

Anna – A Focus on Gratitude

Two Things We Are Learning ...

1. There are lots of people (in fact, the vast majority) who want to celebrate Christmas in the true “Christmas Spirit,” but they are simply not focused on the right things.
2. If others are your priority, you won't miss Christmas.

The Scriptures

“There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.”

- Luke 2:36-38

Anna's Focus

Last week, we learned that Simeon was focused on hope.

It seems that Anna was focused on ONE thing — Gratitude!

The Woman - Anna

The name — means “graceful”.

Her age — She was either 84 or over 100 years of age.

She was married for seven years

and then either lived to 84 years or was a widow for 84 years.

She was a prophetess (this means “a woman who ‘prophesies’; who speaks or teaches the Word of the Lord.”)

“But everyone who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.”

- 1 Corinthians 14:3

There are two views on this:

1. She held the “office” of a prophetess. There are 5 women with this title in the Bible: Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah and Anna. (Also Philip's four daughters prophesied.)



2. She is called a prophetess only because of what she does in this passage.

“...and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.”

- Luke 2:38

She was the daughter of Phanuel, and more importantly, of the tribe of Asher.

“Nevertheless, some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem.” - 2 Chronicles 30:11

She never left the temple. It was her home.



Her Character:

She worshipped God constantly. (Consider the life God had “dealt her.” Could you have worshipped God given this situation?)

In her worship, she prayed and fasted. (The assumption here is that she prayed for the coming of the Messiah, or Israel's redemption.)

“...spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.”

- Luke 2:38

“O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with Him is full redemption.”

- Psalm 130:7

“...but we had hoped that He was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.”

- Luke 24:21

Her Focus

She was focused on Israel's redemption. Note God's timing.

“Coming up to them at that very moment...”

- Luke 2:38

She was focused on gratitude. Because she fully believed the words of Simeon concerning the child, she gave thanks that this child was truly the Messiah.

She spoke about the child to everyone who had the same hope.

My Focus

1. The gratitude of people who worship God and are thankful in all situations becomes contagious.
2. In this holiday season, am I taking the time to give thanks to God for the gift of His Son?

Father, in this Christmas season my hope is found only in your Son, Jesus Christ. I am continually thankful to you for all of life. I want to honour you with my obedience and I want to be like you as I give to others. Amen.

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It seems that Anna was focused on ONE thing — _____!

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