

**Week of December 27, 2020**

**Luke 2:22-40**

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord

<sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"),

<sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.

<sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

<sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,

<sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

<sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed

<sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

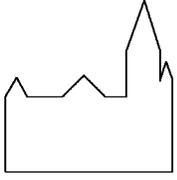
<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

<sup>37</sup> then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.

<sup>38</sup> At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

<sup>40</sup> The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.



### Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

### Gathering questions:

- A. Do you have more trouble starting things or finishing things?
- B. Tell a story of a time you counted on someone's promise to you and they let you down?

### Bible Study Questions:

1. In verses 22-24, why do you think Luke is so specific about the sacrifices offered at Jesus' presentation?
2. What might you imagine is the background of the promise made to Simeon in verse 26? In other words, what circumstances might have prompted Simeon to be given such a promise?
3. In verse 32, it mentions Jesus as a revelation to the Gentiles. What is the significance of mentioning this now?
4. Why do you think the story of Anna is included?
5. What promises of God are you confident of? What promises from God are you less confident of?
6. When has confidence in God, or lack thereof, affected your decisions? How do you develop your confidence in God?
7. In verse 29, Simeon echoes a common phrase, "now I can die in peace." What would you like to see before you die? What would you want to finish before you die?
8. What can God count on you most to do for God? When would you be less reliable for God? In the New Year, what can you work on to be a more reliable disciple?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about ways in which each person can have more confidence in God and be a more reliable follower of God.