



## Message Discussion Guide Week of December 31, 2023

**Message:** Christmas: The Real Story, Part 5: A New Song for a New Year

**Key Scriptures:** [Luke 2:22-35](#)

**Preachers:** Pastor Tom Parkinson

### Message Highlights:

In the days and weeks after Jesus was born, Luke reports three things that Joseph and Mary did in obedience to Old Testament Law:

1. They had Jesus circumcised on the eighth day (Genesis 17)
2. Mary underwent purification rites (Leviticus 12)
3. Jesus was consecrated at the temple at 6 weeks old (Exodus 13)

Luke gives us these three details to show that Jesus was raised by devout Jewish parents. Joseph and Mary are attentive to God's Word and obedient to God's Law.

Luke introduces a lesser-known character in the Christmas story: Simeon. Simeon is described as "righteous," "devout," and "full of the Holy Spirit."

God reveals to Simeon that he will not die before he sees the Messiah. When Simeon sees the baby Jesus in the temple, he takes him in his arms and sings that he can now die at peace because he has seen God's salvation.

For all of human history, humans feared death because it is final. Simeon reveals that because of Jesus, we no longer need to fear death, we can die in peace.

As we embark upon a new year, Simeon teaches a new song to sing.

- Can we live as those who are ready to die at peace?
- Just as Simeon received Jesus into his arms, so the Bible teaches that we can receive Jesus into our hearts.

The best way to be lifted up by the goodness of Jesus is to fall down at Jesus' feet and declare that he is our savior.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1.) Why is it important for Luke to share that Joseph and Mary were devout parents? What does it mean that Jesus was raised by devout parents? How do Joseph and Mary model good parenting for us?
- 2.) [Read Luke 2:22-35](#):
  - a. Who is Simeon? What does Luke tell us about him that makes him special?
  - b. Look at Simeon's song in verses 29-32. What does this song mean? What does it tell us about who Jesus is and what his birth means?
  - c. How do verses 34-35 serve a prophecy? What do they tell us about Jesus' future?
- 3.) In what ways does receiving Jesus give you peace about dying someday?
- 4.) At the end of the message, Pastor Tom shared the [Wesley Covenant Prayer](#), as a prayer to offer at the beginning of a new year. Read over the prayer and discuss what the prayer means to you, and how the prayer might frame the way you approach a new year.
- 5.) What is your primary takeaway from this message?

**Abundant Life Tip:** While we do not know how or when, we will all die someday. When we receive Jesus, we are freed from the fear of death, and have the peace that comes from knowing we will have an abundant and eternal life through him.