

# My Eyes Have Seen Your Salvation

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good, well let's turn now to our Bible reading for this morning, and we are continuing in the early chapter of Luke's Gospel. We have plenty of visitor Bibles at the side and at the back, so do please grab a Bible if you don't have one with you.

And we are in Luke chapter 2, and that's page 857 in the visitor Bible. Luke chapter 2, and we're reading from verse 22. So Luke 2 and verse 22.

And when the time came for their purification, according to the law of Moses, they brought him, that is Jesus, up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. As it's written in the law of the Lord, every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him. 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. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

[ 2 : 1 4 ] And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed, and a sword will pierce through your own so also, so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed. And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phaniel of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was 84. She did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at the very hour, she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who are waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favour of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year, the feast of the Passover.

Passover. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group, they went a day's journey. But then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances. And when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.

And he said to them, why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my father's house? And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favor with God and man. Amen. May God bless his word to us this morning.

[ 4 : 53 ] Amen. We'll do open your Bibles once again to Luke chapter 2. Now amidst the joy of Christmas, and there is good and right reason to be joyful and full of wonder at this time.

But amidst the joy of Christmas, we mustn't miss or skate over or pretend away the implications of Jesus' arrival. It can be possible for us to get caught up in the season, to be filled with warm feelings, and be swept along simply by sentimentalism or seasonal cheer, that isn't actually grounded in the real heart and truth of the gospel.

The gospel is wondrously good news when it is received with humble faith. But the gospel is also a warning of judgment when it is refused with hard-hearted folly.

The gospel, and so the message of Christmas, to some is the aroma of life, and to others the stench of death. We miss the very heart of the incarnation, the heart of Christmas, if we miss the shadow of the cross that hangs over the baby Jesus from the off.

We mustn't romanticize Christmas as simply a touching nativity. Isn't this wonderful news from Mary? Oh, a little lovely baby boy. Oh, and a magical baby at that.

[ 6 : 31 ] No, no. This was wondrous news from Mary. Gabriel had said that. Mary has sung it. But there's more that Luke means to show us. There's more to the story of Christmas.

The truth of Christmas. There's more to the story of Christmas than simply the arrival of Jesus. He has arrived for a very particular purpose. And Luke's way of showing us that throughout these opening two chapters, throughout his overture to his gospel, his way of showing us these realities here is through the lens of Mary as a mother.

We left Mary last week, chapter 2, verse 19, treasuring up these things in her heart, pondering them. And indeed, the heart is going to be a very key thing in these events.

The thrust of Simeon's message is there in verse 35. Jesus is going to be the means of many hearts being revealed. And again, verse 51, Mary treasured up all these things in her heart. And so Luke is using Mary's experience to give us certainty about just what is entailed in the salvation that has arrived. To give us clarity and certainty about what salvation means and requires.

[ 7 : 51 ] About what it achieves and provokes. Well, we're going to spend the bulk of our time this morning in verses 22 to 39, where we see the realities of salvation.

The realities of salvation. Verses 22 to 39. When we are confronted with Jesus, we're brought face to face with salvation itself.

And so the word of the gospel, Jesus' own word, is one that brings comfort, cost, and challenge. Now, these events, in these verses, they mirror, in Luke's structure, they mirror the events of Gabriel appearing to Mary, and Mary going to her relative Elizabeth. Gabriel and Elizabeth earlier had served as a means of preparation for Mary, preparation for what was to come in terms of the significance of her being the mother of God incarnate.

And now, as Mary is to come to terms with another monumental truth, indeed a terrible truth, unthinkable even for a mother, as Mary has to come to terms with the impending departure of Jesus.

[ 9 : 05 ] A departure hinted at in last week's passage, with the baby Jesus being wrapped in cloths and laid in a manger, just as he would later be wrapped in cloths and laid in a tomb.

Hinted at with there being no place for Jesus in the inn, in this world. The shadow has already been hanging over Jesus, and Mary was pondering these things, and so again, she's given two people who act as a means of preparation for what was to come with his impending departure.

Mary's given Simeon and Anna, two aged but undeterred believers in the promises of God. It's striking here how Luke shapes his account around not the major players of the world, but rather he shapes it around ordinary people, regular people, but faithful people.

Throughout these opening chapters, God unfolds his heavenly plan through his understated, uncelebrated, but unswerving people. Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, Simeon and Anna.

