


2025-12-28



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Observation—*What does it say?*

- 1 Read Luke 2:25-38. At this point, Jesus was 40 days old (see Leviticus 12:1–4). In the previous year, Mary and Joseph had experienced angelic visitations, a virgin conception, personal crises, and prophetic pronouncements (Luke 1:39-55; 2:8-18). What did they do with all this (see Luke 2:19)?
- 2 But for the past six months, until they had to make a trip to Bethlehem, it seems that things quieted down (see Luke 1:56 & 2:1-7). Now, two complete strangers, Simeon and Anna, enter the picture. More shocking news (see Luke 2:28-38). What new perspective did they contribute?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 3 Simeon said that Jesus was "God's _____" and "a light of revelation to _____" as well as "the glory of God's people, _____" (Luke 2:30 & 32; quoting Isaiah 49:5–6). We know who "Israel" is, but who are the "Nations/Gentiles"?
- 4 Everyone on earth is either Israel or non-Israel ("Nations/Gentiles"), so is Jesus **everyone's** salvation? Does this mean that everyone is saved? If not, in what sense is Jesus everyone's salvation?

In what sense is Jesus "appointed for the rise and fall of many" (v. 34)? What does that mean?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 5 Do you know any people who **oppose** the idea that Jesus is the **only** source of salvation (v. 30, 34)? Is it somehow intolerant or unjust for there to be **only one way** of salvation? Explain.
- 6 Verse 32 sounds like unalloyed good news, doesn't it? So, **why** do you think it is opposed (v. 34)?
- 7 **To whom** did Anna "continually speak of Jesus" (v. 38)? How do you think she could identify them?
- 8 How can we emulate Anna?

① Mary—and we assume, Joseph as well— treasured all these things, pondering them in their hearts.

- ②
- Simeon “praised, spoke well of” God (v. 28), God had revealed to him that he’d see the Messiah before he died (v. 26), and now he says that that has been fulfilled (v. 29).
 - Simeon referred to the baby Jesus as “God’s salvation” (v. 30)!
 - Simeon acknowledged that these things are happening for all to see (v. 31).
 - Jesus is “truth from God for Gentiles to know” (v. 32).
 - Jesus is “the glory of—the splended, remarkable possession—of God’s people, the Jews” (v. 32).
 - Jesus will cause many in Israel to “rise or to fall”, and will be opposed by many (v. 34).
 - Jesus would bring great sorrow to Mary (v. 35). (“You” is singular—Joseph will be dead by the time of Jesus’ public ministry and crucifixion.)
 - Jesus’ words and works exposed people’s inner thoughts (v. 35; cf. John 2:24–25).
 - Anna gave thanks to God and witnessed about Jesus to everyone who’d listen (v. 38).
- ③
- Jesus was “God’s **salvation**” and “a light of revelation to **the Gentiles (ie, non-Jews)**” as well as “the glory of God’s people, **Israel (ie, the Jews)**”
 - the “Nations/Gentiles” are all people who are not Jewish.

- ④ The fact that Jesus is the only Savior does this mean that everyone on earth is saved, any more than the fact that “Medicine X” is the **only cure** for cancer means that every cancer patient is cured. I does mean that **no other** “potion” will cure cancer, and that **anyone/everyone**—Jew or Gentile—who does accept the correct medicine (Jesus) **will indeed** be cured.

That Jesus is “appointed for the rise or fall of many” means that your response to him determines whether any person “rises” (is saved, goes to heaven) or “falls” (perishes in his sins).

- ⑤ Let group members answer this; **everyone** knows someone who rejects Jesus!

Regarding the charge of intolerance/injustice—ask this: “Does your front door have a lock? Whose house is it? Is it intolerant/unjust for you to determine who comes into your home? So, is it intolerant/unjust for God to determine who comes into his house?”

- ⑥ Right after John 3:16 gives the good news that anyone who believes in Jesus will be saved, v.19-20 explains why most people reject Jesus: **“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.”**
- ⑦ She spoke “to all who were looking for redemption”. I’m guessing that she spoke to everyone, and when anyone indicated that they didn’t need or want redemption, she knew that that person wasn’t looking for it. ie, We cannot know who wants to hear about Jesus just by appearances. We must offer him indiscriminately to all, and let them show whether they’re interested.
- ⑧ Find a way that works for you to bring up Jesus indiscriminately to all, and then share the complete gospel message with those who are interested. Personally, I like the presentation at: TwoWaysToLive.com.

Sermon Summary

Key Text: Luke 2:21-51

Have you ever wondered what the days after Christmas were like for Mary and Joseph? Everything God had promised had come to pass. Jesus was here! But now what? I was musing over this question and I came up with six realizations that must have come to Joseph and Mary as they reflected on all that had taken place.

1. Their Lives Were Forever Changed. Everything changes when you have a baby. Your life begins to revolve around that precious little baby who has entered your home. Jesus was born at Christmas so that you and I might forever be changed, so that our lives might begin to revolve around Him. Jesus came to change us. He wants to transform us into His image. He wants us to become like Him in our attitudes and actions. He wants us to love like He loves. He wants us to care like He cares. He wants us to live like He lived. Jesus came to transform ordinary people like you and me, into extraordinary followers of Him. As this transformation occurs in us, we discover that our lives are forever changed.

