

## **When You Give Thanks For What You Received For Christmas**

Luke 2:21-38

Did you received what you hoped for this Christmas? Were your children happy with their gifts or more interested in the box they came in? Were you satisfied with your gifts or did you return them on December 26? Did your family and friends say, “Thank you” for what you gave them?

In Luke 2:21-38, we are introduced to two people who demonstrate how to truly celebrate Christmas. Simeon celebrated when he discovered that God’s best gift satisfies the deepest longings of our hearts. Anna celebrated by telling others about Jesus.

### **Joseph & Mary obeyed God’s instructions (21-24)**

Joseph & Mary followed the instructions of the Law by having the baby circumcised (21).

They named the baby, Jesus, as the angel instructed them (21).

They brought Jesus to the temple to dedicate him to the Lord (22-24).

### **Simeon discovered God’s Christmas gift satisfies the deepest longings of our heart (25-35)**

While we don’t know his age or vocation, we do know Simeon’s character—he was righteous and devoted to God (25).

He waited with confident expectation (25-26).

He looked for where God was at work (27-28).

He believed God’s promises (29).

Simeon declared, “It’s what I always wanted!” (30-32).

He understood that salvation was available to all people (30-32).

He was a blessing to others (33-35).

## **Anna celebrated Christmas by telling others about Jesus (36-38)**

Anna was a godly senior citizen. She was married for seven years and was a widow for the rest of her life. She chose a lifetime of service over remarriage. She was known for teaching the Scriptures.

Anna lived with a sense of expectation. She was part of the remnant looking for the Messiah. She knew her only hope was in the mercy and grace of God.

Anna demonstrated single-minded devotion. She made the temple her permanent home. She was not idle, but made worship, prayer, and fasting her chief devotion.

Anna was in tune with God. In God's providential timing, she was in the temple near where Simeon stood as he blessed Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Without an invitation, she approached the young family just as Simeon had done. She recognized what God was doing in the person of the baby Jesus.

Anna responded with praise. She gave thanks to God. Her long years of passionately petitioning God gave way to an outburst of joyous praise.

Anna responded by telling the good news to others. She did much more than sing praises and give thanks. She turned to the other worshippers and announced that the Messiah had come. She could not stop talking about Jesus.

Like Simeon, discover that God's Christmas gift satisfies the deepest longings of our hearts.

Like Anna, celebrate Christmas by telling others about Jesus.