

Anticipation

Season of Great Anticipation

- time off work
- family and friends
- gifts and celebration
- great expectations
- often a gap between reality and expectations
- challenge you to anticipate God's gift to mankind, and his promise to return for his children
- Luke 2:22-38

Anticipation

“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 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”, 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.” 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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

Anticipation

“The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 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, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem”

Anticipation

1. Simeon

- told he was righteous & devout
- waiting for the 'consolation' of Israel
- bad time in the nation – under occupation, beaten down

a) Knew He Would See The Messiah

- longed to see the promised comforter & king
- quietly watching for what God was doing – ready

Anticipation

b) Praise was His First Response

- as you have promised.....
- now I can depart in peace – not demanding to see the results or end, confident in God's plan

c) Proclaimed the Truth of This Arrival

- here in plain sight for all to see and respond to
- a light for revelation to the gentiles
- glory for your chosen people Israel

Anticipation

d) Wisdom & Encouragement for the Parents

- blessed them
- honest about the trials ahead!
 - rising and falling of many
 - sign to be spoken against when hearts revealed
 - sword will pierce your soul too

Anticipation

2. Anna

- widowed and devoted to prayer and fasting
- convinced God would be faithful to his promise

a) Praise was Her First Response

- gave thanks to God

b) Proclaimed the Truth

- spoke of the child to all looking forward to the redemption of Israel

Anticipation

3. Mary & Joseph

- presenting Jesus at Temple – doing the right thing
- allowed a stranger to hold their baby

a) Marveled at the Message

- another quiet confirmation of God's care
- accepted blessing

b) Received Difficult News

- conflict would be in the future – difficult for them

Anticipation

4. Lessons In Anticipation

a) Know what God Promises and count on it

- know the bible, be clear about God's plan
- treasure his promises, wait on Him to deliver
- study, hide away in your heart, wait quietly for Him

b) Pay Attention to Your Spiritual Health

- are you doing the right things?
- prayer, praise, spending time with God, devoted to discipleship

Anticipation

c) Be Responsive to the Holy Spirit

- vs.27 – moved by the Holy Spirit
- when they saw the child, they knew
- are you sensitive to God's leading, to his voice
- are you open to his direction and leading

d) Make Your First Response Praise

- acknowledge what God is doing
- thank Him for what is happening

Anticipation

e) Act In Obedience

- proclaiming the truth
- pointing others to God's hand at work
- celebrate the part God allows you to play in His work

Anticipation

So What

- When Jesus arrived:
 - many were anticipating something else
 - many had grown weary of waiting – busy with life
 - many missed the wonder of what God was doing

- This Christmas

1. Review what God Promised and Delivered

- look at the prophecies, see the work of God in the situation, wonder at the people chosen, marvel at the meaning of God with us!

Anticipation

2. Give Praise to God

- this gift was for all mankind – doomed without God's gift
- undeserved, unearned, freely given for us
- faithful to his promise

3. Allow the Holy Spirit to Reveal a Response

- giving back to God & others
- dedication of yourself to the pursuit of God's heart
- renewed passion & desire for God's glory

Anticipation

4. Tell Others the Truth

- in love, carefully – but honestly
- don't be afraid to proclaim the reason for your celebration

5. Live in Anticipation of Jesus Return

- promise he is returning for his children
- live so that your anticipation is based on reality