

NOW THAT I'VE SEEN HIM

Text; Luke 2; Matthew 3, John 3

THE DEDICATION OF THE FIRST-BORN

It was the custom in those days that after a woman had given birth, there was a forty day season of purification in which mother and child would stay at home while she had a chance to recover and get her strength back.

After this time, the child would be presented at the temple in a special ceremony called the Redemption of the First-Born, in which the child would be dedicated to the service of God.

THE WITNESS OF SIMEON AND ANNA

Simeon was righteous and devout, faithful in service, and filled with the Holy Spirit. For his entire life, he had prayed for the coming of the Messiah. God had told him that he would not die before he had seen the Christ face-to-face.

Simeon is saying that there is a sense in which Jesus will be a dividing line among people. The response to his teachings, his life, his death, his resurrection, will bring out the best in some and the worst in others. Ref: Luke 2:34,35

From the very beginning Mary understood that this calling she had received — being chosen to be the mother of the Messiah — would come with a price. Ref: Luke 2:35

The words Simeon spoke to Mary are important, because even today Jesus' words have the capacity to pierce the souls of men and women, and reveal the deepest thoughts of our hearts. And the question that every person must answer at some point in their lives is: How will you respond to the truth that has been revealed through Jesus Christ

THE DISCOVERY OF THE MAGI (Ref: Matthew Chapter 2)

The Magi did what we all will do one day ...

...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10)

HEROD'S REACTION

THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT (Ref: Matthew Chapter 2)

Centuries before, the prophet Hosea had written... (Ref: Hosea 11:1)

Joseph and his family returned to the region of Galilee, to the city of Nazareth, and that's where Jesus grew up — in a simple home, with simple surroundings, among working-class people.

And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. (Luke 2:40)

THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

John spoke in the spirit of the prophet Elijah, and through his preaching many came back to God. He turned the hearts of the fathers to their children and he turned the disobedient to a life of wisdom and righteousness.

He challenged his listeners to demonstrate their repentance through the symbolic act of baptism. That's why he was called John the Baptist.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Why does this Christmas sermon end with a scene taking place 30 years after Christmas?

Because the testimony of John the Baptist tells us why Jesus came to be born, and it tells us how we should respond to his story. Ref: John 3:30

Once upon a time in Bethlehem, a child entered the world, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. He was eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. And he came to set his people free.

His name is Jesus. This is his story.

Now that you've heard it ... now that you have seen him ... what will be your response?

