

An advent wreath with four red candles and a gold star at the top, set against a dark red background with gold stars and concentric dashed circles.

the season of ADVENT

November 26, 2023

SERIES OVERVIEW:

Join us for the season of Advent as we unpack the story of Jesus - our true hope, our source of peace, the bringing of joy, and the one who shows us the true love that God has for us. God's salvation is a person, and that person's name is Jesus. This advent, may we remember that the manger is precious because the cross is necessary.

CONVERSATION QUESTIONS:

- Pastor Brannon shared some of the history behind Advent. If observing Advent has been part of your family tradition or personal habits, what does that look like for you? How do you intentionally prepare your heart to celebrate the coming of Jesus?
- Luke 2:25 tells us Simeon was waiting for the consolation (*Comfort; alleviation of misery, or distress of mind; refreshment of mind or spirits*) of Israel, even after 400 years of silence from God following the close of the Old Testament. Surely, many were wondering if and how God would still keep His promises after all that time. How is that question relevant for us today? What does it look like to be people waiting in expectation for His answer? [Note: in light of current events, this conversation could easily become focused on the political. Focus on **personal** application. If we believe Jesus will keep His promises - that He will one day return and one day all will be made new - what difference should that make in how we live today?]
- *The manger is precious because the cross is necessary.* In what ways does the cross of Jesus spark offense? How does following Jesus continue to confront your claim to personal authority, challenge your belief in your own ability, and demand exclusivity? Try to be specific!
- *If your life is an Advent wreath, what is at the center?* The next few weeks will be extremely busy and demanding for many of us. What is one specific way you can intentionally make Jesus the center of your personal focus this Christmas season?