

Men And Women Of The Bible: Anna

Luke 2:22-38 ~ November 4, 2020

Introduction

- Anna is only mentioned in a few verses, when Jesus is presented at the temple.
- Today's scripture shows us what it means to simply live a faithful, ordinary life before the Lord. And that's a message we need to hear. Society teaches that bigger and greater and more is better.
- Anna's life is simple but profound: she was continually faithful, and therefore ready to do God's will.

Who Anna Is

- The Bible doesn't say much about who Anna is, but we can learn a lot from the fact she was from the tribe of Asher and considered a prophetess.
 - Asher was one of the tribes of Israel taken captive by Assyria in 722 BC. They were taken captive because they consistently turned away from the Lord—prophets had warned them for hundreds of years, but generations of people refused to listen. However, it says in 2 Chronicles 30 that “some men of Asher... humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.” They were some of the few who figured it out, and they repented. So, Anna comes from a line of people who were faithful.
 - She also was a “prophetess,” not because she could predict the future, but because God called her in a unique way to tell His truth.
- Anna was a widow. After seven years of marriage Anna's husband died, which as we know could have been a sentence of poverty unless there was a kinsman-redeemer, like Boaz was to Ruth, or family to care for her.
- After her husband died, she spent a lot of time fasting and praying in the temple.
- She spent a great deal of time in worship—temple worship took place daily in the morning, early afternoon, and evening, where scripture was read and proclaimed, and sometimes the psalms were sung.

Anna's Proclamation About Jesus

- Anna was familiar with scripture because she heard it read three times a day, so she knew the passages that talked about Jesus' birth.
- And as Mary and Joseph walked into the outer courts to bring Jesus to the priests for a blessing, scripture says that Anna and Simeon were there and that God had directed them there. They both would make proclamations about Jesus.
- It is significant that there were two people to witness who Jesus was and what he was going to do. Deuteronomy 19:15 says, *“A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.”* Luke also presented two witnesses to establish truth. Simeon affirmed that Jesus was indeed “the

Lord's Messiah" (2:26), and Anna similarly affirmed that Jesus was "the redemption of Jerusalem" (2:38).

Living Like Anna

- Anna was an ordinary woman, 84 years old, and even as a prophetess didn't appear to have a public ministry.
- Most of us are not called to a large ministry. Our lives aren't going to have constant mountaintop experiences, but we're instead going to spend a lot of time walking on the prairie.
- We are equipped by God to serve Him in whatever capacity we are able. We're going to have less in common with someone like David or Moses or Deborah and more in common with Anna. A steady, stable walk with God. Just like Anna.
- We worship God in everything we do in our daily lives—taking meals to the sick, helping with the food pantry, visiting someone at a hospital or nursing home, mowing the lawn or shoveling the snow for an elderly neighbor, sending cards or letters of encouragement, etc. And our own personal practices—praying for others, studying scripture, reading a daily devotional. Quite simply, serving the Lord is just living each day as a Christian and taking the opportunities that come our way for service to others and for proclaiming Christ to those around us.