

The Song Of Simeon

Luke 2:21-35

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I want to start in Luke 2:7 to set the context of our text, Luke 2:21-35. “And she...” that is, Mary “...brought forth her first-born Son...” that is, Jesus “...and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” So now when we come to verse 21, we see that Jesus has been born. We also know that because in verse 11, the angel said, “For there is born to you this day in the city of David...” which is Bethlehem “...a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” So in the context of our passage, Jesus has already been born.

Now the scene moves from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, from a humble stable to a beautiful Temple. Dr. Luke now tells us about three, important meetings that took place in the Temple. And what we read in our text is only found in the Gospel of Luke. This is unique to Luke’s Gospel, so that’s what makes the Gospel of Luke such a blessing to study.

There are three, important meetings where we will find the infant Jesus. Chapter 2 was the only place in the Bible where we get insight about the infant Jesus after His birth. As the boy Jesus, the child Jesus, we’re going to look at that the next time.

But now we’re going to see these three, important meetings. First, we’re going to see the infant Jesus meets the law of Moses; second, we’re going to see the infant Jesus meeting the old man, Simeon; and three, the infant Jesus meets the widow, Anna. We’ll look at the first two meetings in our passage today.

The first meeting is in Luke 2:21-24. We see the infant Jesus meets the law of Moses. “And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus...” which means “God is salvation” “...the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.” We read that in chapter 1, when the angel Gabriel gave the name Jesus to Joseph and Mary, which he made clear to them. “Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord.” That’s the law of Moses. “‘Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord’), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, ‘A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.’”

As I studied this passage, which I have preached through many times over the years, I thought it interesting that a lot of commentaries skipped over it. Or they combine this story with Simeon and Anna’s stories in the Temple. But I believe that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,” 2 Timothy 3:16. And I do acknowledge that all Scripture is given by inspiration equally. But there are some Scriptures that are more important to the believer today. Not that we should neglect the less important, but there are Scriptures that are more applicable to us. But all Scripture is equally inspired by God. And all Scripture is profitable to a certain degree.

What do we mean that Jesus meets “the law of Moses”? In verse 22, we have reference to “the

law of Moses.” When I draw attention to a text, you may want to make a note in your Bible. “The law of Moses” is mentioned in verse 22, and in verses 23 and 24 as “the law of the Lord.” And in verse 27, it says, “And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law...” Also, in verse 39, it says, “They had performed all things according to the law of the Lord.”

We know that Moses authored the first five books of the Bible. They’re called the Pentateuch. The Jews classify those first five books as “the law of the Lord” or “the law of Moses,” more specifically. So Jesus came—and this is why Luke includes it in his Gospel—to redeem us from the curse of the law. Luke is recording the fact that Jesus, being God and also man, was born under the law.

Let me give you the way that Jesus came to redeem us from the curse of the law. There are three ways. First, by being born under the law. That’s what we see in this passage: we see Jesus being circumcised, we see Mary being purified and no doubt they paid the five shekels to redeem the first-born son. They were under the law of Moses. So Jesus was born under the law, Galatians 4:4-7. Verses 4-5 say, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

The second way Jesus came to save us from the curse of the law was by keeping the law Himself. Jesus perfectly and completely fulfilled the law in the way that He lived. In Matthew 5:17, when Jesus was giving His sermon on the mount, He said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” So all that the law prefigured or prophesied or pictured in type, Jesus was its fulfillment, and He lived perfectly according to the law. Jesus is the only person who ever lived on planet earth without sin. You may live with somebody who thinks they are without sin, but only Jesus was perfect and sinless. He was born under the law to redeem us from the law and kept the law perfectly.

Third, He became the penalty of the law on the Cross. This is what we are so familiar with in the new covenant. In Galatians 3:13, Paul says, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’).” That’s a reference to the Cross of Christ.

