

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE

December 28, 2020 – January 1, 2021

Monday: Luke 2:21-24

Jesus' parents had him circumcised eight days after birth, like other Hebrew boys. It was a sign that even as a baby he was one of God's people. That precedent is one big reason the United Methodist Church baptizes infants—it's a sign that the child is part of God's family. Were you baptized when very young, at a later point in your life, or never? How does belonging to God shape the way you live?

Tuesday: Luke 2:25-27

When Jesus was born, the mighty Roman army firmly controlled Judea, and Israel's religious leaders quarreled and were corrupt at times. Yet Luke said Simeon lived in hope—he “eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel.” As you begin 2021, how can you nurture a sense of “eager anticipation” about what God is doing, in your individual life and in building the Kingdom of Heaven throughout the world?

Wednesday: Luke 2:27-32

Simeon's words of praise echoed Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, which said “the servant of the Lord” would be a light to the nations (i.e. including Gentiles). Much later even many of Jesus' followers struggled to accept Gentiles (cf. Acts 11:2-3, 15:1-5). What qualities do you think allowed Simeon to see and accept God's far-reaching vision? How can you stay open to God's message and mission, even when it stretches your comfort zone?

Thursday: Luke 2:33-35

Simeon warned Mary that she would see many reject Jesus, that her son's ministry would generate opposition. Might she have remembered his words as she wept at the foot of Jesus' cross? What helps you trust God and live out God's purposes when it's not easy or popular? When has following God stretched you in ways you never anticipated when you first set out to follow?

Friday: Luke 2:39-40

Luke showed Jesus as a dutiful, but far from ordinary, son. According to verse 40 (and expanded on a bit in verse 52), Jesus grew mentally, physically, and spiritually during his years in Nazareth. In which of these areas did you experience the most growth during 2020? Ask God to guide you as you look toward your “growing edge” in these areas of life. Ask for wisdom and courage as you fill out your plans to continue growing in 2021.