2. They Realized They Needed to Love Their Son in a Unique Way. Joseph and Mary knew that their Son was unique and that He would play a unique role in God's plans for the world. In order to be the kind of parents God wanted them to be, they would need to love their Son in a unique way. Because their Son was the Christ child, they were to give Him their complete devotion-the kind of devotion due only to God, because that is who Jesus was. He was Immanuel, which means, "God with us." Jesus is pleased when we seek to give Him all of our love and all of our devotion.

3. They Realized They Were Called to Serve Jesus. Their service involved caring and providing for Jesus' needs. Jesus, the Son of God, entered into this world as a helpless baby. He was completely dependent upon His earthly parents. The great paradox to the Christmas story is that Jesus came into this world as a helpless baby - yet He came precisely because we are helpless without Him. He came to save us from our sins. He came to bring us hope. He came to meet our greatest need. In return, we have the opportunity to serve Him by loving as He loved - by sharing the good news that in Christ, God has made a provision for our sin and our guilt. We are the hands, the feet, and the voice of Jesus.

4. They Realized That Jesus Would Grow up to Become a Polarizing Figure in the World. We see how they learned this in Luke 2:21-35. This passage brings to mind images of division and conflict and opposition. These would not be comforting images for a parent. But they did serve to reset Joseph and Mary's expectations for their Son. Still today the world is divided over Jesus. Some embrace Him as Savior and Lord, while others oppose Him.

5. They Realized That like God, Jesus' Ways Were Higher than Their Ways. They did not always understand what He did and why He did it. They were constantly surprised by His actions (Luke 2:48-51). Jesus' actions often confused His parents. Jesus had a unique mission to fulfill which they did not completely understand.

6. They Realized That Jesus' Ministry Would Be Rejected by Israel's Religious Leadership. As we read the gospels, we discover that early on Jesus found Himself at odds with the Jewish religious leadership. They were jealous of His ability to influence the crowds. Unlike them, He taught with great authority, which was baffling because He lacked their learned credentials. By this time, it appears that Jesus' father, Joseph, had died. Word came to Mary that the Scribes and the Pharisees were out to get her Son. In Jesus' day the Scribes and Pharisees were highly revered. In a moment of confused doubt, it appears that Mary and her family conceded that these leaders must be right about Jesus (Mark 3:21). The truth is, Jesus had not lost His senses. Jesus' rejection by the Jewish leadership was merely the outworking of Simeon's prophecy uttered so many years before (Luke 2:34).

Truth be told, like Mary, we too are sometimes confused by His actions. We find some of His teachings difficult to accept. We really shouldn't be surprised by our confusion. Can finite man grasp the thoughts and actions of an infinite God? His ways are higher than our ways. But to fail to embrace Jesus as the New Testament depicts Him is to reject him altogether-as the scribes and Pharisees did. Jesus is still a divisive figure today. To us He is our Savior, our lord, our King. He has called us to take up our crosses and follow Him. He has called us to reach this generation.

Application/Challenge As we prepare to begin a new year, let's seize the opportunities that are before us:

- The opportunity to allow Jesus to change our lives, to transform us into His extraordinary followers.
- The opportunity to give Jesus our complete love and devotion. Anything else that takes center stage in our lives is an idol.
- The opportunity to serve Him, taking the good news about Jesus into our community, and throughout the world.
- The opportunity to identify with Him in a world that is deeply divided on the issue of Christianity.
- The opportunity to really trust God when we don't understand the circumstances we find ourselves in.
- The opportunity to faithfully walk with Jesus when many of the world's trusted authorities are opposed to Him.



2026 Regional Care and Discipleship Training

Whether you're a new believer in Christ or well-seasoned in ministry, this training will help equip you for fruitful discipleship in your church and community. Join us!

Who will benefit?

- ☑ Every church member who wants to grow as a disciple
- ☑ Small group leaders, elders or deacons entrusted with the care of the church family
- ☑ Any Christian who wants to sharpen their skills in caring for others
- ☑ Those seeking Phase 1 training for the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC)

Topics Include:

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| ☑ How People Change | ☑ God's Design for Marriage | ☑ Anxiety |
| ☑ Peacemaking Principles | ☑ Marriage Conflicts | ☑ Temptation |
| ☑ Anger and Abuse | ☑ Divorce and Remarriage | ☑ Mental Illness |
| ☑ Depression | ☑ Parenting | ☑ and more! |

What is the format?

- Videos, group discussion, and live counseling observation
- Four Saturdays together as a cohort, plus three hours per month of individual online content
- Monthly lunches included
- Only \$99 for the whole training package

When and where will it meet?

Triangle Community Church (4216 Kildaire Farm Road, Apex 27539)

8³⁰am to 4⁰⁰pm on Saturday **January 17, February 21, March 21** and **April 18, 2026**

Questions?

Just e-mail Pastor Dan Clement at:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

FAQ, Complete Info,
and **Registration here:**



Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Pastor Doug suggested six opportunities to seize in the new year.

Let's use "Five Question Bible Study" to explore next steps...

Monday— Romans 12:1–2. Allow Jesus to change your life.

Tuesday— Matthew 22:37–38. Give Jesus your complete love and devotion; anything less is idolatry.

Wednesday— Matthew 28:18–20. Serve Jesus by taking the good news into your community and the world.

Thursday— Matthew 10:32–33. Identify with Jesus in a world deeply divided over Christianity.

Friday— Proverbs 3:5–6. Trust Jesus when you do not understand your circumstances.

Saturday— Acts 5:29. Faithfully walk with Jesus when trusted authorities oppose Him.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]