

advanced in years and had lived with *her* husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. ³⁸ At that very moment she came up and *began* giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. //

- a. Are you needy; then trust in God and call upon Him – The Bible instructs: “She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day...” (1 Tim. 5:5 ESV) Rather than push God away and turn to self-pity, God invites all who are truly needy to ♦*draw near to Him* and ♦*be at peace in Jesus!*
- b. Anna was in tune with the things of God – Therefore, when she saw the Christ, *she spoke about Him!* She had read and meditated upon the OT Scriptures; then, by God’s grace, she *understood* and *believed*; therefore, she spoke with *accuracy* and *confidence* about the Christ of Christmas!

Conclusion: ³⁹ When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. // Jesus is our perfect substitute; He ♦fulfilled the Law, ♦paid our penalty, and ♦will carry us through this New Year *and every year* until we are home in heaven! Therefore, let us NOT trust in WHAT WE DO, **but**, instead, in **what Jesus has done** for us! And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

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Our Amazing Savior!

Based on Luke 2:21-40 NAU

1st Sunday of Christmas – 2012

January 1 → 10:00

On January 8 we return to 8:00 & 10:45, BC & SS at 9:30

Introduction: Dear friends, **Christmas** is about *God providing our forgiveness in Christ*; therefore, for us who trust in Jesus Christ as Savior, *every day is Christmas!*

Today, *January 1*, is eight days after our remembrance of Jesus’ birth. The Bible records: ²¹ And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. // The name “*Jesus means ‘the Lord saves.’*” (Small Catechism Explanation, Question 115) The Father sent the Son to live and die for all; then the Holy Spirit ♦showed us our helplessness and ♦gave us faith to trust in Jesus as our Savior! Therefore, *Jesus is so important to every believer!*

1. **Jesus Presentation at the Temple:**

- a. Leviticus records this ceremonial law for new mothers – a law that ultimately points to the all-sufficient sacrifice of the Christ: “And when the days of her purifying are completed..., she shall bring to the priest...a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering, ⁷ and he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement [a sin covering] for her. Then she shall be clean... This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female. ⁸ And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a

burnt offering and the other for a sin offering....” (Lev. 12:6-8 ESV)

- b. Back to Luke 2: ²² And when the ⁴⁰ days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they [Joseph & Mary] brought Him [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “EVERY *firstborn* MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, “A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS.” // They offered the sacrifice of a POOR family. Why? *The Magi had not yet come with their gift of gold!* Also, *right from the beginning*, Jesus perfectly fulfilled God’s Law for you and me and all (Mt. 5:17).

HYMN: “From East to West”

LSB 385, vv. 1-3

2. **Simeon’s Prophecy:** ²⁵ And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation [comfort, encouragement] of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, ²⁸ then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, //
- a. The Nunc Dimittis – Sung after receiving the Supper!
- i. ²⁹ “Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; ³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation, ³¹ Which You have prepared in the presence of all

peoples, ³² A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel.” //

- ii. Simeon not only believed the Bible – as we do, *but he actually saw and held the Christ child!* Jesus used these words to describe people like you and me: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:29 ESV)
- iii. Jesus is the True Light for the people of Israel AND all Gentiles; *NO ONE IS LEFT OUT!*
- b. ³³ And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him [by Gabriel, by the shepherds, and now by Simeon]. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed-- ³⁵ and a sword will pierce even your own soul-- to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” //
- i. No one can be neutral about Jesus – He said: “He who is not with Me is against Me...” (Mt. 12:30 NAS)
- ii. These words describe Jesus – “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone [many Jews rejected Jesus, yet He is the Savior. Jesus is also called]... A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.’ [Peter wrote:] They stumble because they disobey the word...” (1 Peter 2:7-8 ESV) The message is: *Repent and believe*, yet many ♦feel offended and ♦reject Christ as their Savior☹!

HYMN: “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

LSB 393

3. **Anna’s Prophecy:** ³⁶ And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was