Dear Open Door Family,

[This takes place as Simeon finishes blessing Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus...]

Luke 2:36-38 *(NLT) Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years. [37] Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer. [38] She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.*

I love the fact that the first people to actually see the Messiah were common people. They were NOT the wealthy and powerful, or even the religious leaders. On the night of Jesus' birth the shepherds came to see Him. Then there is a gap of 8 days before Jesus is circumcised in Bethlehem. After 33 more days we meet Simeon and Anna at the Temple as Mary and Joseph go to fulfill all the requirements of Old Testament Law.

In a way, Simeon, Anna, and the Shepherds show us that God is NOT interested in a person's wealth and prestige but in their heart. I love the description of Anna and her activities. She had been married for 7 years and then lived as a widow until the age of 84. She had become a fixture in the temple - if it was open Anna was there praying and fasting and worshiping God. Life was never easy for a widow, but for one who was widowed at a young age and without children it could be even more difficult. Yet Anna did not become bitter or angry with God. Instead she drew closer and sought after God even more.

What a great lesson for us. We all go through things that make us wonder what God is doing. There are those times in all our lives when we are sure that if God just had a little more information from us He might change His mind. Yet the reality must be that we accept from His hand those things He brings into our lives. We can accept the good and the difficult because we know that He redeems all things and uses them for His glory if we are willing to submit to His plan.

PRAYER: Lord, God thank you for Your amazing plan of salvation. Thank You for sending Jesus and for using people like Simeon and Anna to remind us that Your plan and timing are always perfect. Help me to submit to YOU and all that You are doing in my life willingly.

Pastor Mark Kieft
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>