

***"Simeon's Song...Our Song"***

**(St. Luke 2:22-40)**

**Pastor Espinosa**

**The Text: *"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; 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 (vv 29-32)."***

**Introduction: "The Presentation" for the baby Jesus at 40 days old is not to be confused with the circumcision of Jesus at 8 days old. And be careful Christians...these events are describing your salvation! Take heed, pay attention!**

- A. At the circumcision of Jesus -- when He was only 8 days old -- our Lord already began to shed His blood to save us. His perfect fulfillment of the Law of God was already being conducted not for Himself -- for He had no sin -- but for us so that by His perfect fulfillment of God's Law His life would be counted for our sinful lives.**
- B. But there was much more to be done and 40 days after His birth and 32 days after His circumcision He is brought to the temple this time for a presentation that was for purification.**
  - 1. The holy family brought prescribed clean and sacrificial animals for their entire families' purification. In this case, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons (v 24).**
  - 2. And while it may be easy for us to understand why Mary and Joseph needed purification (as they too were sinners), but what about Jesus (because He too was definitely included)?**
  - 3. This tests us dear Christians as to how much we actually understand the Gospel. Too often religious folks throw the word "Gospel" around, but if one were to stop and ask, "What does it mean?" I'm not too certain how folks would do. The good news of salvation in Jesus Christ is quite simply a happy and glorious swap...God got something from you and you got something from God...and this is the single most important trade of your life! Recently we "swapped" Christmas presents right? So if we are to be saved, then we need to know the**

**Gospel...and the Gospel is about a swap. Again, God got something from you and you got something from God! What exactly do we mean?**

**Christ got your sin; and you got His righteousness.**

**Jesus became the sinner; you became the holy one.**

**Jesus became the guilty; you became the innocent.**

**The Righteous One was counted as being unholy; but the unholy sinners like you and me are now counted as being righteous and holy!**

**That's the trade, that's the swap, that's the exchange that Jesus worked...and this is the crux of the Gospel, the Good News of our salvation from sin and death!**

- 4. This exchange is exactly what is described here at Luke chapter 2 at The Presentation of Jesus with Simeon.**
- C. This explains why events like the presentation are recorded in Scripture. Many people do not see the significance of such events. Why is this event that occurred 2000 years ago of any relevance to me and my life today?! *And this general tendency to underestimate the revelation of the Word is our serious problem.***
- D. The presentation of sinners before God says that sinners require a sacrifice. Their sin must be dealt with. Something must cover their sin. Otherwise, there is no standing before God. Without the sacrifice, our sin would be exposed and we would be overwhelmed by guilt and shame. We could never stand!**
- E. But in this event of Jesus' presentation, Jesus stood for you! He was presented for you, so that you can stand before God!**
- F. This event demonstrates why Jesus came. In every step of His life He was working to save you from your sin and death! The presentation guarantees it, because this sinless 40-day old child had no need to otherwise be purified!**
- G. We fight, however, over why this is even necessary and our sin problem is not that we simply underestimate the importance of God's Holy Word, but even worse, we don't feel we need the swap that saves. We continue to hold to the idea that we**

can stand alone. That we are good enough by ourselves. And perhaps the greatest sign that this is our true problem is that we don't celebrate Christmas the way we ought to – and yes we are still in Christmas, only on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day this morning – and we lack the true joy that should flood our souls. Why do we lack joy? It's because we feel sufficient in ourselves. Do we really need the happy swap of the Gospel? Do we really need this exchange? Are we really that bad? Are we really that sinful? Do we really need to be saved from sin and death? Of course we do! But our sinful nature, and the world, and the evil one dulls our senses and decreases our spiritual yearning...we are just ok, we don't really believe that we needed Jesus to take our place. We feel that we should stand on our own merit. And we're wrong, deadly wrong.

- H. But the true power and beauty of The Presentation is that this exchange, this swap, obviously didn't wait for you to get your act together. God doesn't say, "I'll send Jesus to do the swap that will save you, just as soon as you figure everything out; or just as soon as you're properly convicted and contrite; or just as soon as you see the light!"
- I. No God doesn't wait. He loves you too much to do that. Instead, He makes the first move and the next, and the next...He exerted the swap and then He comes through His Word to keep it that way.