This is the thought that is very near and dear to our hearts. The law condemns us to die. “The soul that sins shall die,” it says in Ezekiel 18:20. And Romans 3:23 says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” “There is none righteous, no, not one,” Romans 3:10. As a result, we are destined to die. But Jesus came, taking on a body of sinless humanity, being truly man and truly God, and went voluntarily to the Cross to substitutionarily die for us, taking our place. If you don’t understand the substitutionary death of Christ, you don’t understand Christianity. You miss the point.

There is a modern-day movement called progressive Christianity that is apostasy or old liberalism. These progressives preach a contemporary Jesus; it’s not the Jesus of the Bible.

They say Jesus just came to be love, to be nice, to be a good helper, to be a good example and to give us wonderful teaching. They miss the purpose of the Cross: His atoning sacrifice. They miss man's sin and the need for a Savior. They miss the fact that the Cross of Christ was a substitutionary, atoning death for our sins. "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." Jesus took the curse for us. The wrath of God the Father was actually meted out on God the Son instead of on us. He took our sin and our penalty. Understand the significance and meaning of the Cross.

So we see here that He would redeem us from the curse of the law, which is judgment and condemnation. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved," John 3:17. The world was already under condemnation. So the Cross was the idea of substitution and satisfaction and propitiation. Propitiation means that Jesus satisfied the demands of God's righteous law on the Cross.

Now I want you to notice in our text that Jesus was born into a godly home. Joseph and Mary were keeping the law in three ways. First, in verse 21, they circumcised Jesus. "And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb." Jesus Christ needed to be circumcised. So they brought Him to the Temple eight days after He was born to be circumcised. Leviticus 12:3 says, "On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised." Eight days after the birth of a male child, he was to be circumcised.

Circumcision was a sign of the covenant God made with Abraham in Genesis 17. It doesn't save you as a Jew. But it identified you with the covenant God made with Abraham. So even Jesus, who was sinless, had this symbolic rite taken place; He was circumcised according to the law of Moses. Donald Grey Barnhouse said that Christ's circumcision was His first suffering for us.

"If Jesus was sinless, why did He have to be baptized?" He didn't have to be baptized; He voluntarily was baptized in order to be identified with sinners and to do what the law required. He came to fulfill the demands of the law in His birth and in His life and in His death.

Second, Mary and Joseph kept the law of Moses by the purification of Mary, verse 22. "When the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord." This was talked about in Leviticus 12:2-6. Whenever a male baby was born, there would be a 40-day period of purification for the mother. She would complete that with sacrifices to the Lord. So Mary went through this period of purification.

So there is the eighth-day circumcision, the 40-day purification after which she would bring a sacrifice to the Lord and be purified. And third, Mary and Joseph kept the law of Moses by the redemption of their first-born son. Exodus 13:12 says, "You shall set apart..." or "sanctify" "...to the Lord all that open the womb." In our text in verse 23, it says, "(as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord')." Notice that this verse is in parenthesis. It's a parenthetical statement.

So they came to present Him to the Lord, because it is written in the law of the Lord. This is Exodus 13:12. "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord." Why is that? When the Israelites came out in the exodus, the first-born of the Egyptians were killed by the death angel because the blood was not applied to their house, but the first-born of the Israelites were spared because their first-born belong to God. So Mary and Joseph had to redeem their child back. Someone said that they had to redeem the Redeemer; they had to pay five shekels to redeem Jesus back from the law that God gave in Exodus 13 and Leviticus 12 and also in Numbers 18:16.

So Jesus came to redeem us from the law of God by being born under the law, living perfectly according to the law and then dying to pay the penalty of the law so we might be free. We owed a debt we could not pay; He paid a debt He did not owe.

"Jesus paid it all,

All to Him I owe;

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow."

So Jesus meets the law of Moses.

The second section we will look at is verses 25-35, the infant Jesus meets Simeon. This is one of my favorite stories in the Bible. If I were doing a movie of the life of Christ, I would make this a beautiful scene of Mary and Joseph going through these rites and rituals fulfilling the law in the Temple. By the way, when they did sacrifice, they probably gave two pigeons or two turtledoves, indicating they were poor. God made a provision that if you couldn't afford a lamb for the purification and the redemption of your son, you could actually pay for two pigeons or two turtledoves. It's believed that is what Mary and Joseph did indicating that they were poor peasants.

