The Consolation of the King

Luke 2:22-40

In Luke 2:22-40 we encounter several exemplary models of piety and godliness. Simeon, we're told, is "righteous and devout" (2:25), and in Anna we find a widow, who had been "worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day" (2:37). She chose a lifetime of service to God over remarriage. But despite the model resumes of these saints, we find their source of hope lies elsewhere. In fact, there is almost a trace of emptiness or incompleteness until they meet the Messiah. They have been waiting for the "consolation of Israel" (2:25) or the "redemption of Jerusalem" (2:38). This is another way of saying they were waiting for the New Covenant that God would inaugurate through His Messiah, together with redemption for God's people. And when they meet Jesus, in ecstatic joy, they heap prophetic praise on God for meeting their deepest hope and answering His promises for restoration.

This text upholds Jesus as the center of our hopes, while also calling us to meditate on three features of his redemptive work, and to be conformed accordingly. First, we saw that the redemption Jesus brings involves the entire Godhead. Although the Holy Spirit is moving in the background, leading Simeon to Jesus, He is still very much active. The Father is also behind this entire event as the one orchestrating the meeting, primarily through His word (2:22-24). Thus, although the focus is on Jesus Christ, the entire Godhead is at work in the redemption of God's people. Second, the redemption Jesus brings is community forming. Simeon announces that the redemption Jesus brings is corporate. It's salvation for a people, namely the Church. Simeon also announces this redemption knows no racial, social, or ethnic barriers. Yet although the redemption Jesus brings is community-forming, it also divides. Jesus is the stone of offense and the rock of stumbling (Isa. 8:14) who will lead to the rise *and* fall of many in Israel. Finally, the redemption Jesus brings is tenderly-loving. The parenthetical phrase in 2:35 indicates that the cosmic restoration Jesus brings doesn't ignore or trivialize the pain of the individual. The redemption Jesus brings is steered and orchestrated, accomplished, and applied by an all-powerful, tenderly-loving Triune God, for the benefit of his corporate body.

Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
    a. What insights did you learn?
    b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don't understand?
    c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to change as a result of this passage of Scripture?
2. One quality of Simeon's prophetic praise was it's 'other-centeredness.' Are you this passionate about what God is doing or has done for others?
3. What does knowing the Triune God's inseparable involvement in the redemption of his people do for you?