**Part I: But it is vital that you know that The Presentation for you actually occurred! The message that saves you is not a theory or a potentiality. It's real. It happened. It's been established in history! So this real event is recorded in Holy Scripture and it is a real event marked by what was received through ARMS, EYES, and EARS!**

- A. Simeon entered the temple and took Jesus into His arms (v 28), and all of a sudden -- filled with the Holy Spirit -- Simeon saw with new EYES by the power of God.
- B. This 40-day old child was all of sudden in his Spirit-inspired vision a 33 year old man, He was dying on a cross, shedding His blood, and atoning for the sins of the world.
- C. So with the baby in his arms, and the Spirit's vision in his eyes, Simeon could also hear in his EARS from the Lord the message of the Holy Spirit. It did not come from Simeon, but from the Lord! And He said in His great song:

***"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; 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 (vv 29-32)."***

1. He was so full of joy, assurance and the peace of God which far surpasses all understanding that he said he was ready to die. This will be very difficult for younger people to understand, but easier for the older Christians here. This world and this life has many beautiful things and we are thankful for the great gift of life here on earth, *but* the best of all things is in the Lord and to know Him is to know the best of life that is not confined to this world, but is eternal life that *includes* this world *and* the eternity beyond it...we know that in Christ, we will not die, but live and so this thing called "death" becomes nothing to the believer...so Simeon can say that now that He has Christ he is ready to die!

2. He is able to say it because of what he has SEEN, yes, what we SEE is vital and the Lord knows that what you SEE is also vital for your faith. In Jesus, Simeon sees salvation; He sees the One on the cross, and the One who defeats the grave!

3. And Simeon confirms that this salvation and revelation is for all people...after his song he says more to Mary and assures her:

***"Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed...so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed (vv 34-35)."***

4. That is, there is only one of two states to be in while standing before the Living God and Savior: either the state of condemnation at the Lord's left hand; or the state of salvation at the Lord's right hand. A person must either fall OR rise. There is no third option.

5. So there Simeon is experiencing the New Creation...holding Jesus in His arms; seeing Jesus with His eyes; hearing the Word of God in his ears...he was experiencing the truth of the great swap via his very arms, eyes, and ears.

**Part II: And nothing really has changed!**

A. Jesus comes again to the temple, but now to the temple of His Church...He stills comes among sinners...among you and among me.

- B. This is where the happy and glorious exchange continues to be proclaimed and eaten. This is where God's righteousness in Christ is distributed to sinners and where sinners experience for themselves their new righteousness with their arms, and eyes, and ears!**
- C. He permits you dear Christian to hold Him in your arms. You hold in your arms the very body and blood of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament!**
- D. With your eyes you see your salvation in, with, and under the bread and the wine for the forgiveness of sins which the Lord NEVER tires of giving to you. This is what keeps your spirit ALIVE!**
- E. And with your ears you hear His voice (the pastors are only mouth-pieces). And what is that that you hear? You hear the very voice of Jesus: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins!"**
- F. What does this new holding, seeing, and hearing accomplish? It puts you and keeps you among those who are raised and not among those fallen. You have already been raised to new life when you were baptized, but as Christ is kept in your arms, eyes, and ears, you are being preserved to rise again. You shall be raised again when you hear the voice of Christ like Lazarus did and your burial place will be overcome by the power of the voice of Jesus!**
- G. Thanks be to God dear Christians, the presentation of Christ means your presentation to God as one holy and without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish. In Christ you were and are still presented as a holy one of God. Let us now go forth as His new creation and serve the Lord and our neighbors with what we hold onto, with what we see, and with what we hear...namely, the Lord and His Word so that we may be a blessing to those we are called to love; all whom the Lord puts before us, because the one in front of you is your neighbor that you are called to love.**
- H. Christ was presented for you! Our Christmas celebration continues in our arms, in our eyes, and in our ears! Hold Jesus, see Jesus, and hear Jesus!**