Now the infant Jesus meets Simeon in the Temple. Notice verse 25: "And behold..." or "look" "...there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him." When Mary and Joseph were in the Temple, they encountered Simeon. The name Simeon means "God has heard."

All that we know about Simeon is only found in Luke. Everything in Luke 1 and 2 are unique only to his Gospel. So we only meet Simeon in Luke 2, but there is still a lot we don't know about him. We don't know his age. If I made a movie of this episode, I would have a very old Simeon. It's interesting that we assume Simeon is old, because he said, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace." Yet the Bible doesn't say he was old. But some theorize he may have been 100-112 years old.

Also the Bible doesn't tell us his occupation. Was he a priest? Was he a prophet? Was he a Sanhedrin or a Pharisee? It doesn't tell us where he lived. It only says that he was in Jerusalem at the Temple. But it doesn't say he lived in the area. It doesn't tell us what he looked like. It doesn't tell us about his family. One commentator said he was the son of the famous rabbi, Hillel, and the father of Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul the Apostle, which Jewish tradition teaches, but the Bible is silent on this. Nor does it tell us if he was rich or poor.

But the Holy Spirit does tell us what He wants us to know about Simeon. Isn't it interesting that when Luke wrote this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God the Spirit wanted us to know about Simeon's character. There are four things to note about Simeon, which should be true of us as well. First, he was "just," verse 25. It could also be translated "righteous," which means "right with God." I believe that it was because of his faith.

We look back at the Cross, believe and are justified. But the Old Testament saints looked ahead by faith. Abraham believed God, and God gave Abraham righteousness. Abraham "believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness," Genesis 15:6. Salvation comes the same way, whether it happens under the Old Testament or the New Testament.

Sometimes people ask, "Well, how were they saved in the Old Testament? By the law?" No. No one was ever saved by the law; the law brings a curse and judgment. They were saved by faith, believing in God's promises, looking to the Savior, who had not yet come. We are also saved by faith, looking back at the Cross. So Simeon was just or righteous before God. We too can be justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

Second, verse 25, as to Simeon's character, he was "devout." "Devout" carries the idea of being cautious. Cautious in what way? To keep God's laws. So he had the righteousness of God, and he kept obedience to the law of God. We would say he was "God-fearing"; he constantly obeyed the Word of God. Psalm 25:14 says, "The secret of the Lord..." in your relationship to God "...is with those who fear Him." So we need to be righteous, cautious and obedient to God's Word.

Third, Simeon was expectant, verse 25. He was "waiting for the Consolation of Israel." What does "Consolation" mean? It's taken from Isaiah 40:1, where the prophet said, "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" says your God." The consolation is the comfort or the hope of Messiah. So Simeon had a Messianic expectation; he believed God's promise, the Scripture that said the Messiah would come. He was a Bible-believing Jew. He believed God would fulfill His promise to send the seed of the woman to bruise the head of the serpent, Genesis 3:15. The promised seed, the Messiah, would come through the lineage of Abraham and David. So Simeon was an expectant believer in God. And it brought comfort to his heart.

We as Christians cannot only be righteous and devout or God-fearing, but we should be living in expectation. These qualities should be true of us. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me," John 14:1, and again in verse 27 said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Then in John 14:2-3, He said, "In My Father's

house are many mansions..." or abiding places "...if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am..." His Father's house or heaven "...there you may be also."

Every Christian should be living in expectation of that blessed hope. Are you? Are you righteous by faith in Christ? Are you devout in keeping the Word of God? Are you living in expectation that Christ may come at any moment to bring your heart comfort?

