

Family Traditions

(Luke 2:22-40)

Introduction

[Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to amplify the gospel in your life & church, and to impact the culture.

1. We're continuing the thread of learning how to love & worship God.

Family traditions [Luke 2:22-24]

1. [2:22] Joe & Mary go to the temple "according to the Law/Custom": Mentioned 5 times (cf. Luke 2:22, 24, 27, 39, 42)
2. Joe & Mary love and honor God by regularly offering up their lives to Him through family traditions of faith.
 - a. [2:21] (Pre-Temple) Circumcision as a symbol of being set apart for God (cf. Gen 17)
 - b. [2:22-23] Mom's post-birth purification (cf. Lev 12); dedication of a firstborn son to God (cf. Exo 13:2, 12)
 - c. [2:24] They're poor, and give a poor person's offering to God (cf. Lev 12:8).
 - d. It's not the size of the gift, but the heart of the worshiper and the degree of sacrifice.
3. *Application*: Do you offer your life regularly to God? Do you regularly express how you love & honor God?

Five functions of the temple

1. The temple is the sacred connection point between Heaven and Earth.
 - a. God is holy & awesome Creator, different and distinct from us.
 - b. But the temple showed that He cares and makes Himself available; He is not aloof and disconnected.
2. The temple is the place of God's very presence.
 - a. God dwelt in the Holy of holies; He is near and He is here.
 - b. God's presence & nearness brought comfort, strength & joy to His people.
3. The temple is where God's people meet with Him.
 - a. God didn't need a house, but created a place for us to come and meet with Him.
 - b. He is personal and relational for anyone & everyone.
4. The temple is the place where sin is atoned for.
 - a. Acknowledging a holy, righteous, perfect God, people are sinners by nature and choice.
 - b. Sacrifices were made to pay for the natural consequence of death (separation from God) for sin.
 - c. Most important tradition: Yom Kippur ("Day of Atonement") with two sacrificed goats:
 - i. Substitution: After confessing the people's sins, it's slaughtered; its shed blood pays the penalty.
 - ii. Scapegoat: It is sent away, symbolically carrying people's sins away.
5. The temple is the center of life, faith and worship.
 - a. For oppressed, average people, they could come together as God's people here.

Jesus fulfills the functions of the temple [Luke 2:25-40]

1. When Jesus & the temple come together, it is the fulfillment of the old covenant & inauguration of the new.
2. Jesus is the new connection point between Heaven & Earth.

- a. [*Last week's message*] Jesus is God who became a man, connecting Heaven & Earth in one person.
3. Jesus is the very presence of God; people meet with God through Jesus.
 - a. [2:25] Before, righteous & devout people experience the presence of God by going to the temple.
 - b. [2:26-28] Now, Simeon experienced the presence of God by going to Jesus: Immanuel; God is here with us.
 4. Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins.
 - a. [2:24] Before, people had to bring sacrifices to the temple to atone for sin.
 - b. [2:30-32] Now, Jesus brings salvation from sin as the Messiah and atoning sacrifice.
 - i. Jesus is the substitution goat who shed blood to pay our penalty.
 - ii. Jesus is the scapegoat who takes away our sin.
 5. Jesus is the center of life, faith & worship
 - a. [2:37] Before, Anna spent her life worshipping in the temple day & night.
 - b. [2:38] Now, Anna worships Jesus.
 6. Jesus replaces the old tradition, as the presence of God, the sin sacrifice, and the center of worship in our lives.
 7. Application: What are you using as a temple instead of Jesus?
 - a. Test: When I'm tired, angry, stressed, hurt, lonely, I first turn to _____. If it's not Jesus: Idol.
 - b. What do you use to draw close to God or meet with Him, other than Jesus?
 - c. What substitutes do you use to atone for your sin? Guilt, being good, doing good as a bargaining chip?
 - d. Where's your community? Where's the center of your life, faith and worship?

You are the new temple

1. [1 Cor 3:16-17] You are the temple of the Holy Spirit, God's presence, to the glory of Jesus.
2. [Eph 2:19-21] You are the Church, a temple composed of people, joined together & growing toward Christ.
3. [Matt 5:14] You are the City on the Hill, not Jerusalem, shining Jesus into the world.
4. Application: People can & should experience God, forgiveness of sin, find community in Him... through you.