

1st Reading – What is happening?

Read through as a whole group.

Go over bits which are harder to understand:

- v22-24: 'purification according to the Law of Moses'
 - Process given to Jews in Leviticus 12 to 'purify' a woman after childbirth
 - Woman would remain unclean for 7 days then have 33 days neither pure or impure
 - Sacrifices were then offered 1) Sacrifice for burnt offering 2) Sacrifice for sin offering
 - Part of process of atonement (making sure she was right with God)
- v24: 'pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons'
 - In accordance to Leviticus -> shows Jesus' family were poor
- v25: 'waiting for the consolation of Israel'
 - the Greek word for 'comfort', the hope that God would come rescue/comfort his people
- v25: 'the Holy Spirit was upon him'
 - God was working through him, He was filled with God's spirit, He was lead by God.
- v27: 'in the Spirit'
 - Under the guidance / direction of God. God had brought him there.
- v29-32: 'your salvation... light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory to your people Israel'
 - He saw the baby Jesus was God's way of saving people from all the world ('gentiles')
 - Before this God's special relationship with just Israel
- v34: 'appointed for the full & rising of many in Israel & for a sign that is opposed so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed'
 - Jesus will bring down ('fall') the arrogant/proud.
 - Jesus will save ('rising') the humble and weak.
 - There will be opposition to Jesus ('opposed')
- v38: 'the redemption of Israel'
 - The restoration of the Jewish people
 - God sealing his promise that it will be better in the future

2nd Reading – What does it mean?

Read through as a whole group whilst asking in our heads 'What does it mean?'

3rd Reading – How does it relate to us?

Split into three groups to look at each of the 3 sections and ask:

- What does it mean? How does it link with what we know about the rest of the bible?
- How does it relate to us? What is God saying to us through it?

1. v22-24: Jesus' family going to the temple
2. v25-35: Simeon meeting Jesus
3. v36-38: The prophetess Anna

After 5 minutes come back and share with whole group.

My thoughts on application:

1) v22-24: Jesus' family going to the temple

- Mary & Joseph were faithful to God's law. It doesn't appear like they picked/mixed bits.
 - Do we? Even the bits that are tough? The bits we don't want to do or don't understand?
- God choose a poor & humble family and used them in an amazing way.
 - God doesn't choose people who think they have it all sorted/think they are important
 - He uses the humble, helpless, the outcasts.

2) v25-35: Simeon meeting Jesus

- Simeon was looking to God for hope / comfort and God showed him Jesus
 - Are we looking to God for the same hope/comfort? Then we need to look to Jesus.
- Simeon departed 'in peace' because Jesus fulfilled the longing of Simeon's heart
 - Only Jesus can satisfy our deepest desires for true peace and fulfilment

3) v36-38: The prophetess Anna

- Anna 'did not depart from the Temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day'
 - We now do not need to go to the Temple to meet God, God fills Christians with himself, his Holy Spirit. **See 1 Corinthians 3:16.**
 - But do we have the same passion / mindset which never leaves or stops worshipping? Or do we have moments, or days off? Certain times or certain parts of our life where we willingly let our commitment slip? Parts where we need to give up to God and have the attitude of Anna?
- Encouraged to be like Anna and tell the Good News to all those 'waiting'

Any Questions?

Pray.