Series: The Drumbeat of Christmas

December 30, 2018

Message 4:

**Forgotten Drumbeats**

Luke 2:21-38

*Guests - Handout designed with you in mind - Info and notes especially for you - won’t call or visit -*

*Next Steps - January*

*Generosity -*

**Intro:** 2 weeks ago - 4 Drumbeats of Seeing Christmas - Last week - the Drumbeat of Peace

There is a part of the Christmas story that is often overlooked - and often forgotten - because it comes after Christmas -

Since it comes after Christmas, yet it is still part of the Christmas story, we often don’t even look at these passages - they are the forgotten drumbeats:

**> Obedience**

Luke 2:21-24 - Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived.

 Then 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. The law of the Lord says, “If a woman’s first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord.” So they offered the sacrifice required in the law of the Lord—“either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Obedience is one of the most important drumbeats we can play!

If Jesus came today - and you had never heard of Him before - you had never heard any of His teaching before - and you were hearing them for the first time - how would you respond?

You may say, “Oh, His teachings were all about love - forgiveness - hope - healing - I’m sure I would accept His teachings!”

Really?

Matthew 5:21-22 - “You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment!…”

Matthew 5:27-28 - “You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’ But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Matthew 5:38-39 - “You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also.”

Matthew 5:43-44 - “You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!”

How are we doing at obeying? This is a forgotten drumbeat!

Just like in Jesus’ day, our entire culture teaches us to think and acts one way - and Jesus changes everything!

Before we follow Jesus - and even after we become followers of Jesus, we often get caught up in ways of thinking, speaking, and acting, that is really contrary to what He teaches!

When we realize it, we rationalize why we don’t obey - we rationalize why we don’t accept certain Scriptures and certain teachings as valid fo today -

Sometimes we think if we give enough in money or in ministry, then that will counterbalance the areas in which we don’t really obey -

“To obey is better than sacrifice!”

Mary and Joseph knew they were holding the God of the Universe in the body of an 8-day old baby!

Why did they need to take God into the Temple to be presented to the Lord? Jesus had come! Doesn’t that change everything?

But Jesus Himself would fulfill every part of the Law and every part of God’s plan - so Joseph and Mary had to be obedient in bringing Jesus in for dedication.

If they had to obey in this circumstance, then we need to be obedient to Jesus in every area!

As we close this year and move into the next one, let’s pick up this drumbeat - let’s resolve to live a greater life of obedience - it will lead to a great life of blessing!

Simeon:

**> Devotion**

Luke 2:25-26 - At 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 and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.

When we are people of devotion, we are going to have our priorities in order.

This time of year is always a good time to evaluate our priorities -

I don’t think much about resolutions - but I am thinking of what I need to do to be more pleasing to the Lord this year -

What do I need to do to be closer to Him this year?

What do I need to do to more fulfill His calling and purpose on my life this year?

What do I need to do to be more effective in bringing others to know Him this year?

When we evaluate our priorities - are we sure that God is first in our lives?

Are we sure that we are willing to do anything He asks us to do?

Being a person of devotion obvious implies that we are going to be more faithful in what we call devotions -

This is not a matter of feeling guilty because we don’t do enough - all of us miss some days - but it should be an inspiration to do more - Not just for the sake of checking off boxes and reading so many chapters - but we should have a desire to know more of what He wants us to know - and that involves reading more of what He has to say, and spending more time just worshiping Him, praying, and listening in His presence!

Peace comes with this!

Luke 2:29-32 - Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace,

as you have promised.

I have seen your salvation,

which you have prepared for all people.

He is a light to reveal God to the nations,

and he is the glory of your people Israel!”

Matthew 6:33 -

The next forgotten drumbeat that follows right after devotions is -

**> Divine Guidance**

Luke 2:27-28 - 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, Simeon was there…

Simeon was led by the Spirit of the Lord -

Imagine this - The Holy Spirit had told him years earlier that this would happen - Then he wakes up this morning - “Today’s the day!”

His life couldn’t get more exciting!

He goes to the Temple … waits … watches … listens … then he sees them….

Are we living our lives in anticipation of God’s divine guidance?

Are we making our own decisions with our own wisdom, or are we seeking to receive the Holy Spirit’s wisdom in our daily lives?

What does God have for us that we don’t even know about yet because we haven’t been listening?

Can we go to a place where we can get in God’s presence … wait … watch … listen … then see how God will lead us?

I’m looking for the leading of the Lord in the coming year! I’m going to put myself in a position to wait, watch & listen. I believe God is going to give us some great guidance this year!

I don’t want to forget this drumbeat - it’s so easy - we do have the ability to choose and God has given us brains - but we need to not forget to rely on the Holy Spirit as our guide!

**> Praise**

Luke 2:28 - …He took the child in his arms and praised God.

I want my life to be a life of praise!

I want to come together and sing … shout … raise my hands … give God all the worship and praise I can -

But I also want my entire life to be a life of praise.