I think there's great encouragement to us in this. God doesn't work through superheroes nor sovereigns, just steadfast, ordinary people, people like you and me.

[ 10 : 24 ] And so here, it is Simeon and Anna, both of them advanced in years, but notice righteous, devout, worshipping, praying.

And notice both of them were waiting. Verse 25, Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel. And Anna, verse 38, for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And that is the life of the people of God in all ages. Simeon and Anna were longing for the promised Savior, longing for the day he would bring all that had been promised.

And their faith manifested in obedience to what God had commanded and spoken. That is still the life of faith today. We long for the coming again of the Savior so that we will see salvation fully, finally, completely.

And faith today looks just like it did for Simeon and Anna. It looks like longing, waiting, and whilst we do so, obeying, even through days of discouragement.

[ 11 : 33 ] And so Simeon and Anna are not just apt teachers from Mary here, but Luke also means them to teach us of the realities of salvation. And so we're going to look at the realities of salvation that Luke shows us here, six of them, six S's, through this incident with Simeon and Anna.

The first S, subject. Jesus was subject to the law from the very beginning. That's what verses 22 to 24 are all about. Look at how the law is present throughout this whole section, but particularly verses 22 to 24.

Verse 22, the law of Moses. Verse 23, the law of the Lord. Verse 24, the law of the Lord. And then again, likewise in verses 27 and verse 39.

Mary and Joseph were faithful believers and so they obeyed the law of God. They had circumcised Jesus already on the eighth day back in verse 21. And now the time came, verse 22, for their purification.

And we can find details of what exactly is being referred to here in Leviticus 12. But basically, giving birth led to ritual uncleanness. And so for 40 days, a new mother wouldn't come to the temple, but then they would come to make an offering and they'd be clean.

[ 12 : 57 ] That's what's being referred to there in verse 24. And the law allows for those who are poor to offer two turtle doves instead of a lamb. And so again, we can see that Mary and Joseph were not movers and shakers in the world.

who were poor, poor, but faithful believers. And ever since the Exodus, when God had passed over the firstborn sons of Israel, the firstborn of each womb, verse 23, was to be set aside for the Lord. And so Mary and Joseph are being faithful to the law here. And so Jesus, from his earliest days, is marked by faithfulness to the law.

And I think it's important to notice this. Jesus doesn't arrive as a savior who meant to tear up the script. He didn't arrive as the God-man and seek to exempt himself from God's creation and God's commands.

He wasn't a revolutionary seeking to start something radically new. No. He arrived subject to the law. Coming not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it perfectly.

[ 14 : 11 ] Salvation. Wonderful, full salvation. The salvation that Jesus brings is according to how God has always ordered and planned things. Jesus' mission unfolds within the status quo.

And there's no sign of struggle on his part that this is so. Now, there are two important aspects to Jesus' obedience. First, Jesus was obedient to the will of his father to bear the penalty for our sins. Sometimes that's called Jesus' passive obedience. And that's a vital and precious truth for the Lord's people. Jesus' passive obedience means God's wrath is poured out on Jesus instead of us. And we see that even echoed here in what's happening. Verse 23, the presenting of the child, presenting a firstborn. that was a standing testimony to what God had done to rescue his people in the Exodus.

And the ongoing presentation of these firstborn children year after year after year stood as a reminder that God's rescue of his people is through redemption.

[ 15 : 20 ] And the price of redemption has always been a sacrifice, a substitute being sacrificed. That's what the redeemed firstborns in Israel, that's what redeemed the firstborns in Israel at the Passover, the blood of animals sacrificed in their place.

But secondly, Jesus was also perfectly obedient throughout his life, even from birth to the enduring commands of God. He lived a truly and totally righteous life.

And this is sometimes called Jesus' active obedience. And so his subjection to the law here, what Luke's showing us, means that his people, when they receive him, can also receive his perfect record.

That's what Luke makes play in here. Just as the shadow of Jesus' suffering hangs over him from birth, so does the shape of his righteousness. A perfect life, subject to, submissive to, God's commands in every way possible.

And so one of the realities of salvation is that those who cling to Jesus also claim from Jesus his own perfect record. There would be no salvation, no hope without it.

[16:42] Jesus was subject to the law. Second, satisfaction. Salvation. Salvation is receiving Jesus. It's Jesus drawing close to you to bring peace, to bring contentment, satisfaction.

