

Mirror, Mirror... **Christmas Series Part 2: "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing Baby!"**

By Cere Muscarella

"Humbly accept the implanted word which is able *to save your souls*. Be a doer of the word and not a listener only, deceiving yourself. If anyone is a hearer only, he is like a man who looks at himself in a mirror, walks away and quickly forgets what he looked like. *But if anyone sees himself in the word of God and is a hearer and a doer of it, he is like a man who never forgets who he is! This one will be blessed in his doings!*" **James 1.21-25**

Whatever images we see of believers in the word of God, we 'snapshot it' and fit ourselves into it!

Mirror, mirror... 1st week of Christmas, we saw Mary... in the power of simple belief... Highly favored and specially honored... Who, because of the sound and balanced faith... Partnered in impossible, miraculous life with God *to change the whole world!* True power displayed in one little girl! To be mirrored in us all!

Today... Going to the other end of the age spectrum... To gain wisdom and insight from an old man named Simeon... To see the one who would not be cheaply satisfied... or sedated... The one who faithfully sorted through the offers of life to settle for a compromise... ***To see and hold the real presence of God on the earth!***

Christmas Images... "And when the days of Mary's purification were done they brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. There was a man there named Simeon; a just and *devout* believer waiting for the relief and regeneration of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him, revealing to him that he would not die before seeing the Lord's Christ! And he came by the Spirit into the temple and when they brought Jesus in for the dedication, he took him up in his arms and blessed God saying, 'Lord, now I can die in peace for You have fulfilled Your words to me, *for my eyes have seen Your salvation* which You have prepared for all people!' And Joseph and Mary marveled!" **Luke 2.22ff**

Christmas Images... Think about all the 'offers of life' this man had handed to him/long lifetime... 'Do this and you'll find peace...' 'And BTW your friends don't understand or like all this God talk!' **1Pet 3.16 4.4** 'If you get this you'll be satisfied...' "Life does not consist..." **Luke 12.15** 'Try this and just chill your way through...' My first/last resort is the Lord! **Ps71.3**

You know why you're so disappointed? You're believing for a fantasy to come true! Nothing has changed 700 years! Life is passing you by Simeon, get real!

How many times on his last nerve? Leg? Breath? Only to find resolve>>reserves!

In the face of life, Simeon held firm! In the process of day-to-day living he just kept sidestepping...
"That's not it..." "No. This isn't going to do it for me..." "Ha! Vain, empty, promises..." No substitutes... No sedations... No seductions...

He had to sidestep... His detractors/His disappointments/His doubts/His will/His weariness/His willingness/His preconceptions and plans

How Simeon? A Spirit led believer in God! v25,26,27 3x "Holy Ghost/Spirit!" The only way to a life this focused! '**Just:**' right, holy, by faith! **v25 'Devout:**' careful, cautious, especially of his religious life! **v25 Wholly owned 'slave'** (Lord as Despotes, not Kurious) WAITING! **Ps 123 Faithful to the end!** "Master, as You have spoken Your promise (rhema) You now dismiss and release your slave (doulos) in peace!" **v29**

“Speaks as a slave who, through the night of long, weary years, has been standing on the watch-tower of expectation, and is at last set free by the rising of the Sun.” –Ellicott

With sight that is not limited to his surroundings or his natural eyes! “Mine eyes have seen Your salvation!” **v30** Looking at a baby? Not natural vision!

“The world looks poor to those who have Christ in their arms!” –P.C.

Simeon lived in the real world but he was after the real thing and was intent on waiting for it to appear! He didn't know when, *and he waited a long time...* he didn't know how, *but he knew he would...* then “click!”

Philippians 3.8-9 “Without a doubt, I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them as dung, that I may win Christ and be found in Him in the righteousness that is of God by faith! Without hesitation, I count the ‘whole of things’ a detriment, damage and loss compared to the surpassing excellence of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have put away all competing things and do commandingly deem them as waste ‘thrown to the dogs,’ so that I may never lose Christ. I want to be found in Him in the righteousness that is of God from the basis of faith!”

Philippians 3.10 “I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death!”

Again: “I want to know Him and the miraculous might of standing up from the dead and to partner with Him in His passions and hardships (pathos), to be jointly formed with Him unto death!”

Can you see yourself as a hold-out for the real thing?