

Simply Joy
Next Steps
December 3, 2023
Luke 2:25-40

OPENING PRAYER:

In You we find our true joy, O God. From You we receive real peace, O Christ. Through You we step out in faith, O Spirit. Forgive us when we seek joy where it cannot be found. Forgive us when we derive peace from the things which do not make for it. Forgive us when we walk without the power or direction to really move. May this time, Lord God, be a time of seeking and finding, asking and receiving, knocking and opening. For those willing to enter Your adventure, these things You have promised. And You are faithful, even when we are not. Thank You, and praise You. Amen.

BREAKING THE ICE:

- What's a time when you found it difficult to wait on God and you ended up getting frustrated?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

In this week's lesson, we look at the story of Simeon and Anna and how they waited for the Messiah and the joy that comes when they found Him. Read Luke 2:25-40.

- Simeon and Anna had two different perspectives here. Simeon was promised that he would not die until he has seen the Messiah. What are your thoughts about this brief description of his life and God's promise to Him?
- Anna became a widow at a young age and spent the rest of her life in the temple waiting on the Messiah which ended up being several decades. What do you think led her to this?
- In this week's LifeTalk, we learn that in order to have hope, we have to have faith. What is the significance of hope and faith being together? Read Hebrews 11:1
- We also learned that trusting in God means having patience. Why is learning to have patience important in having faith and trusting God?
- Like with Simeon and Anna, our patience leads us to worship. Why do you think that is?

CLOSING POSSIBILITIES:

- Through our worship, we connect with Jesus. And when we find Jesus, we find joy. Think about some of the moments in your life that you can look back and realize that knowing Jesus allowed you to have joy in times that would have otherwise gotten you down if it wasn't for knowing Him.
- What are some of the simple things in life God has blessed you with that brings you joy?
- What things can you let go of in order to spend more time with God?

NEXT STEPS:

- Make a list of things that distract you from God and keep you from having joy in your life. Then ask God what can you do change those things.
- Look at any trying situations you might have in your life right now and ask God to give you the hope and faith you need to get through it. Then praise and worship Him for what He's going to do.
- How can you share the importance of having joy in Jesus with someone else around you who needs to hear this as well?

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Almighty God,

I hear it over and over: you are coming to me. I feel my heart stir in anticipation.

Help me to feel renewed patience settle in my heart,
and to lift my face in joy.

When I have been like a lost lamb,

I hear your voice calling me

and I feel how deeply you want me to return.

Somehow I know that you rejoice in my desire to find you.

Help me not to be afraid, to believe, to hope, and to rejoice in you coming into my life.