Now, Luke records these events around making purification to show us also how God orchestrated Simeon to meet with Jesus. Notice, in amongst these events, as Mary and Joseph and Jesus are being faithful to all that God has planned and spoken, in amongst all of that, notice, at that point, the Spirit leads Simeon to see Jesus.

God doesn't just stir up emperors as a means of orchestrating history as we saw last time. He also orchestrates it through the everyday obedience of his people to unfold his salvation plan.

And so we're introduced to Simeon, who, like Zechariah, was a devout and righteous man. He was waiting, hoping, trusting for the consolation of Israel, the time when Israel would finally know comfort and relief, would know a second great Exodus rescue.

But notice that Luke wants to make plain that God's Spirit is very much at work here. Verse 25, the Spirit has been at work in Simeon as he waited in faith for the consolation of Israel.

[18:11] Verse 26, the Holy Spirit had revealed a message to him that he wouldn't see death until he'd seen the Christ. And again, verse 27, the Holy Spirit was drawing him into the temple at this very point so that he would see Jesus.

And that is a picture of the Holy Spirit's work. He works to reveal Jesus to people. He was doing it for Simeon and he still does it today. When the Scriptures are opened, when they're taught, God's Spirit is at work.

And notice the Holy Spirit's primary work is verse 26, to shew the Lord's Christ, which is why the Spirit draws Simeon into the temple here and now.

Verse 27, so that he sees this child. And when he does, verse 28, he takes the child in his arms and blesses God. He can't help but burst into song.

Can you imagine it? Something you've longed for, yearned for, and you know that your life hinges upon it. And it's been a long, long time. And then suddenly you see the answer.

[19:20] Here was Simeon clutching Jesus, clutching salvation itself. Verse 30, do you see to see Jesus is to see salvation.

They're one and the same. Now, of course, Jesus still had to live his life in perfect obedience. He still had to die. But his presence here for Simeon was enough to know that salvation has arrived.

Verse 29, now he can die in peace. God's promise kept. He can die because he's seen the Lord's Christ. And we have here, once again, don't we, the common Christmas word.

What is it that goes hand in hand with salvation? Peace. Simeon can die in peace. And he can do that for two reasons.

He's encountered Jesus, the bringer of salvation. Simeon finds satisfaction, contentment in knowing that God has kept his promise. He has now seen what had been promised and it fills him with joy, with satisfaction.

[20:25] He blesses God. And we live in a world, don't we, that is filled with discontentment. We're well acquainted with it.

We're bombarded from the media, advertising, all kinds of other ways. We're bombarded with messaging that would seek to tell us that we're lacking something, that would seek to tell us that we've got something to fear.

We're conditioned to crave more and more and want more and more. All the while, we know that our deepest longings are untouched. It's easy to toy about with trinkets that promise to add to our lives, but we know that they cannot bring lasting joy to us when, well, here is Simeon giving us the answer plain as day.

Real peace, real satisfaction is in drawing near to Jesus. Simeon had spent his life longing for the consolation of Israel and here was the means of it before him, before his very eyes.

He could see it and touch it. And Simeon would say to us that the key to peace in this life that cuts through all the disappointments, that cuts through all that we do not have, is to receive Jesus.

[21:39] Jesus offers water that means we'll never be thirsty again. And anything else is but sipping salt water.

Well, Simeon can also die in peace secondly because death now holds no fear for him. He can depart in peace because he has seen your salvation. Simeon has seen the one of whom it was

spoken that he will swallow up death forever and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and the reproach of his people he'll take away from all the earth.

Behold, this is our God. We have waited for him that he might save us. This is the Lord. We have waited for him. Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Friends, to receive Jesus is to receive a hope that means we can truly face death head on, happily, with real peace.

Again, it's quite a contrast to the world around us, isn't it? Death is that uncomfortable topic best avoided. Euphemisms are used. Deflection is embraced.

[ 22 : 53 ] Facing up to mortality is so very far from what we want to do. But Simeon will tell us to receive Jesus means that we need not fear death.

He has conquered it. We can depart in peace. Well, third, we also see here salvation's scope. The scope of salvation.

Jesus isn't a savior for a narrow, nationalistic cause. He isn't just a personal savior to be clung on to and hidden away. Jesus means to save people from every tribe, tongue, nation, and language.