Fourth, Simeon was empowered or anointed by the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit was upon him." This is very interesting, because it is still Old Testament dispensation. It is pre-Pentecost or pre-Acts 2, when the church was born. We now have the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, the sealing of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This Old Testament believer, Simeon, was empowered by the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit was on him and not in him. "The Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit anointed him and revealed truth to him. And verse 27 says, "So he came by the spirit into the temple." So the Holy Spirit was all over this old man, Simeon. He was anointed by the Spirit, he was taught by the Spirit and he was led by the Spirit.

Simeon was righteous before God, cautious to obey God, expectantly looking for the promise of God and surrendered to the Spirit of God. So should we be, as well. Let the Holy Spirit fill you and empower you. So if you're born again, you have the Holy Spirit living inside you. But the questions are, "Does He control you? Does He fill you and empower you? Is He leading and guiding you? Is He directing your life?" We should be filled and controlled and guided by the Spirit.

Now note God's special revelation to Simeon, in verse 26: "And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" or the Messiah. The Bible does not tell us how the Holy Spirit revealed this to Simeon. Some say a dream, some say a vision, some say an audible voice or maybe just an internal impression, but we don't know. My theory is that he was reading Scripture, reading Daniel 9, that has the 70-weeks prophecy predicting when the Messiah would come in His first Advent. If he figured it out, he would have realized that Messiah would come at any moment.

However it happened, Simeon was promised that he wouldn't die until he saw the Messiah. Think about how cool that is. He's indestructible! Nothing could happen to him to cause his death, because he hadn't seen the Messiah yet! What a great promise God made to this godly man, Simeon!

Then Simeon sang his Spirit-filled song in verses 28-32. "He took Him up in his arms and blessed God." So Simeon came into the Temple, saw Mary, Joseph and the baby and grabbed up Jesus in his arms, "And said: 'Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation...' which he says while looking at this baby "...which You have prepared before the face of all peoples..." He is to be "...a light to

bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.” So Simeon sings the Nunc dimittis, which is taken from the Latin translation “now...depart,” from verse 29.

Someone said that Simeon’s heart was experiencing God’s peace, his eyes were expecting God’s promise and his lips were expressing God’s praise. This old man, no doubt ready to depart and ready to go to be with the Lord, had experienced God’s peace in his heart, was expecting God’s promise looking for the Messiah and with his lips expressed God’s praise.

The song of Simeon has three characteristics. First, it was a worship song, verses 28-29. “He took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: ‘Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word.’” So here comes this man Simeon, and he actually takes the baby Jesus out of Mary’s arms. She doesn’t know what’s going on. She’s probably calling for Temple security.

Where it says they went into “the temple” in verse 27, it means the outer courtyard, not the inner sanctuary. It was probably in the court of the women, because Mary was with Joseph. So Simeon sees them, being led to the Temple by the Holy Spirit. He knew that was the Messiah and took the baby up in his arms.

Verse 28, “He took Him up in his arms and blessed God.” Then he calls Him “Lord.” It is from the Greek, which means “sovereign master.” From the Greek word we get our word “despot.” It’s not the Greek word Kurios. Then Simeon calls himself a “servant” or “doulos.” And he said he was ready to “depart in peace.” The word “depart” is a reference to death.

When you die, you don’t stop existing. You just move your residence. You depart. You don’t disappear. You don’t go in a poof of smoke. You don’t just dissolve into thin air. You move from this body to the Lord, or you’re separate from the Lord for all eternity.

The etymology of the word “death” I found very interesting. It is the word “separate.” Death means separation. Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the physical body. Spiritual death is the separation from God in sin. Eternal death is the separation from God, which is what we call hell. So we, as believers, have eternal life, because we are born again of the Spirit. We may die physically, but our spirit leaves our body, and we go to be with the Lord.

The word “depart” is a word-picture used of a prisoner coming out of a prison cell. It’s used of a ship loosed from the dock and its moorings set to sail on the sea. It was used for a tent when they would pull up the stakes, break camp and depart. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:1 that our bodies are tents. “We know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Some of our tents are leaning right now, flapping in the wind.

So Simeon was ready to die. Are you?

Second, not only was Simeon’s song a worship song; it was a salvation song, verses 30-31.