Simeon recognized Jesus come into his life - and his response was praise.

I want to recognize Jesus in my life every day - and I want that to lead me to not only praise God every day - in between Sundays - but I want every part of my life to be an offering of praise to God !

I have a meeting scheduled for next month - I’m going to meet with some business leaders - and we are going to discuss the possibility of ongoing roundtable meetings with Christian business people in our community - so that we can help each other live lives of praise throughout every area of our lives -

* Does your life praise God at home?
* Does your life praise God at work?
* Does your life praise God in every relationship you have?

It’s about so much more than what we do here!

An entire life dedicated to every aspect of our lives being praise to God, is often a forgotten drumbeat.

**> Vision**

Luke 2:32 - He is a light to reveal God to the nations,

and he is the glory of your people Israel!

Simeon had a vision of who Jesus was - what Jesus came to do - and how that was going to affect his nation and the nations of the world!

Do we have a vision of who Jesus is - what Jesus came to do - for us - in our lives - in our time - and how that is going to affect our community - our culture - our nation - and the nations of the world?

Acts 1:8 -

Kokomo - US - the World - right from here - is that part of our vision?

What we do here is important - but it is only the beginning -

We sometimes get caught up and even conflicted about what we are doing here in ministry - but what we do here should be a catalyst that affects those immediately around us and even throughout the world!

We can’t stop with just looking at what we are doing here - how is what we are doing here becoming a catalyst for life change outside of this place - everywhere we go - everywhere God sends us.

John 4:35 - But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.

Simeon had a vision - as a result of Christmas -

We are following Christmas - following this Christmas season - do you have a vision for your life - for this ministry - that goes beyond what we do here?

I want my vision to be God’s vision for my life!

**> Blessing**

Luke 2:34-35 - 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. As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul.”

We taught a whole series last September on the power of speaking life and blessings into your situations, your circumstances, and into the lives of those around you.

Are you putting that into practice?

Have you been speaking life and blessings at your home?

Are you speaking blessings to your spouse?

Are you speaking blessings to your children?

Are you speaking blessings at your workplace?

Are you speaking blessings at your church - to your church and ministry?

It’s easy to complain -

It’s as easy to complain as it is to fall down - but speaking life and blessings can sometimes be as hard as climbing a mountain -

You have to keep your eyes open - you have to look for the good - you have to look away at what is easy to look at - and look for the plan of God in the midst of the mess.

When we are raising children - it’s easy to correct -

Sometimes we’re fearful - what will they get into?

We project a lack of trust on them when they haven’t given us any reason not to trust them - so they end up living DOWN to the level of our mistrust.

It’s easy to correct - and that’s necessary, but can sometimes be overwhelmingly negative - to the point where they hear more negative than positive from us -

We have to focus on speaking life and blessings into their lives the way a mountain climber has to focus on their every step.

Falling is easy - climbing takes focus -

I want to be like Simeon - I don’t want to miss this drumbeat - I want to speak blessings into situations and circumstances - look for the positive - and see the positive results that come into other’s lives as a result of blessing them!

Anna:

**> Faithfulness**

Luke 2:36-37 - 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. 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…

Anna was faithful!

She moved into God’s house! She lived there!

We’re not really prepared for that - but some could be more faithful than they are -

I don’t need to talk to you - because you’re the ones here between the holidays!

But let’s remind ourselves how much faithfulness to the house of God benefits us!

Hebrews 10:24-25 - Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

In giving -

2nd Corinthians 9:6-8 - Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. “For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.” And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

Faithful in ministry - using our gifts - making a difference -

Her faithfulness also involved Praise - we saw that in the life of Simeon -

We see a river of praise flowing from everyone who is a great hero of the Bible -

There are some common characteristics in all of the Bible’s great heroes

* Imperfection ….
* Moses - David - Joseph - Paul - Peter - John (fighting with his brother)
* Praise -

They are all imperfect - they don’t excuse their imperfection - their imperfection doesn’t give us license to sin -

But they are also people of praise -

They keep coming back -

The monster at the end of the movie who never dies …

Those who do great things for God will keep coming back - they can get hit time and time and time again like that monster at the end of the movie - but they are never going to die! They are never going to give up -

They are always going to keep coming back with praise!

That’s what I’m going to do!

She also was faithful in fasting and praying …

January 6-26 - 21 days …

Don’t let faithfulness in any of these areas be a forgotten drumbeat!

**> Witness**

Acts 2:38 - …She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.

Are we openly telling everyone what Jesus has done for us?

It is our responsibility - build relationships - give the invitation -

Try to tell more people in the coming year than you told last year -

Try to invite more people in the coming year than you invited last year -

Put yourself in a place where you can be a faithful witness and tell others - tell everyone - expect results -

The more people you tell - the more opportunities for positive results there will be!

Forgotten drumbeats of Christmas - from this often neglected part of the story -

* Obedience
* Devotion
* Divine Guidance
* Praise
* Vision
* Blessing
* Faithfulness
* Witness