

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

30th January: The End

What does it mean to end something well? Share any anecdotes of endings done particularly well or badly.

Endings often lead to a sense of grief, even if the ending is apparently a positive thing. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, in her 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*, wrote that the five stages of grief are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Which of those stages has been most difficult for you in the past? Why do you think that might be?

Read Luke 2.25-32

Here we read of the ending of Simeon's ministry. How do you think he feels about this transition?

Simeon is helped by looking forward in hope and expectation. How important is it to imagine a hopeful future when dealing with endings? How easy is it?

After all his long adventures, Frodo finally makes it to the place where he can destroy the One Ring. However at the last moment we find he has himself been corrupted by the Ring and cannot let go, instead he puts it on and turns away. The situation is redeemed by Gollum who takes this opportunity to grab the Ring and, following a scuffle with Frodo, falls with it into the fire thus destroying the Ring and all its power. Gollum is at hand to do this because Frodo has spared his life in the past, hoping that there is still some good in him. The good outcome is typical of the "unintended consequences of grace". Share examples of this principle in your own life. How important to you is the idea of grace? (*Ephesians 2.8-9*)

"I am glad you are here with me. Here at the end of all things, Sam." -
Frodo Baggins

"I thought up an ending for my book: 'And he lived happily ever after, unto the end of his days.'" -
Bilbo Baggins

"No, the journey doesn't end here. Death is just another path, one that we all must take. Go in peace! I will not say: do not weep; for not all tears are an evil." -
Gandalf



To become something else, you have to stop being what you are now; to start doing things a new way, you have to end the way you are doing them now; and to develop a new attitude or outlook, you have to let go of the old one you have now. Even though it sounds backward, endings always come first. The first task is to let go.
- William Bridges, *Transitions, Making sense of Life's changes*

If you haven't seen the films there is a plot summary at
www.sparknotes.com/film/lordoftherings/summary