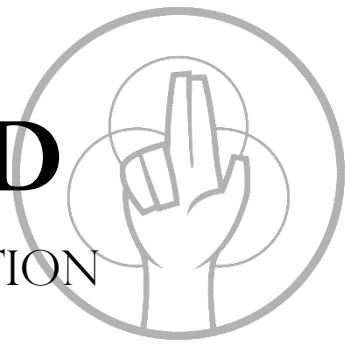


In the HOUSE *of the* LORD

LESSON #12 – SONG OF SIMEON & BENEDICTION



Having received the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in Holy Communion, we thank the Lord for gift of grace as we sing “Thank the Lord.”

Throughout the worship service we have heard about peace from God: the pastor has announced the peace in the forgiveness of sins; we have joined with the angels in singing about peace on earth through the coming of Christ; and the pastor has proclaimed the peace of the Lord following the words of institution. We also prepare to depart in peace.

We hear one last assurance of God’s love and care as we receive His three-fold blessing in the benediction that ends the worship service.

After receiving God’s assurance of peace and His promise of blessing, we cannot help but leave the worship service eager and excited to share this peace and blessing with others.

Peace with Jesus

God’s eternal truth has an impact on our lives today. We’ve had a basic overview of God’s Word, and we’ve seen how the different doctrines are reflected in our worship service and in our confessions of faith. Most importantly, we’ve seen how each teaching is directly related to the person and work of Jesus Christ – our Savior.

Why is peace with God so vital to our lives as Christians?

- Psalm 4:8 *I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.*
- Psalm 29:11 *The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.*
- Proverbs 16:7 *When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.*
- Romans 15:13 *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

People are searching for peace. People think peace is the absence of trouble, tension and disaster. They feel that peace is the presence of safety, contentment and relief. Unfortunately, earthly “peace” will always change. Earthly peace is always short-lived. Where is the only place where true peace can be found?

- Isaiah 9:6-7 *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*
- Philippians 4:4-7 *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

What has Jesus done in order to grant us this peace with God?

- Luke 2:13-14 *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."*
- Isaiah 53:5 *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*
- Romans 3:10-12, 5:1-2 *As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;"¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." ...¹ Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.*
- Revelation 1:4-6 *Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father-- to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.*

Now that we have been granted this peace through God's grace, what do we want to do with this peace?

- Isaiah 52:7 *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"*
- John 20:19-21 *On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*
- Luke 2:25-32 *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.²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.²⁷ 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,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people,³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."*

Is sharing this message of peace going to be easy or readily accepted?

- Matthew 10:34 *"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword."*
- Luke 12:51 *"Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division."*
- John 16:32-33 *"But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.³³ I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

When I called
You answered me
You greatly emboldened me

Understanding the Task Ahead

Discovering our purpose in the world is closely tied to understanding Jesus' mission in this world. It was focused on people.

Put yourselves for a moment in Jesus' sandals. What did He see when he looked at the people around Him?

- *Matthew 9:35-37 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."*

It is estimated that 4.5+ billion people in the world do not know Christ or do not claim to follow him. Who are those people? What are they like?

Look at the people around you. Who most needs to learn more about Jesus? Who are your friends who need Jesus?

Discuss what happens to those who do not know or follow Christ.

- *Acts 4:10, 12 It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ...¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*
- *John 3:17-18 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.*

How does (should) this knowledge impact your concern or relationship with others?

When Jesus first called Peter, Andrew, James and John (the fishermen), he said, "Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Jesus calls us to follow Him. Now what? Underline the commands and circle the promises of the mission Jesus gives to His followers. Then summarize what this means for our mission:

- *Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*
- *Luke 24:45-49 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."*
- *Acts 1:3, 7-8 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ...⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*
- *1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ...¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

- 1 Peter 3:15-16 *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*

Describe the powerful tool Jesus has given us and how it further defines our purpose.

- Romans 1:16-17 *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17 *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Some Notes Regarding Telling Others About Jesus

- The law has to work first before people are ready to hear about Jesus. But remember, you have an advantage – God has written His law on the hearts of all people.
- Be aware of people going through big changes in life (i.e. an illness, a death, job loss, career move, marriage, birth of a child, etc.). Often God uses those events to awaken the conscience, reminding them of their sinfulness and their lack of a relationship with God.
- Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:2: “For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” Keep the focus on Jesus, both our need for Him and what He has done for us.
- Often the best answer to objections is to simply say “Come and see,” like Philip did (John 1:46).
- Faith only happens in one way: hearing the message. Our goal is to get people in contact with the Word of God. If the person rejects the message, he’s not rejecting you – he’s rejecting God and His Word. On the other hand, if faith does happen, all the glory goes to God. We’re simply the messengers!
- Although we want to reach out to everyone, often the best place to start is with our friends, relatives, acquaintances, and neighbors – FRAN. These are the people who already know you and trust you. But don’t stop with your FRAN’s. Look to reach out to others.
- Only the message can convert people; we cannot. Unfortunately, because of our sinfulness, we can become an obstacle to the message. That’s why a humble attitude, a willingness to say “I don’t know,” and continued Bible study are important.
- Christian living is an important part of evangelism work. People who see that you quietly, humbly put your faith into action will be much more likely to listen when you tell them about Jesus. Often God will use your lifestyle to awaken the natural knowledge of God and the conscience.
- Be confident! You know who you are, what God has done for you, and where you’re going. The people to whom you’re talking don’t know those things. You have a wonderful message to share with them!

Summary:

- Telling others about Jesus is an integral part of the Christian’s life.
- Our message is two-fold; we bring the law (which shows our sins) and Gospel (which shows our Savior).
- Only God can work faith in a person’s heart. Our role is to simply bring the powerful Word of God to people. God causes that Word to bear fruit.

THE SONG OF SIMEON

*In peace, Lord, you let your servant now depart according to your word.
For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for ev'ry people,
a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory, the glory of your people Israel.*

THE BENEDICTION

*The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace. Amen.*

A hymn that teaches the faith: Christian Worship #562 – “I Love To Tell The Story”

I love to tell the story Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory, Of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story Because I know it's true;
It satisfies my longings As nothing else can do.
I love to tell the story; 'Twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story, For those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting To hear it like the rest.
And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story That I have loved so long.
I love to tell the story; 'Twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and his love.

