

Luke 2:29-32

“The Man”

Christmas and Carols

December 20, 2015

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Pastor Hartwig

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

[Introduction] There he is ... there he is...

Bet you thought I was talking about the Christ Child, the Babe of Bethlehem.

Logical conclusion. After all, it is Advent. We are to be on watch for him.

For Christ will come again. In the blink of an eye...

And we are waiting to celebrate Christmas, to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

And the focal point of every nativity is Jesus.

And the answer to every Sunday School question is Jesus.

But no... I am not... not talking about him.

The shepherds? no... not them.

The wise men? no... not them.

They won't even arrive on the scene for at least another year.

And we will celebrate them on Epiphany

[The Man]

But look at him. To the right of Jesus. That is the man!

That is the man who stood behind Mary, and did not divorce her.

That is the man who did not resent the intrusion of the shepherds and the Magi,
but rejoiced with them in the birth of a son whom they believed
to be the long-awaited Messiah-king.

That is the man who was a good provider and defender.

He managed lengthy trips to and from Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Egypt!

That is the man who saw to it that the baby Jesus was circumcised and presented
according to the Old Testament law.

That is the man who was a puzzled parent when they couldn't find

the almost-teenager Jesus after the trip to Jerusalem for a Passover festival.

Jesus was holding theological discussions with servants in the Temple.

That is the man who was a carpenter and taught his son Jesus to be a carpenter.

That is the man whom Matthew calls, “Just.”

That is the man...

That is the man who disappears from the history books.

After this, nothing more is heard of Joseph.

At no time does he appear again during the three-year public ministry of Jesus, and the safest assumption is that he had died in the meantime.

His wife, Mary, however, emerges at several important incidents in Jesus' career, including the crucifixion, for which Joseph would have certainly been present had he been alive.

Maybe Simeon knew it.

You see, after Simeon holds the baby Jesus and says:

***“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”*** (Lk 2:29-32)

He then looks at Mary. ONLY MARY. He ignores Joseph.

And says:

“Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” (Lk 2:34-35)

This scene almost acts as a prediction that Joseph would be gone.

By any measure, the noble Joseph is the unsung hero of the Christmas story.

[Unsung]

And there are times in your life when you feel like the unsung hero.

You are sitting in a crowded room. You know the people well.

You have worked with them for years, and yet you feel all alone.

And you think, why doesn't anyone notice me?

You have been single your whole life.

You are always the bridesmaid, never the bride.

And you think, what is wrong with me, why doesn't anyone notice me?

You have volunteered and worked hard. You are consistent, constantly giving.

But you don't receive. No one notices.

And you think, why doesn't anyone notice me?

