

still waters

home church studies

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 [Worship]

18 Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod. 19 His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the LORD repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the LORD"; and then they would return to their home.

26 Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and with the people.

Consider:

[Words]

The site of the temple opens and closes these final readings, just as Luke opens and closes Jesus' infancy narrative in the setting of the Jerusalem temple. First, we see the young Samuel, who has been given to serve the Lord by his mother, Hannah. Earlier in the chapter, Hannah recites a canticle not unlike Mary's as she praises God for Samuel and offers him to God. Samuel is portrayed as an excellent servant who "was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod" (1 Samuel 2:18).

Luke portrays Jesus in a very similar fashion, an obedient Jewish boy who finds safety and comfort in the temple, instead of with his parents. Here, after being missing for three days, Jesus responds to his frantic parents somewhat nonchalantly, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's

house?" (Luke 2:49). Here Luke makes Jesus' allegiances clear. Jesus belongs to God, not to blood relatives. It is an idea he will reinforce throughout Jesus' life, first by implying that Jesus finds his true family among those who hear and do God's will (Luke 8:21, 11:27), and then by asserting that following Jesus will divide

traditional families and create new ones based on belief instead of blood (Luke 12:53).

Now that Christmas is over, and just when we are tempted to set our spiritual lives on cruise control until Easter, Paul insists that we prepare to actually live with, not just wait for, Jesus. He spells out just how: "...[C]lothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.... Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other.... And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body.

And be thankful" (Colossians 3:12-13, 15). The last three words alone are enough homework to last us until Easter and beyond. If we can achieve just half of Paul's advice, we can help build the peace of Christ to rule not just our hearts, but the world.



[Scripture]

Colossians 3:12-17

12 As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. 13 Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.