

# ***Encounters with Jesus, Week 7***

## **Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Dec. 11th**

### **DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> SERMON SUMMARY**

#### **ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS: SIMEON (LUKE 2:25-35)**

What we seek shapes what we see, and that shapes what we get – and at Christmas, our sense of joy and peace can be limited by what we seek. We can learn from Simeon, a righteous and devout man waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel.

- What was Simeon seeking? Prepared by Scripture and the Spirit, Simeon was seeking a King (not a baby). Are we seeking warm and cozy, or busy activity, or are we seeking to serve and love the King?
- What did Simeon see? Simeon saw Jesus as salvation, light, and glory, and as the King who had come to save everyone (not just Israel). He also saw that Jesus would bring conflict and opposition.

Simeon was overwhelmed with praise and peace because of the presence of Jesus. He got a glimpse of the impact Jesus would have as the dividing line of history and the turning point of time.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Share one thing that's on your Christmas wish list.

#### **READ LUKE 2:25-38 about Simeon and Anna.**

**25** Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27** Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, **28** Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

**29** "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

**30** For my eyes have seen your salvation, **31** which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

**32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

**33** The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, **35** so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

**36** There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, **37** and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. **38** Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

2a. List some things you learn about Simeon in vs. 25-27.

b. What stands out to you, or surprises you, about Simeon?

3a. List some things you learn about Anna in vs. 36-38.

b. What stands out to you, or surprises you, about Anna?

4. What impresses, surprises, or blesses you about:

a. Simeon's Song of praise in v. 29-32

b. Simeon's warning to Mary in v. 34-35

5a. Simeon addresses God as "Sovereign Lord" (v.29). What do you think this title means? (\*Discuss first, then see note below.)

b. How do you see evidence of the Sovereign Lord at work in Simeon and Anna's life, and in Simeon's prophecies?

c. Share an example of how you have experienced the Sovereign Lord at work, if you can.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

6a. When you think of Jesus, how do you see him?

- as a baby lying in a manger, a kind and gentle teacher?
- as a Savior dying on the cross, a King who rules in your heart?
- as the one who changes everything, or something else?

b. How do you think that affects your relationship with Him?

c. How would you like to grow or change in this?

7. Share what you are seeking this Christmas, and what you hope your experience of the Christmas season will be like.

8. How is God speaking to you through the message or the small group discussion?

\* Note for 5a: Sovereignty means God is in control. To address God as Sovereign Lord is to recognize that God orders everything, controls everything, rules over everything. He has no limitations, and nothing happens outside of God's influence and authority.