

CHRISTMAS VINYLs - THE SONG OF SIMEON

Christmas Morning 2022

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Christian Fellowship

I. Hope and Heart

II. Midnight Mantra

- A. Waiting & looking are the birthplace of Seeing & Receiving
 - B. Waiting births Receiving
 - C. Looking births Seeing
 - D. Belief is the birthplace of Fulfillment
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III. Message

A. Hook

1. On Nov 27th infiltrators led police to raid a house church. The house was ransacked, several were arrested on trumped up charges of forced conversions and imprisoned 300 kilometers away from their homes.

a) In South Asia, there has been a continuing wave of persecution of Jesus followers disrupting lives, imprisoning believers and closing ministries.

b) Those imprisoned will have a hearing for bail on Dec 28th. There is no trial date set.

2. Nigeria is one of the top 5 places of Christian persecution in the world as we close out of 2022

a) "Fulani militants destroyed more than 50 villages and displaced nearly 5,000 Christians," said a Release International partner. "The attacks by the Fulani now include kidnappings for ransom. Churches, church leaders and Christian communities remain the primary targets." Emily Bontrager

3. This past month or two have been filled with much loss of loved ones and tragic deaths just in our community.

4. Ukraine photo of Christmases for the last 4 years - still at war but not at their choosing.



display photo

a) The prayer for Jesus to come and bring peace is altogether different this year.

5. These stories move our heads and hearts to the space of our prophet Simeon, who was waiting and looking for the salvation of the Lord's Christ.

a) Oppressed and occupied people yet maintaining a faith in the prophecies of old and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

b) Christ - The anointed one was coming, and Simeon would see this salvation with his own eyes.

6. Waiting, Looking and Believing make all the difference.

The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord. -Henri Nouwen

B. Book

1. THE PRESENTATION (display painting on center screen for reading of text)

[The Presentation - Ambrogio Lorenzetti 1.jfif](#)

a) Ambrogio Lorenzetti (Italian pronunciation: [am'bro:dʒo loren'tsetti]; c. 1290 – 9 June 1348)

2. Luke 2:21-35 - Simeon

Jesus Presented at the Temple

22 And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." 25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 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. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, 28 he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

29 "Lord, now you are letting your servant[e] depart in peace, according to your word. 30 for my eyes have seen your salvation 31 that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

33 And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. 34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

3. Jesus fulfills the Law does not replace it. The temple is in Jerusalem.

- a) Circumcision on the 8th day (a mother is unclean for 7 days after birth)
- b) Two things happening at the temple
 - (1) Mary's time of purification 33 days later (40 days total from birth)
 - (2) He is presented to the Lord They offer a sacrifice for him ("two turtledoves or two young pigeons") Evidence of poverty

4. Simeon - A marked life

- a) Righteous and Devout
- b) Waiting for the Consolation of Israel (life steeped in the OT scriptures)
- c) Holy Spirit was upon him
- d) Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ.
- e) He had a prompting from the Spirit to go to the temple.

5. Simeon's song (part 1)

- a) Fulfillment - According to your word - I can now depart in peace.
- b) I have seen your (the Lord's) salvation
- c) This salvation has been prepared in the presence of all the people.
- d) A Light of revelation to Gentiles
- e) Glory to your people Israel

6. Simeon's song (part 2)

- a) This child (The Lord's Christ) will be the fall and rising of many in Israel
- b) A sign opposed
- c) Thoughts of many hearts will be revealed
- d) Mary - a sword will pierce through your own soul

(1) Mary would possibly have known her scriptures. Would these words from Isaiah 53 have been in her mind?

(2) Isaiah 53

He was despised and rejected[b] by men, a man of sorrows[c] and acquainted with[d] grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces[f] he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—everyone—to his own way. and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

C. Look

During this Advent Season of waiting for the birth of a savior we have seen found other birthplaces:

- Hopelessness is the birthplace of HOPE (song of Zechariah)
- Shame is the birthplace of FAVOR (song of Elizabeth)
- Claiming our identity and submitting to our destiny is the birthplace of SIGNIFICANCE (song of Mary)
- Wandering is the birthplace of WONDER (song of the Shepherds)
- Last night in the we spoke about: (songs of the Angels
 - BEHOLD – LOOK HERE
 - GLORY – LOOK UP
 - PEACE – LOOK AROUND

1. Simeon's life gives us three gifts this morning.

- a) Waiting is the birthplace for receiving
- b) Looking is the birthplace of seeing
- c) Believing is the birthplace of fulfillment

2. Simeon's Song gives us two more gifts this morning

- a) The breadth of the Lord's Christ
 - (1) all people - Light to Gentiles and Glory of Israel
- b) The depth of the Lord's Christ
 - (1) Heart and soul of all people
 - (2) "This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed!"

(3) Christmas has become marketable - so we see signs of Christ the babe throughout stores and all over in songs being sung. Yet, Christ himself comes in the depths of poverty and to shepherds and wise men from a far and to old men that have been waiting and looking for their entire life.

(a) Simeon's prophecy doesn't mean that Christ has come to incite violence, but that his call to allegiance will bring conflict and opposition.

3. Waiting and Looking

a) Waiting and looking can lead to receiving and seeing when faith releases hope and joy.

b) Waiting and looking can also lead to rejecting and blinding when despair releases bitterness and ingratitude.

4. Belief is the difference

a) From Miracle on 34th Street to Elf the message of most Christmas movies is believe in the Spirit of Christmas. There is always one person that the story is bringing into belief.

b) There is power in belief - hope and joy become constant companions.

D. Took

1. Reflection this Christmas morning (perhaps over the next 12 days)

a) What word has God given to you that this Christmas He is inviting you to believe again?

(1) We all want a fresh word but perhaps Simeon will lead us that just one word from Holy Spirit believed and held onto will fill your life and be fulfilling.

b) Where have you been waiting for God, and He is inviting you to receive His salvation on His terms for me?

(1) I am sure Simeon had imagined over the years what seeing the salvation of God - the consolation of Israel could look like. I am not sure he imagines a baby, yet he was fulfilled in receiving the salvation of God on God's terms.

c) Where is He pointing you to see His breadth of salvation in this world?

(1) Simeon was righteous and devout in his Jewish faith, yet he had believed the prophecies and had eyes to see that this promised salvation was a revelation light to the Gentiles (all other people). What group or religious people or is God inviting to see this Christmas with compassion and love as Jesus came to be their light too.

2. The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord. -Henri Nouwen

IV. Bellringer

V. Dismissal