

APPRECIATING ADVENT

Discussion Guide
December 16
Luke 2:22-35

Introduction

So many things pull for our attention during the month of December – holiday parties, kids' programs, family get-togethers, travel schedules, shopping, and more. Thinking about Christmas can leave us overwhelmed and exhausted if we focus only on these things.

To help us prepare for and reflect on Christ's coming to earth, the Church for centuries has celebrated the season of Advent leading up to Christmas. Advent is a season of hope and longing, of joyful expectation, and of peaceful preparation. Luke 2:22-35 shows us how a man named Simeon responded in worship to the arrival of Christ. As you look ahead to December 25, take some time to reflect on what we can learn about Jesus through Simeon's response. When we see Jesus as He deserves to be seen, may our hearts be primarily turned to Him this Advent Season.

Questions for Study

1. What are the things that are filling your mind and getting your attention so far in December? Are you satisfied with this? Why or why not?
2. Are there ways you've been recognizing the Advent Season already in your home? If so, what has this looked like? If not, what can you do prepare your heart and home to celebrate the coming of Jesus?
3. Read Luke 2:22-35. What initial observations or questions do you have about Simeon's response to the arrival of Jesus?
4. Simeon understood that Christ's coming was the fulfillment of God's ultimate promise – that a Messiah would come to save God's people. In your own words, explain what this means and why it's so important for the Christian faith.
5. How did Christ's coming provide peace for Simeon?
6. When is it most difficult for you to experience peace? How can the reality of Christ's coming and Jesus' words in John 16:33 provide peace for you?
7. Jesus' coming offers salvation to all peoples. Knowing that Jesus came into the world to seek and save what was lost (Luke 19:10), how can you approach Christmas "missionally"?
8. In light of what you've learned from reading and discussing Luke 2:22-35, what will you do practically to focus on Jesus' coming as we approach Christmas?