Do you see verses 31 and 32? Salvation has been prepared for all peoples. Jesus is a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

surely Simeon had once again in mind Isaiah's prophecy. Isaiah again and again talks about a light shining for the Gentiles, a light for the nations that salvation may reach the end of the earth.

[ 23 : 56 ] And Simeon can see that in Jesus. God will stretch out his hand of salvation to the nations and Jesus is the hope of all peoples. Jesus. And so that's a broad and far-reaching reality.

Jesus is the hope of the whole world. Wherever we're from, whatever our history, Jesus is the answer. Jesus is the person around whom the whole world turns.

And so his salvation is expansive. But, it is also exclusive. There's no other way.

It is Jesus and Jesus alone who is a light of revelation to the world. And it is that message of exclusivity that is behind Simeon's further words to Mary.

And so we see, fourthly, separation. The gospel message is a divisive message. Jesus is divisive.

He is the light that exposes and separates out those who love the darkness from those who love the light.

[ 25 : 03 ] When confronted with Jesus, he either brings down or raises up. He will either be seen as salvation or scorned. Look at verse 34.

Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel and for a sign that is opposed so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.

The light of Jesus is an exposing light. He forces the issue. He reveals and exposes the disposition of hearts. Listen to how John's gospel puts it.

The light has come into the world and people love the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. for everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his works should be exposed.

Simeon saw in Jesus all that he longed for. He saw in Jesus the one who would make all wrongs right, the one who would restore glory to the people of God. Jesus is wonderful news to those who've been humbled, those humbled by the predicament that they see around them, those humbled by the knowledge that they're in dire need of rescue, those who've been brought low, those who've fallen, who can see and recognize that Jesus is the only hope of them being raised up.

[ 26 : 30 ] But if you refuse to see that you're the problem, if you refuse to give God his rightful place to accept that he is God, we're not. If you determinedly carry on through life ignoring the claims and commands of God and continue to love the darkness, not face up to sin, if you want to continue doing as you please, well then Jesus is an affront to you.

He's a challenge that will never go away. Every claim of his cuts against how you want life to be.

And when that is the case, the gospel is exposing.

It's revealing hearts. It exposes that apathy about Jesus is in fact enmity towards Jesus. And where that is the case, then this child, verse 34, will only be for the fall of those who refuse him and not for their rising.

Jesus is very confronting. He separates those who will be raised up from those who will be brought down. Now, because he separates, he also provokes.

We cannot be neutral with Jesus. Verse 34, he is appointed as a sign that is opposed. And so this separation also comes with, fifthly, a sting, the sting of salvation.

[ 28 : 07 ] Verse 33, Mary and Joseph marvel, they wonder at what has been said by Simeon. That's a common expression in these early chapters of Luke about God's work, Jesus' identity, wonder, marveling.

But then right beside it, verse 34, Jesus is a sign that will be opposed. In fact, verse 35, a sword will pierce through Mary's own soul.

Contrast this with Mary's song. She'd previously sung, my soul magnifies the Lord. But here, her soul will be pierced through as if by a sword.

Because the very separation that Jesus causes, the division that the gospel produces and exposes is ultimately the very thing that will lead to Jesus' final rejection, his death.

Jesus' exposure of those who love darkness is maddening. It provokes hatred, rejection, violence. Simeon is preparing Mary for the darkest day that any mother could possibly face.

[ 29 : 17 ] I'm sure that those who've lost a child, who've seen their beloved son or daughter ripped from them would recognize those words, a sword piercing through your soul.

But Simeon's words here mean that Mary in days to come would be able to reflect that as Jesus was opposed, as he was rejected, as he was arrested, as he was beaten, and as he was killed, she'd be able to reflect that this was always what was to be.

It would still be painful, piercing, but it was planned and full of promise, full of purpose. Salvation has a sting, a sting that has ultimately been paid for us, wonderfully paid for those who trust in Jesus by him.

The creedal and the cross go together. Salvation is only possible by a costly sacrifice. And what would be a terrible cost to marry the mother will end up being a wonderful comfort to marry the believer and to all who will receive Jesus and draw him close like Simeon.

But the sting follows his people too, doesn't it? Simeon is preparing any who would follow Jesus for the sting. The rejection and hostility Jesus faced is not alien to his people.

[ 30 : 46 ] Listen once again to Jesus himself. If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own, but because you are not of the world, but I choose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Salvation has a sting for Savior and saints alike. And so Simeon is preparing us the sting is normal. The sting of the world's opposition is but evidence of belonging to the one who was hated first. It still hurts.