Simeon was looking at the baby Jesus and said, "My eyes have seen Your salvation." I like that statement. Salvation is a Person. It's not a code of conduct. It's not a rite or ritual or ceremony. It's not a belief system. It's the Person, Jesus Christ. When he looked at the baby Jesus he basically said, "This is God's salvation." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me," John 14:6. So the Person of Christ is salvation. Salvation is in a person; it's called "the Incarnation," God in flesh. Jesus is perfectly suited to be our Savior.

And verse 31 says, "...which You have prepared before the face of all peoples." The word "prepared" means "suited" or "equipped." Jesus was perfectly prepared, suited or equipped to be the Savior of mankind. Why is that? Number one, because He is God. Only God can save mankind. Number two, because He is man, He had to die as our substitute. Number three, because He is a sinless human being, He died in our place. Number four, He died in our place as a substitute. And number five, He rose from the dead.

So this is the heart of Christianity. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him..." not about Him or follow His preaching or teaching, but "believes in Him" "...should not perish but have everlasting life," John 3:16. So your faith must be in Christ alone. I can't emphasize that enough. We sing:

"Nothing in my hand I bring;

Simply to Thy Cross I cling."

If you were standing before God in heaven and He said, "Why should I let you in heaven?" what would be your answer? "I'm a good person." But "There is none righteous, no, not one....All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Romans 3:10 and 23. "But I went to church! Not only that—I went to Revival Christian Fellowship! And I've been baptized! I've been confirmed!" On and on the list goes.

No. What you need to be able to say from your heart is, "I believe that Jesus died for my sins, He rose again from the dead and my faith is in Christ and in Christ alone." The Bible says, "By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast," Ephesians 2:8-9. So there is no boasting in heaven; we're saved by grace through faith in the perfectly suited, perfectly fitted Savior, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins.

Third, Simeon's song was a missionary song, verses 31-32. Simeon said, in verse 31, "of all people." "All people" would include the Gentiles. And then he says, "...a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."

I think it's so interesting that in sequential order, Gentiles is mentioned before Israel. In God's plan, Israel was elected, then Israel was rejected and then Israel will be restored. During this temporary time of rejection and blindness of the Jews, the Gentiles are coming into the kingdom of God. Wild olive branches, the Gentiles, are being grafted in to the promises made

to the Jewish fathers of old. It is all part of God's master plan, and Simeon saw the whole plan.

God will save the Gentiles. Even the early church, in the book of Acts, had a difficult time accepting the fact that God could save Gentiles. They didn't believe it could happen. God had to save Cornelius just to blow their minds and tell them to "not call any man common or unclean," Acts 10:28. So Jesus would be a light to lighten the Gentiles. He would come before the face of all people. Remember that God told Abraham, "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed," Genesis 22:18. And the prophet Isaiah said in chapter 9, verse 2, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." And verse 32 of our text says, "...and the glory of Your people Israel."

Now in verses 33-35, Simeon stops praising God in song and starts to prophesy of what happens now that Christ has come and then speaks specifically to Mary. "And Joseph and His mother marveled..." or were "blown away" or "outside themselves." They had seen angels and shepherds and knew all about who Jesus was, but Simeon's song just blew them away. "...at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, 'Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against...that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.'" Then he speaks directly to Mary and says, "(Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also)."

that of a stone, a sign and a sword.

First, the stone is seen in verse 34. He said, "This Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel." There are a couple of ways you could interpret this. It could be that the fall and rising is of the same person who humbles himself, repents and believes Christ and God lifts him up. But most Bible scholars believe—and I concur—that it is talking about Jesus Christ, the Messiah who came, being a stone that was rejected, and those who rejected Him would fall in judgment under the wrath of God. And those who accept Christ who be risen or lifted up, 1 Peter 2:7-8. And the Bible declares that Jesus Christ, for many of the Jews, is a "skandalon" in the Greek, or "a stone of stumbling." He is an offense; they stumble over Christ.

