

## “MOVING FORWARD WITH HOPE — WHEN GOD STEPS INTO THE WAIT”

*It's Time to Move Forward*

*Luke 2:25–38*

*“Hope is not optimism about the future — it is confidence that God has entered the present.”*

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### I. INDUCTIVE INTRODUCTION — CHRISTMAS FOR THE TIRED, NOT THE HYPED

By the time Christmas arrives, many people are already exhausted. The shopping is done. The gatherings are planned. The calendar is full. The emotions are mixed.

And if we're honest, Christmas doesn't always feel hopeful. For some, it feels heavy. For others, it feels lonely. For many, it feels like another reminder that time has passed... and certain prayers still haven't been answered.

The dangerous lie of Christmas is this, *“If God was really with me, life would look different by now.”*

Scripture introduces us to people who waited a long time for God —and still believed He would show up. Not with noise. Not with spectacle. But with **presence**.

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### II. UNEXPECTED WITNESSES — SIMEON AND ANNA

Christmas is usually told through angels and shepherds. But Luke slows the story down and introduces us to two elderly saints in the temple:

- **Simeon** — a man waiting for peace
- **Anna** — a woman waiting with faith

No fanfare. No spotlight. No platform. Just people who stayed faithful when hope would've been easier to abandon.

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### III. SIMEON — PEACE BORN FROM WAITING (LUKE 2:25–32)

The text says Simeon was, *“Righteous and devout... waiting for the consolation of Israel.”* That phrase matters. Simeon wasn't waiting for Rome to fall. He wasn't waiting for life to get easier. He was waiting for **consolation** — comfort, peace, restoration. And Scripture says, *“The Holy Spirit was upon him.”* That's important. **Simeon has peace before he has proof.**

When Mary and Joseph bring Jesus into the temple, Simeon takes the child in his arms and says, *“Now, Lord, you may dismiss your servant in peace...”* Here's the revelation, **Peace is not found in outcomes — it is found in recognizing God's presence.**

Jesus hasn't preached yet. Hasn't healed yet. Hasn't gone to the cross yet. He's just... there. And that's enough.

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#### IV. ANNA — HOPE THAT REFUSES TO RETIRE (LUKE 2:36–38)

Anna is an even quieter figure — and just as powerful.

She is:

- A widow
- Advanced in years
- Faithful through decades of loss

Scripture says, *“She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.”*

Anna didn't let grief turn into cynicism. She didn't let time erode her faith. She didn't let unanswered prayers silence her worship. And when she sees Jesus? *“She gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to redemption.”*

This matters deeply—**Hope grows strongest in those who keep worshiping while waiting.** Anna waited decades. And when hope finally arrived — she recognized Him.

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#### V. WHAT THE INCARNATION REALLY MEANS

Christmas is not God shouting from heaven. It is God stepping into human fragility. Jesus does not arrive as a solution —He arrives as **presence**.

Peace is born because God is near. Hope is born because God entered time. Salvation begins because God chose incarnation over distance. Simeon shows us peace that rests. Anna shows us hope that speaks.

Together, they teach us this, **Hope is not about how fast God moves** —it's about trusting that He has entered the story.

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#### VI. PRACTICAL APPLICATION — MOVING FORWARD WITH CHRISTMAS HOPE

1. **Stop measuring God by speed**—Waiting does not mean forgotten.
2. **Learn to recognize God in small beginnings**—Jesus arrived as a baby — not a breakthrough.
3. **Let peace come from presence, not resolution**—Simeon held Christ before he saw change.

**4. Keep worshiping even when life hasn't explained itself**—Anna stayed faithful long before fulfillment came.

**5. Speak hope once you've encountered Him**—Anna didn't stay silent — she testified.

## **VII. CELEBRATION — A CHRISTMAS WORD FOR YOUR CHURCH**

This Christmas, God is not promising:

- instant answers
- immediate fixes
- perfect clarity

He's offering something better. **Himself.**

Peace has a name. Hope has a face. Salvation has entered the room. And because God stepped into time, you can move forward — even if you're still waiting.

Like Simeon, you can rest. Like Anna, you can testify. Like Mary, you can treasure. Like Joseph, you can trust. Because the light has come. And the waiting was not in vain.

**Emmanuel — God with us.**