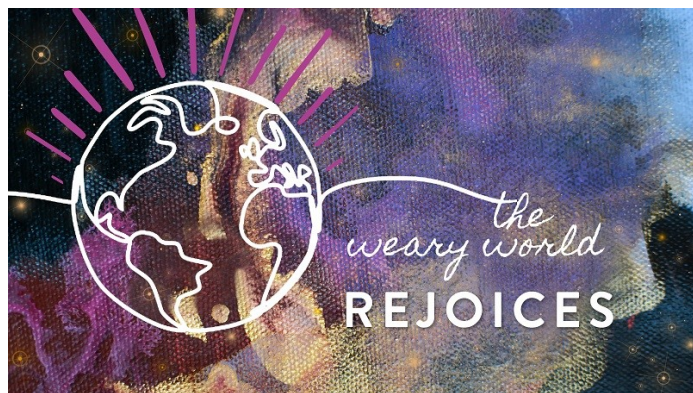


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



We Live Sacred

December 25, 2023

Rituals mark sacred turning points in our lives. They can help us make meaning of celebrations, losses, and transitions. As new parents, Mary and Joseph likely felt weary, but perhaps their sacred birth rituals—and those who bore witness to them—bolstered them and gave them courage for the journey. How do our sacred rituals root us and help us live into new chapters with courage?

SCRIPTURE TEXT: LUKE 2:21-40

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

When Simeon and Anna encountered Jesus at the temple, they had eyes to see that what they had been doing—their strategy for discipleship they had been following their entire lives—was in need of change and review. For them to follow God in a new way, they needed to allow God to change their strategy. They needed to put new wine into a new wineskin.

Nothing changes if nothing changes. Simeon and Anna, Elizabeth and Zechariah, Mary and Joseph, and so many other people we read about in Scripture, changed the way they followed God after having an encounter with God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about a “new wineskin” moment in your life - a time when your very way of life was turned upside down. What did you learn from the experience? How did you grow?
- Share about an encounter you had with God during this Advent/Christmas season.
- Are the rituals, rhythms, and routines that you’re employing in your life of discipleship getting you closer to where you want to go or are they clear paths in the wrong direction? Is it time for a change in the way you follow God? Explain your answer.
- ***The way to change how you follow Jesus is to receive grace: the unmerited, unconditional, unstoppable love and presence of God into your life.*** Share about a time that you received grace. Where could you use some grace right now? Who else do you know who could use some grace right now? How can you be a conduit of God’s grace for this person?
- Share about a time that you kicked off a new habit, a new routine, a new practice, or a new discipline that is now defunct. What went wrong? What are some ways to be successful in executing positive change?

CHALLENGE: Take some time in the days ahead to create some space. Let grace rush in to create a foundation for your faith. Allow yourself to rest in the fact that it is GOD that will complete the good work that GOD started in you in the first place.