvation. Very good things come to those who wait on the Lord.



Q: *Share a time when you had the privilege of waiting on the Lord. How did the waiting grow your faith?*

Q: *Our text says Mary and Joseph marveled at what Simeon said about Jesus. What about Jesus makes you marvel?*

ANNA SHARES THE GOOD NEWS WITH THOSE WAITING FOR REDEMPTION

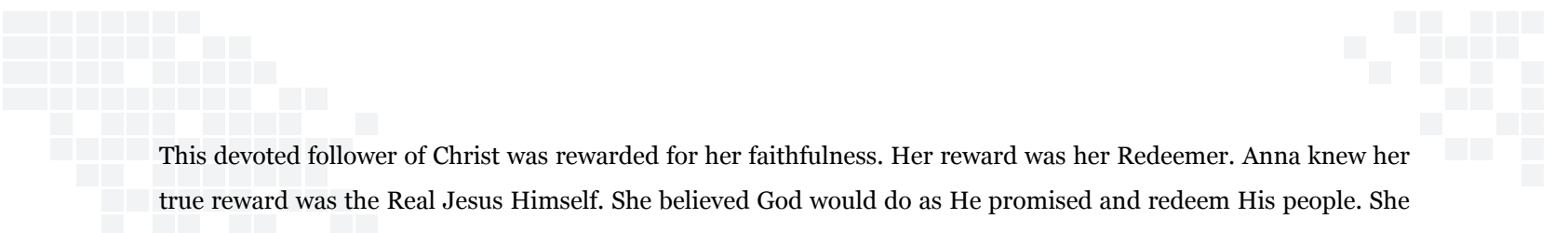
☞ **LUKE 2:36-38**

Q: *Approximately how old was Anna?*

Q: *What were the people she spoke to waiting for?*

When Jesus entered the world, there were people waiting for Him. God continues to reveal Himself to us through people He has chosen to deliver the good news of His arrival. He chose Anna, a prophetess. We mustn't mistake Anna's title as an affront to biblical complementarianism. Anna is not a pastor. She is a woman who spoke God's Word. After being married for only seven short years, Anna is also a widow who has now lived to the age of eighty-four. In using Anna as His mouthpiece, God reminds us how He values the widow and the elderly. As His image bearers (Genesis 1:27), we will do the same. Anna has another distinction. She was wholly devoted to the Lord. "She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day" (v. 37). What a testimony! Anna is a woman with nearly a century of faithful devotion to God. As her actions speak for her, God uses her words to speak for Him. When the people gathered at the temple on what they thought was an ordinary day, Anna used her voice to thank God and, "speak of Him to all who were waiting on the redemption of Jerusalem" (v. 38).

Like Zechariah, Anna thanks God for visiting and redeeming His people (Luke 1:68). She believes the newborn in the temple that day is the Christ. She believes, and she speaks. She blesses all those in the temple who are waiting for redemption. Thabiti Anyabwile suggests in *Christ-Centered Exposition (Luke)* that Anna starts "gossiping" the gospel. Anna arrived at the temple that day prepared to worship, fast, and pray. Instead, she encountered the object of her worship, the Real Jesus, and became an evangelist, sharing the good news of God's Son coming to redeem them. Anna promoted Christ to those waiting for Him. What a privilege to contribute to this work of heralding the kingdom of Christ to those waiting for redemption.



This devoted follower of Christ was rewarded for her faithfulness. Her reward was her Redeemer. Anna knew her true reward was the Real Jesus Himself. She believed God would do as He promised and redeem His people. She waited for almost a century. She waited with others in the temple. She saw her redemption and spoke up, telling others about the One who came to redeem them. She gossiped the gospel. We need more saints like her who will use their voices in “gospel gossip.”

❓ *How does Anna’s story inform our ideas about the elderly and the mission of God? How can we challenge the elderly we know with Anna’s example of devotion?*

❓ *Are you a “gospel gossip?” Consider what you promote to your friends and family. Do you need to redirect your conversations with others to share the good news? How can we encourage one another to be “gospel gossips?”*

IT’S OUR TURN TO SPEAK UP

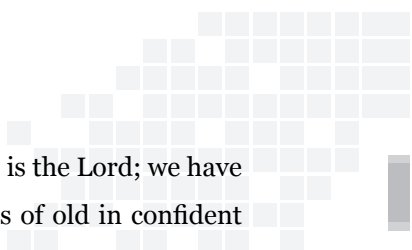

❏ **2 CORINTHIANS 4:13 AND LUKE 6:45.**

❓ *According to 2 Corinthians 4:13, what should we speak?*

❓ *The mouth speaks out of the abundance of what?*

We’ve studied Simeon and how he was waiting to see his salvation. We’ve studied Anna and how she spoke up to the people gathered at the temple waiting for their redemption. But where do we fit into this narrative of waiting people? What do you wait for?

