

Life lessons from Anna

Various Scriptures

"She never left the temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer." -Luke 2:37

Where do you see your relationship with God in the next 5, 10, 15, or 20 years? Whether, you are older or younger, as you consider your impact on the next generation, what are some truths and lessons you would like to share or learn? In preparation of our lesson, all of us, should not only desire to become mature in our spiritual relationship with God, but we also ought to be willing to learn and share God's word with others. As we look closer at the life of Anna, be encouraged to find joy in knowing who God is and inspiring others to do the same.

Did you know?

- *Her personal name means _____.
- *She was the daughter of Phanuel, whose name means "face of God", was from the tribe of Asher.
- *Tribal name of Asher means "fortune", or "happiness"; One of Jacob and (Zilpah) Leah's sons. Genesis 30:13; 49:20; Revelation 7:6
- *Anna served the Lord in the temple
- *Anna lived most of her life as a _____ for over 70 years.
- *Her story is told in Luke 2:36-38

What is the context?

Mary has just given birth to Jesus, He was circumcised after the 8th day and now 40 days later, they were permitted to bring Him to the temple in Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, as it was written in the Law. There they meet a man named Simeon who had been informed by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. So on this particular day he was led by the Spirit to go to the temple and at that moment, in walks Mary and Joseph holding baby Jesus. Luke 2:28-35

At the same time Anna the prophetess who had been studying Old Testament scripture and teaching about the redemption of God's people also sees this encounter and testifies of the Lord's faithfulness.

Anna's Calling: Luke 2:36

Anna was a _____ who declared God's word as a teacher of the Old Testament. She most likely studied the Prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah. As a result she forth-told, meaning, she proclaimed this is what God says.

Forth-telling: Declaring what has already been stated. Those who have the gift of prophecy speak God's word of edification, exhortation and comfort to the church. 1 Corinthians 14:1-4

Foretelling: Declaring what the future holds. In light of the Bible, God's revelation of His Son, plan of salvation and end times have already been declared. This means there is no need for a new revelation.

Do you remember the 3 other women that prophesied in the Bible?

* _____ Exodus 15:20 * _____ Judges 4:4 * _____ 2 Kings 22:14

Anna was also called to be a _____ and a _____. As a daughter she was to honor her father and mother by submitting to their will and being obedient to their instructions. As a wife she was called to honor her husband by supporting the family and encouraging him.

What do you think is the significance of Luke mentioning she belonged to the tribe of Asher?

As you reflect on your calling, what are some things you can do to ensure that you are answering in such a way that God would be pleased?

Anna's Commitment: Luke 2:37

When Anna was married she probably thought she would have a long and fruitful marriage but we are told her marriage lasted _____ years. Instead of remarrying she became and remained a widow.

Although God declared that His people were to take care of widows, (Exodus 22:22) they still lacked the economic, legal and physical protection a man provided in that society. As a result, if they did not have children to support them, they most likely fell victim to a number of circumstances that kept them oppressed. This was not the case for Anna, who the Bible says, did not _____ from the temple.

In other words, Anna stayed _____ to the Lord! In the midst of all the things that could have gone wrong, how do you think she managed to stay so close?

*S _____ God's Word *T _____ God's Word

*S _____ God *P _____ and F _____

By definition fasting is refraining from eating food. There are 3 main forms of fasting.

-Normal fast: This is a total abstinence of food. In Luke 4:2 we see that although Jesus abstained from food he still drank water.

-Absolute fast: Consists of no food or drink. Acts 9:9 tells us Paul did not eat or drink for 3 days.

-Partial fast: This is the restriction of diet. In Daniel 10:3 we see Daniel abstaining from eating the king's delicacies (meat) for 3 weeks. This could also be laying aside a whole meal for a period of time also known as "skipping a meal."

Regardless of what type of fast one does it should always be accompanied with _____.

In the midst of your disappointments and or discouragements, what does making a commitment to stay close to God look like for you? How will you do it?

Anna's Consolation: Luke 2:38

As Anna had remained committed to her calling, trusting God to take care of her, one day she happened to see the Messiah that God had promised in the Old Testament readings. I imagine when she saw and heard the joy of Simeon that her heart was comforted. In response to this peace and comfort of knowing everything was going to be okay she:

*Gave God _____; What does it mean to give thanks to someone? Psalm 136

*She _____ of Him; What are your thoughts on talking to others about the Lord? Especially those who are looking for help and hope? Psalm 107:1-2

By this time in history, both Simeon and Anna were well up in age, but yet they were able to participate in God's will and find joy in trusting Him. **As a senior, how does this inspire you to share with those who are younger than you?**

As a younger person, what would you like to ask someone older than you about trusting God when it seems like He's quiet?

As you reflect on this study, what is the greatest lesson that you are willing to share with someone else?

"God has perfect timing, trust Him."