

Unit 19: Session 4 - Jesus is Dedicated¹

Scripture: Luke 2:21-38

Introduction (5 minutes)

READ:

While the information in this session's passage is concise, it is also full of treasures to be mined by careful observation. The specific words and subtle references provided by Luke paint a picture of Christ as the long-awaited light to the Gentiles and hope of Israel. As the events in this passage unfold, God's sovereign hand is unmistakable in pointing to His beloved Son, who came to seek and save the lost. What God has revealed here is more than sufficient to lead us to salvation, and it is more than sufficient to share with others.

ASK:

Why does what we talk about most often reveal what we treasure most?

What does that say about us as Christians?

Teaching Plan (15-20 minutes)

Read the Scripture passage below one section at a time and ask the corresponding questions within each section. Feel free to use your own Bible or follow along with the text below (the translation used is from the CSB).

READ:

Luke 2:21-24

When the eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus—the name given by the angel before he was conceived. And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were finished, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (just as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord) and to offer a sacrifice (according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons). - Luke 2:21-24

ASK:

Why did Jesus' parents dedicate Jesus and offer sacrifices? (see Exodus 13:12; Leviticus 12:8).

Why do you think it was important that these laws were followed?

READ:

Luke 2:25-32

There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel's consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, he entered the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him what was customary under the law, 28 Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said, Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace, as you promised. For my eyes have seen your salvation. 31 You have prepared it in the presence of all peoples— a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel.

ASK:

¹ From The Gospel Project for Students, Leader Guide, Vol. 7, pgs. 32-39

How did Simeon know the Messiah would come in his lifetime?

What does this tell you about God's sovereignty?

How do you think Simeon felt during this moment?

READ:

Luke 2:33-38

His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and told his mother Mary: "Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed— 35 and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." 36 There was also a prophetess, Anna, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well along in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and was a widow for eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayers. 38 At that very moment, she came up and began to thank God and to speak about him to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

ASK:

What two things does Simeon say are a part of Jesus' destiny? What do you think those things ultimately point to?

How did Anna respond to the birth of Jesus? How does Jesus' birth give us the hope of redemption?

Our Mission (10 minutes)

For application, ask the following questions divided into sections head, heart, and hands, to help students think through how God's story connects with our own.

HEAD:

What should our response be when we can't fully understand all that God is doing through the circumstances of our lives?

HEART:

What was the connection between Anna's heart for God and her actions of telling others about the Messiah?

HANDS:

Who has God brought into your life that you can share the hope of redemption in Jesus Christ?

How might you share the joy of Christ with this person or group of people in the next few weeks?

Prayer

Pray together to close, taking prayer requests if desired. Encourage students to spend some time journaling the following questions:

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about myself?