

WEEK 19:

THE HOLY FIRST BORN

PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:

Luke 2:22-40

RELATED SCRIPTURES:

Isaiah 49:6 + 66:1-3, John 4:21-24,
Romans 5:12-21 + 9:4-5, Colossians 1:13-18

“The resurrection and incarnation of Jesus opens the door to ... the powerful, mysterious presence of the God of Israel, the creator God, bringing Israel's story to its climax by doing a new thing, bringing the story of creation to its height by a new creation from the womb of the old.”

- N.T. Wright, “God’s Way of Acting”

PERSONAL STUDY:

Have you witnessed a young couple (yourself or friends or family members) giving birth to a child? What kind of thoughts, fears and events do new parents in the first few months of a baby’s life?

Read Luke 2:22-24 and Leviticus 12. The offering of two turtledoves or pigeons was a provision in the law for those who could not afford a more expensive customary lamb. What difficulties in travel did this poor young couple likely experience? What do we learn about Mary and Joseph’s devotion to God?

Read Luke 2:33-35. Simeon’s prophecy can be paraphrased as: “This boy will expose the hearts of those who pretend to be holy and those who fear they’ll never be holy enough. He will show us all our need for salvation. He himself will be that salvation, and you, mother, will suffer because he will suffer. It will be like a sword piercing your own soul.” After all Mary and Joseph have experienced in the first weeks of Jesus’ life, how would that prophecy sit with them?

Read Luke 2:25-32 and 36-38. Simeon and Anna have been praying and waiting their entire lives for the coming Messiah. Has anyone in your life been praying for you for years? What prayers do you hope will mark your life over the years? What are things you currently pray about on a regular basis?

SERMON NOTES:



LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION:

Read Exodus 13:1-2, Luke 2:22-24, Colossians 1:13-20 and Romans

8:29. What is the significance of the firstborn male in a Jewish family?

What are the implications of Jesus being the new patriarch for a new humanity?



Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-17. What kind of sinful traits and family patterns did you inherit with your first human nature? How have you seen Jesus redeem you as a new creation and part of his new humanity?



Read Luke 2:25-32 and Romans 8:18-25. Simeon's patient longing culminates in seeing God's salvation come in the form of a baby whose name means salvation. What forms of brokenness (personal, communal and global) wear you out as you wait for Jesus' promised second coming to restore all things and put a final end to sin and death?

Read Luke 2:25-38 and Revelation 21:1-8. How as a Lifegroup do we need to focus our hearts on responding to Jesus in worship and anticipation of His return? What are specific ways we commit to seeing Jesus and His salvation in the busyness of the next few weeks?

