mbic MANHEIM BIC CHURCH

Sermon-Based Discussion Guide

Date 12/21/25 Aaron Brown
Watch the sermon at manheimbic.org/sermon.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 2:25-33

25 At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him **26** and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27** That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, **28** Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying,

29 "Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace,
as you have promised.
30 I have seen your salvation,
31 which you have prepared for all people.
32 He is a light to reveal God to the nations,
and he is the glory of your people Israel!"

33 Jesus' parents were amazed at what was being said about him.

1 John 4:9-10

9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Other passages:

Genesis 12:3, 26:4, 28:14; Isaiah 11:10, 49:6; Daniel 7:13-14; John 1:9-12, 3:16-17; Romans 5:8

Connect:

Get to know each other. Connect, warm up to each other, and take time to fellowship.

Care:
Carry each other's burdens. Share life's challenges and practice Soul Care. Pray together.

Challenge:

1. Aaron shared, "God's mission is far bigger than we can imagine… when our vision is too small, we can miss what God is doing." Have you ever experienced missing what God was doing in your life, only to get it in hindsight? What did that look like?
2. Aaron asked, "Are we focused on God fixing our problems or joining His bigger mission?" What might those two focuses look like in our experience? How do we know the difference?
3. Read the following quotation: "How could God possibly love sinners? He might be able to forgive them and even love them *if they promise to improve*. But this is not what Jesus taught. In actions and words, He proclaimed that God loves sinners - as they are, and not as they should be" (James Bryan Smith, *The Good and Beautiful God*, p. 66). As you reflect on this thought, what questions come up? Do you feel resistant to the idea of God's unconditional love for sinners? Why or why not?
4. Aaron used the metaphor of God sitting on an office chair to illustrate our thinking that our behavior conditions God's love toward us. He turns from us when we sin, and He turns back when we clean ourselves up. Have you ever felt that way? How does it affect the way we view God and interact with Him?
5. At the Church of the Nativity, the Door of Humility forces people to bow low to enter. Why is humility necessary to receive God's gift of unconditional love? What resistances to humility do you experience?

Take a moment to pray for one another.

Clarify:
Does anyone need clarity on something? Are there any big God questions you are wrestling with?

Celebrate:
Celebrate life's successes and God's provision. Worship God's presence. Time to brag about God.

<u>KEY TAKEAWAYS</u>