



Arrival: Anticipation
Message Notes, December 3, 2017
Luke 2:21-38

Remember those long trips when you were a kid – e.g., to the beach or to Grandpa and Grandma’s house for Thanksgiving or Christmas? Remember the anticipation? The excitement, the longing, the hope and joy ...

Advent is a season of anticipation. We, in all our different stories, are waiting for God to come, for Jesus to be born in our lives. We can anticipate with expectant longing and joy, even if it seems He is long in coming, or we can fall into restlessness, frustration and despair. Simeon and Anna, in our Luke story today, set great examples for how we can live well in anticipation.

Romans 8:22-25 captures well the essence of waiting for God – in the cosmic frame of Christ’s final return and also in the everyday aspect of our own lives. Ponder on Eugene Peterson’s expression of this in *The Message*:

All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it’s not only around us; it’s within us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We are also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, do not see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

Anticipation means “to see and act in advance of.” It is not a passive waiting, but one in which we are attentive and engaged. Simeon and Anna model this well for us.

- Simeon:
 - Not a priest or temple official; simply “a man” (ordinary like you and me), but one ...
 - “righteous and devout” (faithful to worship, prayer, and trusting God) ...
 - “waiting for the consolation of Israel” (for a long time, as had the Hebrew people – 400 years since Micah, the last prophet, had spoken to the people for Yahweh).
 - sensitive to the Holy Spirit – “revealed to him that he would not die before he had seen the Christ.” (A promise undergirded by the promise of scripture. See Isaiah 7:13-14.)
- Anna:
 - Prophetess
 - Old (84 years)
 - Widowed (after only seven years of marriage)
 - Homeless (it seems she may have lived at the temple)
 - One acquainted with loss, sorrow, and hardship, but still she ...
 - lived faithfully before the Lord – a life of worship, fasting, and prayer. Trusting in the promise of ...
 - Isaiah 61:1-3 – the One who will come “to comfort all who mourn, bestowing beauty for ashes, a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”

What active anticipation do Simeon and Anna demonstrate for us?



Four Tips for Living in Anticipation:

1. Realize God is faithful. He will keep His promises; it may not be how or when we expect, but Jesus will come into our lives with His love and grace, no matter what our circumstances.
2. Follow our guide – the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us.
3. Thank and praise God for our salvation. The cross and resurrection are the anchor of our hope. No circumstances can shake this hope. See Romans 8:35-39.
4. Tell others about Jesus. He has come. He does come (in our lives). He is coming again (to make all things right!).

The Luke story is bookended by verses 25 and 38. Simeon is “waiting for the consolation of Israel;” Anna proclaims at the end “the redemption of Jerusalem.”

Anticipation – patient, hopeful and active, and gives birth to joyful redemption!