It is still piercing at points, but let's not flee from it for it proves that we belong to the Savior. And finally, because of the sting, Luke finishes with succor.

Succor. All of the dark shadows of suffering for the Lord's anointed will give way to glorious redemption. And this is where Anna comes in. I think Anna is being lined up here as a living illustration of Jerusalem.

[ 32 : 00 ] We've seen similar with Zechariah and Elizabeth being a living illustration of the people of Israel longing for God to keep his promises. And here we see Anna bound up with the temple in Jerusalem.

Notice Luke tells us verse 36, she was the descendant of the tribe of Asher, one of the ten tribes who were lost in the north, cut off from Judah and cut off from Jerusalem.

Even her family tree communicates a longing for Jerusalem's redemption. And then we see that she was advanced in years. A long time has passed. She's been waiting a long, long time.

We also read verse 37 that she was a widow, married only for seven years before having what seemed to be a very long widowhood.

Now notice verse 38, she was waiting, hoping, trusting for the redemption of Jerusalem. Here was a widow longing for the restoration of Jerusalem. Back in Lamentations chapter 1 verse 1, we're told that Jerusalem was to be made desolate, to be made a widow.

[ 33 : 12 ] But just like Simeon was longing for the day when Israel would have comfort, consolation amidst its great longing, amidst its terribly long and dark night, so was Anna longing for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The city that once was the thriving heart of God's kingdom on earth. The city that had David ruling over it in prosperity. The city where God's temple was constructed, that he might dwell forever amongst his people.

But Jerusalem had been robbed of the glory of all of this, widowed, suffered painful loss, like Anna. But here she is, verse 38, rejoicing, giving thanks to God.

And this would have been the crowning preparation for Mary. Here amidst the news that great pain was coming to her, coming to her son, here was Anna.

Anna, in Luke's ordering, had to come to Mary first. Because if Anna, because if Simeon had come after Anna, then it might have seemed that his words would nullify the hope that Jerusalem might be redeemed.

[ 34 : 27 ] Because Simeon spoke of the ongoing rejection of many who belong to Israel. But no, Luke has it the other way around. Luke wants to show us clearly that despite the dark shadow of Jesus' rejection, despite the sword that would pierce Mary's soul, Anna shows us that it's not in vain.

Anna has walked Jerusalem's path. She's suffered great loss. She's been widowed. But Anna has seen salvation as she too comes face to face with Jesus in the temple.

Dark days lay ahead for Christ, but they were also days of destiny. redemption was coming. And so Anna isn't left reeling at the loss she suffered.

No, she too encountered Jesus and could see in him all that she had built her hopes upon. All that she had built her hopes upon had blossomed in Jesus. She's not left reeling. She's left rejoicing. She's able to give thanks to God and speak of him to all who were likewise waiting and longing for hope. Anna is a reassurance for Mary that whilst Mary the mother would be pierced through, Mary the believer would be able to praise.

[ 35 : 43 ] And likewise for us, this is sucker for the people of God today. We too are awaiting people waiting for the final day of God's salvation, waiting for Jesus' return. And what's sucker for us as we experience in this life the real sting of belonging to the Savior?

We can both tell of Jesus' arrival as Anna did, but we too can long with hope that the same experience of rejoicing that marked this widow, this aged believer, will also be our experience.

Luke wants us to be clear about the realities of salvation so that we can take hold of it and hold it out to others like Anna. So that this Christmas we might see salvation, not scorn it.

I might hold it out to others, not be hardened against it. Well, finally and briefly, we're going to look at verses 40 to 52 where we see the reality of the Savior.

Jesus is truly the Son of God and He is given completely to His Father's business. We see in these verses the wonderful reality of Jesus' humanity.

[ 36 : 56 ] divinity and we also see His unmistakable divinity. There's much that we can draw from these verses and we may return to them at some point in the future. But just briefly now, this final event serves as the climax of Luke's account of the arrival of Jesus.

This is the tenth event in these opening two chapters. And we've seen that these two chapters are an overture of the gospel, a taste of the gospel as a whole. chapter one focuses particularly on the glory of Christ's arrival, just like the first half of the gospel up to 951.

