

January 1, 2006

"Jesus - Became Like Us"

Jesus is the way to God.

Key Verse: Luke 2:30, 31 (NIV)

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people.

Bible Passage: Luke 2:22-32 (NIV)

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace; For my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Lesson Thought

A group of Americans were traveling in a foreign country. They received warnings to leave the country because it was not safe for Americans. The travelers did not heed the advice and chose to stay. Soon after this, they were kidnapped. The captors took the travelers and put them into a room. In this room, there was no furniture and no lights. There were steel walls and a dirty, dusty, smelly, cold cement floor. At first, the travelers had great hope that they would be rescued. They even thought they might possibly escape on their own. They stayed ready, standing near the door, waiting for an opportunity to escape. After awhile, the travelers decided to preserve their energy. They wanted to be sure that when the door opened, they would have enough energy to escape. The attentive, standing travelers began resting on the dirty, dusty, smelly, cold cement floor. Soon their resting turned to despair. One by one, they found themselves with no hope - alone, curled up in little balls on the empty, dirty, dusty, smelly, cold cement floor. At

last, a group of Navy Seals broke into the room to save the travelers from their captivity. However, the travelers had lived in despair so long that when the Seals opened the door to save them, the weary travelers stayed in their position on the floor, curled up in little balls. The Navy Seals were unable to get the travelers to move. Finally, one of the Seals put his gun and ammunition down, took off all his combat gear, got down on the smelly, dirty, dusty, cold cement floor, and curled up in a little ball himself. He moved from one traveler to the next. He talked to them, comforted them, and cared for them. He told them that he knew the way out if they would follow him. One by one, the travelers began to trust the Navy Seal. He led the whole group to safety one at a time. Often we find ourselves like this group of travelers: lost, alone, afraid with no way to out, and searching for fulfillment and hope for the future. Jesus comes to our world. He talks to us, comforts us, and cares for us. Jesus shows each of us the way to God. Through Jesus, we can find fulfillment and hope for the future. When we look at Jesus we can say with Simeon, "My eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the sight of all people."

Application: what does this lesson say to us today?

- 1) Last week we thought about what we would give Jesus for Christmas. This week, if you have not already done so, would you think about giving Him your life?
- 2) Is there someone in your life who needs to hear the story of Jesus who came to earth so we do not have to go through life alone? Is it time to share that story with them?

Family Activities: putting the lesson into action

- 1) Play a game of Hide and Seek with your family. Discuss what it would feel like to be lost and unable to find your way home. Talk about any times when a family member was lost. Talk about how it feels to be lost and then found. Relate this to how Jesus came to find each one of us.
- 3) Parents, spend time assuring your children that they are loved and cared for, that you will always be there for them. Help them to understand God's love by demonstrating unconditional love to your children.

Suggestions for further study

Isaiah 60:1-6

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