

The Gospel of Luke
Godly Expectation (Luke 2:21-52)
Authentic devotion brings Godly expectations.

Open and Hook (2min)

In Luke we hear many stories of ordinary people who are surrounded by a culture full of human expectations, and yet, when they devote their lives to God, their eyes are opened to a new Godly expectation.

When we expect to see God in our lives, we realize all of the amazing ways that He is at work in and around us.

As we dive into the scripture, I'd like to you to hold this question in your mind.

Are you living your life with Godly expectation?

*PRAY

Turn to Luke 2:21-24

Luke 2:21-24

21Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived.

22Then it was time for their purification offering, as required by the law of Moses after the birth of a child; so his parents took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. **23**The law of the Lord says, "If a woman's first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the LORD."**24**So they offered the sacrifice required in the law of the Lord—"either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Mary and Joseph were ordinary people who didn't expect to be parents to the Son of God, and yet they obeyed and devoted their lives to following God and raising up Jesus.

They obeyed God's Will even without knowing what this would mean for the future – not knowing what to expect. They put their trust in God.

They dedicated Jesus to the Lord as an act of obedience but also as an acknowledgment that their child belonged to God.

And not just because He is the Son of God, but because He is a child of God as we are.

This is the same reason that we dedicate children still.

As parents we offer our children to God and ask the church body to come alongside us as we raise them to know and love God. To put Him first in our lives.

This dedication becomes a life of devotion that goes beyond childhood.

But dedication is not just meant for children. Yes, it's something we want to do for children, but ...

The first step is to dedicate your own life to God.

We are all His precious children who He deeply loves and He wants our life to be devoted to Him.

And so you have to say with words, "I will follow and trust God."

When we are devoted to Him we can have Godly expectations in our lives.

Have you dedicated your life to following God?

In the next passage we'll read more about what we can expect from a life of devotion.

Luke 2:25-40

25At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him **26**and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27**That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, **28**Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, **29**"Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised.

30 I have seen your salvation,

31 which you have prepared for all people.

32 He is a light to reveal God to the nations,

and he is the glory of your people Israel!”

33 Jesus’ parents were amazed at what was being said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, the baby’s mother, “This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, and many others to rise. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose him. 35 As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul.”

Mary probably wasn’t expecting that her baby Jesus would be recognized as the Messiah. She also probably wasn’t expecting to hear a prophecy about His future.

And in this prophecy she received some sorrowful news, and yet she continued to obey and look forward expectantly for what God had planned.

The Prophecy of Anna

36 Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years. 37 Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer. 38 She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.

39 When Jesus’ parents had fulfilled all the requirements of the law of the Lord, they returned home to Nazareth in Galilee. 40 There the child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God’s favor was on him.

We read this and are awed by the prophecies that Simeon and Anna spoke, and yet, they were just ordinary people.

Why are their names recorded in Biblical history? Because they devoted their lives to God.

They were waiting with Godly expectation for the coming Messiah.

They probably weren't expecting Him to come as a baby, and yet Simeon and Anna both recognized who Jesus was right away.

How did they recognize Him? They recognized Jesus as the Son of God because they knew who God was.

They spent time with God – worshiping, praying, and fasting. Anna never even left the temple and Simeon was in communion with the Holy Spirit. This is authentic devotion.

***Authentic devotion is a life spent with God.**

Do you recognize where God is in your own life?

How will you know unless you are spending time with Him?

A few years ago I was a stay-at-home mom. I had been a working mom with my older kids and something I wasn't expecting was for God to use the pandemic (of all things) to bless me with the ability to be home with my youngest child.

As she got older I knew that God was calling me to work again, but I didn't know what it would be. I prayed and prayed and asked Him to give me clarity.

I was looking forward with Godly expectation and so when I got the call from our lead pastor 6 weeks later asking me to consider being the Kids Minister, I knew that it was God answering my prayer.

As I have stepped into ministry in His Kingdom, I have grown deeper in my relationship with Him through worship, prayer, and being in the Word, and He has far exceeded my human expectations.

On my own I never could have imagined that I would be up here preaching.

It is only through my devotion to God that I am able to be here today. God is powerful and can work wonders in our lives.

***When we are devoted to Him we can live with Godly expectations.**

Remember though, that devotion to Jesus does not mean that life will always be easy.

Luke 2:41-52

41 Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. 42 When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual. 43 After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him at first, 44 because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends.

We're going to pause here to watch a clip that will possibly help put us into Mary and Joseph's mindset a little. It fits right along with this Christmas season and is about a missing boy. Let's watch this clip from Home Alone.

*Home Alone clip

45 When they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. 46 Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. 47 All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

48 His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere."

49 "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?" 50 But they didn't understand what he meant.

51 Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart.

52 Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.

It's now been 12 years since Jesus was dedicated in the Temple

Mary and Joseph had obediently returned to Jerusalem year after year to celebrate the Passover.

They didn't expect this year that Jesus to stay behind in Jerusalem.

When they traveled together, the women and children were in the front of the group and the men were in the back.

As a 12 year old, Jesus was on the cusp of being considered a man in Jewish culture.

That means that Mary may have thought that Jesus was with the men, and Joseph may have thought that he was with the children still.

Remember also that they were still just ordinary humans, not perfect parents. Jesus was perfect, Mary and Joseph were imperfect people just like us.

They likely had several other young children to look after, to feed, all while traveling a long distance. They may have been a little distracted.

How many of you have been distracted before?

In today's culture we are bombarded with distractions – we're told to buy this, or watch that, or travel here or go there.

We're so busy with work, and activities, and families that we lose focus on what's most important.

This is something that I still have to work on myself. Earlier I shared this story about my devotion and yet, I am also still just an ordinary human who gets distracted.

Just recently I was going through the motions of picking up kids from school in the afternoon.

I dropped off 2 of my older kids at home (I didn't even get out of the car, just waited to make sure they got in the house) and said "I'm going to pick up your little sister, be back soon."

I headed all the way to the preschool (about 15 minutes away) and pulled into the parking lot when I looked back and realized I didn't even have her car seat in the car.

In my rush to get through the afternoon, I had gotten distracted and had forgotten something very important.

These distractions in life can sometimes get in the way of our devotion to following Jesus.

In this same scripture we can learn from Jesus himself on what we should do.

Remember, when Jesus stayed behind He wasn't disobeying his parents, He was devoting His life to following God's Will.

He didn't let the busyness of everything that was going on prevent Him from seeking the knowledge and truth of God, His Father.

He had Godly expectations for His life.

He knew that God had big plans for Him because of His time spent with Him.

John 8:31-32

31 Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. **32** And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

***Free yourself from distractions and seek the truth of God's Will for your life.**

Devote your life to following the way of Jesus by putting Him first in all things.

Spend time in prayer, in worship, and in the Word of God.

Not just at church, but at home, at work, and everywhere you go.

Imagine what your life will be like when you are living with Godly expectation.

***PRAY**

***QUESTION:**

How will you grow in your devotion to Jesus and live with Godly expectation?

Benediction – **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.

Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