And chapter two, as we've been seeing, has the shadow of Christ's departure hanging over it, like the second half of Luke's gospel from 951 onwards, where we see Jesus' journey to and through Jerusalem, to and through the cross to be taken up in glory.

And so this last event of the overture is the exclamation mark at the end of Luke's introduction. It's filled with little glimpses of Jesus' true humanity.

Verse 40, He grew in strength and wisdom. Similarly, in verse 52, you see His growth. We see verse 51, that Jesus was submissive to His parents.

[ 38 : 13 ] That's a word to all youngsters here, isn't it? To be a faithful follower of Jesus as a child is in large part seen in that relationship to your parents.

Jesus took it seriously. The reality is that surrender to God, the life of faith, will at times look very much like willingness to accept parental discipline.

The God-man took that seriously. But as well as Jesus' humanity in these verses, we see a quite staggering claim by Him.

And so this event, as we work through it, is any parent's nightmare. They've set off on a trip to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem, faithful believers as they were.

But as they set off home, Jesus isn't amongst the group. After a day's journey, Joseph and Mary realize that Jesus isn't with them. I remember as a youngster, probably around 12 years old, this age, getting lost in a shopping center for about five minutes.

[ 39 : 24 ] And the anguish for me and my mom was notable. Only five minutes, and there was a sense of dread and terror. It's a horror scenario to lose a child. And so Mary and Joseph head back in distress to look for Him.

And they eventually find Him. And where is He? He's in the temple. Mary asks, why have you treated your father and I like this? And look at Jesus' response.

Well, first, before His response, look at verse 43. Jesus hadn't gotten lost. He hadn't been left behind, forgotten about.

He was in the temple because He chose to be. He stayed behind. He wasn't forgotten. He stayed. And then look at His response. Verse 49. Why are you looking for me?

Didn't you know that I'd be in my father's house? His response to His mother is extraordinary. Your father and I have been looking for you, they say. And He says, did you not know that I'd be in my father's house?

[ 40 : 33 ] Jesus refers to the temple in a way that nobody else ever has. Not even David. Joseph isn't Jesus' father. God Himself is.

And here, as Jesus reaches the age of 12, the point at which Jewish boys come of age as they progress to adulthood, here is Jesus committed wholly to His father's work at His father's house. Luke shows us very clearly Jesus' humanity, and He also shows us His divinity. But there's more going on here, I think. Notice verse 46. That little detail.

About three days. After about three days, they find Him. Well, a day was coming when after three days, Jesus would once again be missing and find.

Only then it wasn't missing and in a temple. A day is coming when he would be missing from the tomb. And on that occasion, as again, another Mary is there, a similar question will be posed.

[ 41 : 43 ] Verse 49. Why are you looking for me? But later, the end of Luke, why do you seek the living among the dead? He's not here, but is risen.

Luke, once again, gives us an echo of the glorious resurrection of Christ a sword will pierce through your own soul. Mary would know distress again, greater distress even than her son going missing. He'd be killed. But after three days, he'd be found again. I think Luke finishes his overture, his introduction here, with a foretaste of the very end of the gospel for two reasons.

To give certainty that all the bumps, all the opposition, all of the rejection, would one day give way to glorious resurrection. Keep that firmly fixed in view all the way through. That's where it's heading. That's what's going to happen. That's the first reason. But secondly, also to make so very clear that before that wonderful day of resurrection, Jesus is first about his father's business.

[ 42 : 50 ] Before resurrection would come the cross. And before then, Jesus in his humanity was to continue growing, learning obedience, as the writer to Hebrews puts it.

And so now is not the time of resurrection glory. Now was the time for verse 51, submitting to his parents.

Christmas, the incarnation, was but the beginning of Jesus' arrival. He is here. And it will be glorious at the end. But first, he had to be utterly submissive to the law of God for us.

And that included dying. So that we might all be able to say with Simeon, Lord, now are you letting your servant depart in peace? For my eyes have seen your salvation.

And so, will our hearts be revealed, exposed? Or will we join with Mary in treasuring these things up within our hearts?

[ 44 : 04 ] Let's pray. Lord God, we marvel at how all of your promises are yes and amen in Christ Jesus.

And we ask, at this festive season, that you would grant us a new great joy, great peace in the salvation that Jesus has won for us. And graciously give to us what we need to persevere through all the costs of salvation.

and that we would continually speak of the Lord Jesus until he comes again. Amen.  
Amen.