



## Advent Series: Herod

*Luke 2:29-32. 34-35, "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel....then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."*

1. What are some Christmas traditions that you celebrated as a child? How and why were they meaningful for you?
2. Pastor Steve shared that *"Herod was shrewd enough to understand this sobering truth: If Jesus is King, then I can't be king."* In what ways does the gravity of the gospel help you to understand Herod's reaction? Why is this truth so easy to miss (or dismiss) for us in our day?
3. As a practical application Pastor Steve invited the church to spend the close of each day in a time of reflection based on a discipline called *the Examen* by Ignatius Loyola.
  - a. *Review and respond to today.* Think back on the day and offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessings. Also consider your failures and shortcomings and respond to them in a prayer of repentance, seeking God's grace and healing.
  - b. *Look to tomorrow.* Look over your schedule for tomorrow. What tasks do you need to get done? Who will you be meeting with? Consider ways that God may want to use you throughout the day and commit your intentions to him in prayer.

Share with the group if you have ever practiced these disciplines in the past and how it may have been helpful for you. Or share about how you plan to incorporate them into your daily routine during this Advent season.

### **FOR FUTHER STUDY** (together or on your own)

Read Luke 2:29-35. In what ways have you seen Jesus be the cause of the "falling and rising of many in Israel" in his life and ministry? Do you notice a common theme among those who fall versus those who rise when they encounter Jesus?