

Small Group Notes for the Week of January 17, 2021

Luke 2:21-35

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

General Questions:

1. What stood out to you in the sermon?
2. What is something new you didn't know before?
3. Is there a question that the sermon prompted for/in you?
4. How do you feel called to respond to the sermon?

Discussion Questions:

1. Pastor Nate asks the question, "What would you have done had you known what 2020 would have looked like?" Would you have prepared for it differently?
2. Anna is from the tribe of Asher. Look up what Asher means in Hebrew. Why is it fitting that Anna is from the tribe of Asher?
3. There are very few instances in the Bible where we actually get to know the name of a widow. Widows were considered to be insignificant in Jesus' world. But she was named because she was known for something. Pastor Nate says, "Poor woman, she never leaves! She could have found another person to love and things to do. And yet she went on and on—fasting and praying. That's what she did. That's what she's known for. What are you known for? What you're known for matter at the end." What are you known for? Or what would you LIKE to be known for?
4. Pastor Nate mentions Matthew 25 in his sermon. Read Matthew 25:31-48. How does this relate to the sermon and Pastor Nate's refrain, "Had I known"? Discuss what this means for us in our walk with God.

Beyond Questions:

1. Anna stayed in the temple fasting and praying for many decades. Share your spiritual practices with one another. How do you practice God's presence in your own life? Be intentional about spending time listening to God this week.
2. Take some time to share which parents you blessed/encouraged last week. What was the outcome? Or share what you had to let go to hold peace in your arms—how did that work out for you?

3. Spend some time sharing prayer requests and praying for each other.
4. We live in midst of MANY unknowns. In fact, there are more things we don't know than we DO know—especially during these in-between and turbulent times. Anna didn't live a life of "had I known" but a life of faithfulness based on God's promises. Reflect on God's faithfulness this week so that you may also live a life of faithfulness. Here's a hymn to help you to do that:

Great is Thy Faithfulness

"Great is Thy faithfulness, " O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain: "Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
"Great is Thy faithfulness, " Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!