In Romans 9, 10 and 11 we see that the temporary blindness happens, in part, to much of Israel until the Gentiles are brought in. Then their eyes will be opened, and they will be restored at the Second Coming of Christ. All this fits together. So the fall and rising is the stumbling stone "and a rock of offense" to those who reject Christ, or to Christians Jesus is "the Rock of our salvation," Psalm 95:1. When we trust in Jesus, He sets our feet on solid rock.

Second, the word-picture is of a "sign," in verses 34-35. You have to take note of the parenthetical statement. He shall be "a sign which will be spoken against" or "will bring opposition or refusal." And verse 35 says, "...that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." So the sign reveals the thoughts of our hearts.

Have you ever noticed when you are in a crowd of people that you could be getting along fine talking until you bring up Jesus? Then the hair stands up on the back of their neck, a cloud

comes over their face and they say, "Jesus! I don't want to hear about Jesus!" Jesus is the dividing line. Where you are with Jesus determines where you are with God and where you will spend your eternity.

Jesus is a sign pointing to something. It is pointing to your heart. Where do you stand with God? If you're wrong about Jesus, you're wrong about God. You can't have God without Jesus. Jesus is God. He's the way to God. So Jesus is the sign. He came into the world to divide the world; some fall and stumble at the stone, and some are brought up to salvation by trusting in Christ. Some have a hard heart. Notice the end of verse 35, which says, "The thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Christ reveals what's in our heart.

Third, in verse 35, we see that Jesus is a "sword." Verse 34 says, "Simeon...said to Mary His mother...." So these words were spoken directly to Mary: "Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also." This started early for Mary. At the end of Luke 2, when Mary and Joseph go to Jerusalem for the Passover and then start home, Mary thinks Jesus is with Joseph and Joseph thinks Jesus is with Mary. But when they get halfway home, He can't be found.

I grew up in a big family, and when we stopped at a gas station, everyone had to use the restroom. Mom and Dad had to count to make sure we were all back in the car. We had role call before we drove away. Years ago at my former church in San Bernardino, when I got home and my wife got home, we got a call from the church, "Hey, you left some of your kids here at church." I felt like saying, "Keep 'em! We'll get 'em next Sunday." More than once we left our kids at the church. I thought they were with Kristy. She thought they were with me.

So when Mary met Jesus in the temple, she said to Him, verses 48-49, "Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And Jesus said, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" And a sword started to pierce through her heart. Then she had thoughts that Jesus had "lost His marbles," and she sent the family to rescue them. She saw the opposition turning against Him. But I think it culminates in the primary meaning of the "sword."

By the way, the Greek word for "sword" here means "a large sword." And in the Greek, it means that this sword will continually, habitually go through Mary's heart. It's a reference to the Cross. And Mary stood at the foot of the Cross and watched Jesus die.

You women who are mothers, try to imagine watching your child crucified on a cross!

Mary had heard the angels rejoicing and heaven celebrating. There was Elizabeth's song and Zacharias' song, all the singing and joy because Christ was born as the Savior of the world. But there's also going to be a sword, because Mary was going to stand at the foot of the Cross weeping. And Jesus would say to Mary, "Woman, behold your son!" To John He would say, "Behold your mother," John 19:26-27. He would take care of His mother when He died on the Cross, because the sword was piercing through her heart.

God has provided the perfect, suitable Savior in the Person of Jesus Christ. There is no other. No one can save but Jesus Christ. Simeon looked at the baby and said, "My eyes have seen

Your salvation." Salvation is in the Person of Jesus Christ.

And we must look to Jesus by faith. Have your eyes been opened? Have you received Him? And only then, when you believe and trust in Jesus, will you be ready to depart in peace.

Are you ready to die right now? If you were to die right now and move out of your body, where would you go? And it can happen in a split second. "Well, I'm young and healthy." That doesn't protect you from an automobile accident.

Are you ready to depart in peace? Simeon said, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace." Are you ready? Simeon was ready because he saw Jesus. The minute you look to Jesus and put your trust and faith in Him, your sins are forgiven and you too will be ready for heaven.