

Title: LUKE'S AFFIRMATIONS, LUKE 2:21-40  
(Chatham, NJ; 12/28/14, AM) [E – Narrative Analysis]

Theme: In Luke's Gospel the events of Christ's early life affirm his divine calling and messianic mission.

Purpose: To demonstrate how both angels and the Holy Spirit demonstrated that Jesus was ordained by God.

Introduction:

1. Luke's early record is filled with the testimonies of angels and eyewitnesses who essentially are people who have been led by the Holy Spirit.
2. In Luke these things demonstrate that Jesus has been ordained by God.
3. Matthew uses Joseph's dreams and fulfilled prophecies to do the same thing: chapters one and two are full of these affirmations.
4. Both Gospels affirm what Peter says: we don't follow "cleverly devised myths."
5. Let's hear Luke's story.

## I. Jesus Is Identified by Angels

### A. At his conception

1. Mary visited by Gabriel, 1:26.
2. Zechariah's visit is by the same angel, 1:19
3. Gabriel "stands in the presence of God," apparently a high-ranking angel
4. We see him several times in Daniel, and he is only one of two angels named in the Bible.
5. He delivers significant messages to Zechariah and Mary.

### B. At his birth

1. Angels announced his birth to shepherds, 2:9-14
2. They are joined by "a multitude of the heavenly host," 13
3. He is named by an angel, 1:31 & 2:21 (as was John the Baptist)
4. Jesus' identity is thus God-ordained (Mt. 1:21 – "he will save people from their sins." BTW, it is an angel that appears to Joseph in his dream.)

## II. Affirmed by Eyewitnesses – more importantly by the Holy Spirit

### A. Simeon

1. Jesus presented to the Lord at the time of Mary's purification (his circumcision had already occurred in verse 21)
2. Simeon – "righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel," 25
3. Isaiah 40:1; 51:3; 52:9 – prophecies about Israel's consolation
4. \*\* "The Holy Spirit was upon him," 25
5. God wanted Simeon to remain alive until salvation dawned upon the people
6. The Spirit prompts him to enter the Temple, 27
7. He took Jesus into his arms, 28 – would you allow a stranger to hold your baby?
8. Something must have told Mary that this man was not a threat

### B. Simeon's words

1. He thanks God that he can now go to his rest
2. For he has seen the salvation that God had prophesied: a light for the Gentiles and glory for Israel
3. His words come across filled with gratitude and joy
4. The child will create a stir (34-35): rise and fall of many, a sign that is spoken against, and trouble for Mary's soul; he'll reveal the hearts of many

C. Anna

1. A prophetess who lived a reverent life of prayer and fasting
2. She also came forward and spoke to “all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem, 38
3. Was this a close circle of devout people?
4. As with those who spoke of John’s birth, this must heighten their anticipation

III. Wisdom and God’s Favor

- His physical growth is accompanied by the presence of God
- In several ways, the presence of God was seen in the next segment of Jesus’ life
- He was filled with wisdom: wisdom came from God (Proverbs 3:5-7)
- This affirmed things that surrounded his early years
- In addition, “The favor of God was upon him,” 40
- Favor is also the word translated “grace”
- For these first twelve years the presence of God is readily apparent
- The Temple experience will further affirm the wisdom and grace of God

Conclusions:

1. The prayers and faith of two devout people confirm the work of God in Christ.
2. That they were both moved by the Holy Spirit to express their witness coordinates with the angelic activity.
3. God had designed and approved Jesus from conception onward.
4. His baptism by John was just one of a long list of signs that confirmed Jesus.
5. We can be confident and rejoice that God has indeed demonstrated his salvation for all people.
6. Let it fill us with joy and assurance that God is still at work in Christ.
7. Believe in Jesus, repent, and be baptized: his salvation is for you.