

Group Discussion Guide: With Jesus at the Beginning | December 19, 2021

Begin with Scripture and prayer (10 minutes).

As you begin, read **Luke 2:22-38**. Once finished, pray to open your time together.

Split into three or four mini-groups for Scripture and reflection (25 minutes).

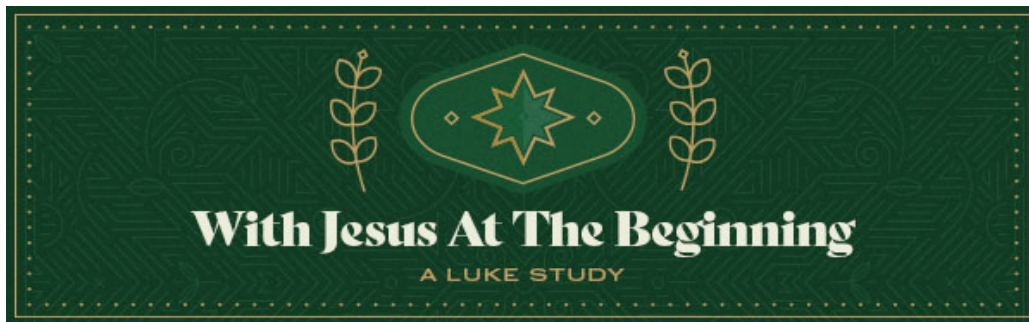
In this sermon, Dan shared the story of Simeon and Anna – a devout man and a prophetess, respectively. For the next few moments, take some time to prayerfully read through the portions of the text dealing with Simeon and Anna as a smaller group. As you do, pay careful attention to any words or phrases that the Holy Spirit may be impressing upon your heart.

- **Re-read Luke 2:25-35.** What stands out to you from these verses about Simeon? What do you believe the Holy Spirit is leading you to believe or do as a result of these words or phrases?
- **Re-read Luke 2:36-38.** What stands out to you from these verses about Anna? What do you believe the Holy Spirit is leading you to believe or do as a result of these words or phrases?

After your allotted mini-group time is finished, have everyone circle back up in one big group to share their insights.

Go over the sermon, sharing your thoughts and insights (30 minutes).

- How did your mini-group discussions go? What sorts of things rose to the surface from those conversations?
- How did this sermon about Simeon and Anna challenge you? What resonated with you?
- In this sermon, Dan said “whatever captures your heart will shape the way you live.” If someone from the outside looked at your life and had to guess what you most deeply desired based on how you lived, what do you think they’d say your heart was set on? What do *you* think your heart is set on? What sorts of things do you *want* it to be fully set on?
- In preaching this passage from **Luke 2**, Dan mentioned three things we learn about Jesus here: (1) Jesus was born in poverty; (2) Jesus changes every life; and (3) Jesus came to give his life for the world. Which of these three is most meaningful to you? Why?



- What do you think it means that Jesus didn't come as a king or as a rich man, but was born into poverty? What might be some of the repercussions of that for your life and what you deem to be important?
- In speaking on **Luke 2**, Dan also mentioned how Simeon and Anna (1) were deeply committed to God, (2) served God their whole lives, and (3) maintained a singular focus on the Lord. As you look back over 2021, would you say you committed to these three areas like Simeon and Anna did? In what ways could you grow in these three areas in 2022? How do you plan to achieve that?
- What practical ways do you feel challenged to grow in obedience or in your relationship with God from this text?

Split into gendered accountability groups (15 minutes).

Throughout this series, we'll create space each week to have accountability with one another. This will provide each person a more intimate and hopefully safer space to share where they might struggle. Here are a few questions to guide this time after you split out from one another:

- What has the Lord been teaching you recently? How has the Holy Spirit been convicting you as of late?
- Is there anything from this message that made you uneasy or made you feel like you have fallen short of what God wants for you and your life? Explain.
- How is your relationship with God these days?
- What has your time in Scripture and prayer been like recently?
- Who are you trying to bring to Lord? Who can this group be praying for?
- How can this group pray for you right now?

Finish by praying over and for one another.

Come back as a large group and finish with intercessory prayer (10 minutes).

Like each week, finish your group session with prayer. You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is on your heart that you need prayer for?
- Who in your life needs prayer?

Have someone close in prayer.