We contribute to a rich and diverse lineage of saints who wait for the Lord. Before Jacob died, he blessed his sons and said, “I wait for Your salvation, O Lord” (Genesis 49:18). With forward-looking faith, Isaiah said, “It will be



said on that day, ‘Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, that He might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation’” (Isaiah 25:9). We join the saints of old in confident expectation of seeing Jesus. We no longer wait for the Messiah to come visit us to secure our redemption. He came in Simeon and Anna’s day to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). We now wait for His return. He says in Revelation 22:12, “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.” When He comes a second time, it will be as judge. Because we believe this, we must speak up about His return.

The world trusts in the sufficiency of their works. But we know we can only trust in the sufficiency of Christ’s redemptive work. We believe that the Real Jesus is our salvation, not our empty works. “We will never again say, ‘Our God,’ to the work of our own hands” (Hosea 14:3). Our good deeds are not enough to save us. This is what we believe, therefore what we speak (2 Corinthians 4:13). Scripture says that our words reflect what’s in our hearts (Luke 6:45). Our hearts trust in the Real Jesus and His sufficiency. We wait for our king to return and take us to the home our souls long for. Are we speaking up about the eternal home our Father is preparing for us? Are we sharing with others how they can exchange their empty works for Christ’s redemptive work and be welcomed into God’s family?

If you want to know what your heart truly believes, consider your words. Our faith is expressed through our words. We speak what we believe, and we believe our heavenly Father will fulfill all His promises in the Real Jesus. We trust He will never abandon us (Deuteronomy 31:6). We believe we will be glorified just as we have been called to Him (Romans 8:30). We believe, therefore we speak. We share in the faith of Simeon and Anna. Now it’s our turn to speak up. We must use our voices on behalf of God to beg others to be reconciled to Him (2 Corinthians 5:20). It’s our turn to “go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere. Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.” Jesus was born, and we believe that changes everything. It’s our turn to speak up and tell the world salvation has come!

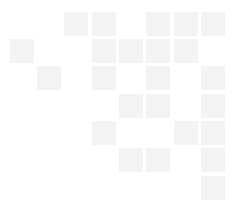
Q: *What do you put your faith in? What or who are you expecting to save you? How can we encourage one another to wait for the salvation of the Lord as we reject our efforts to save ourselves?*

Q: *Are there people in your group who speak up to share the good news of Jesus coming to save sinners? Take some time to encourage them and consider how you can share the good news this week.*



NEXT STEPS

+ *Connect the truths from God's Word to your daily life. Process how what you've learned this week will impact the way you live beyond today and into the future.*

- 
- ♀: *Simeon was waiting for his people to be comforted by the Lord. How can we be people who seek the good of others? What encouragement do we receive from our text to equip us to bless others?*
 - ♀: *Do you struggle with feeling too old or too insignificant to be useful to the Lord? How does Anna's bold witness empower you to share the good news with others?*
 - ♀: *When was the last time you spoke up about what you believe? Spend some time encouraging one another and offering accountability in "gospel gossip." Share stories of God's grace in your proclamation of Him to others.*

PRAY

+ *Use this prayer point to connect your time in prayer to this week's focus.*

- **Father, thank You for Your Word. Thank You for the examples of your faithful servants to encourage us. Stir our hearts in belief. Forgive us for relying on our own efforts to save ourselves. Give us the grace to trust the Real Jesus for our salvation and to speak up to others about how they can be saved.**



COMMENTARY

LUKE 2:34-35 A sign that is opposed foretells future opposition to Jesus. Sword refers to Mary’s future sorrow at Jesus’ crucifixion (see John 19:25).

LUKE 2:22 “the time ... for their purification.” Forty days after Jesus’ birth—the time from the circumcision (on the eighth day) plus the thirty-three days of Leviticus 12:3–4 counted inclusively.

**All exegetical content and commentary resourcing for this lesson was provided by the ESV Study Bible Commentary Notes and Christ-Centered Exposition (Luke).*

