

A Message from Pastor Ed

If you are reading this on Sunday February 2, note that it has been 40 days since we celebrated Christmas. What's the big deal about that? Luke chapter two reminds us of the significance. *"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 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord'")* (Luke 2: 22-23) This was to happen 40 days after the birth of a male child.



First born male children often take delight in having this verse read for obvious reasons!! Mary and Joseph were devout in living out their faith and to the best of their ability they strove to do the duties of the Law as had been handed down from Moses millennia before their own time. The following verses describe Simeon and Anna along with their joy in seeing the promised Messiah with their very own eyes. This Messiah this Jesus would bring about the consolation of Israel and would bring us salvation, peace, and hope.

Mary and Joseph were doing what they were supposed to do as parents and as God's people. They were living out their faith with the duties and responsibilities entrusted to them. Were they perfect? No, they both would falter and need forgiveness in their responsibilities and in their lives. Yet, to the best of their ability they both were to be stewards of all that had been given to them to manage. They were to be managers/stewards of the time, talents and treasures God gave them. Mary and Joseph were not materially wealthy; the treasures offered to them by the Magi would have been very nice but would have only lasted so long. Their greatest treasure was Jesus. Their Son and their Savior.

The occasion of Mary and Joseph offering up a sacrifice in thanksgiving for the birth of their child - indeed a very special child for them and the whole world should give us pause to ponder if there is a lesson for us in our lives. In our reflection we also remember the account of Hannah in the old testament where in the first two chapters of 1st Samuel we read of Hannah also giving back to the Lord her little boy Samuel. Hannah knew full well that Samuel had been a gift and she too would surrender the little boy to Eli for service in the tabernacle. These parents along with their choices, sacrifices, and behaviors remind us of what stewardship is all about.

Stewardship reminds us that what is entrusted to our care really belongs to God Himself (Psalm 24:1). Stewardship reminds us that God expects us to be responsible for His things that we are managing for a moment in time (Matthew 25). In February we will continue to grow in our stewardship maturity through the sermons, Tuesday morning Bible studies, and the working of the Holy Spirit. May God grant us faithfulness and forgiveness in the journey as demonstrated on the pages of Holy Scripture. ~ *Pastor Ed Clemens*

