



advent 2019

DISCUSSION GUIDE

MAKE HIM ROOM / ADVENT 2019

Advent. Despite being good news of great joy, this can be one of the busiest, most stressful, and for some, the darkest seasons of the year. What we wish was a time of joy and peace, is instead filled with the noise and busyness of Christmas activities, the stress of strained relationships, or the heaviness of loss and grief. In the midst of this, God is inviting us to let our hearts and minds be tuned to the good news of Christmas. This Advent, we invite you to make room for Jesus; to make room for the impossible, for the unexpected, for worship, and for hope.

Doxa has also created a Daily Advent Devotional Guide to help you make room this Christmas. To find it, download the Doxa app from your app store or visit: doxa-church.com/guides.

PART 4: MAKE ROOM FOR HOPE

READ THE TEXT: Luke 2:21-33

And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

And 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 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

If you're processing these questions as a missional community, take time to gauge whether these will best be answered in smaller groups or all together. Feel free to break into smaller “DNA-sized” groups if that's helpful.

1. What happens when your hopes are never realized or dreams are not fulfilled? What's your default response? What does this response reveal about what you've put your hope in and what you are worshipping?

2. God used Israel's forty years in the wilderness as a period of testing a preparation, teaching them to wait and put their hope in what He had promised. Remembering this, Israelites in Mary and Joseph's time would wait forty days before bringing their children to be presented at the Temple. The number "forty" symbolized a time of waiting—and hoping—to prepare them for God to keep His promises. Like their forty years or forty days, you may be in the midst of a time of waiting and hoping. You'll only be able to sustain hope during these times if you remember who God is and what He has done for you. Take time to remember what God has done for you in tangible ways. Recall and share with each other His provision, rescue, and the ways He has kept His word in specific ways.

3. For our hope to endure, we have to continually remember God's promises. How do you currently fill your mind with God's promises? Are there ways you need to grow in filling your mind with His promises? What steps will you take to grow in this?