



ADVENT

A Christmas Discipleship Guide for
the Whole Family

WHAT IS ADVENT?

Traditionally, the Advent season is a 4 week long period meant to prepare our hearts for Christmas Day - when we celebrate the birth of Jesus! Advent means "coming." Similar to those who awaited the arrival of the Messiah over 2,000 years ago, in this Advent season we await the celebration of Jesus' birth and anticipate His coming again one day.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

EACH WEEK WILL HAVE A FOCUS BIBLE PASSAGE TO READ, A DISCUSSION GUIDE THROUGH THE DOMAINS, AND AN ACTIVITY. USE THE CALENDAR ON THE NEXT PAGE TO INTENTIONALLY PLAN YOUR TIME.

ONCE A WEEK

FIND THE BEST TIME THAT WORKS FOR YOU/YOUR FAMILY



MEAL TIME



BED TIME



MORNING TIME



DRIVE TIME

STARTING NOV 26



STEP 1 - READ THE PASSAGE



STEP 2 - DISCUSSION



STEP 3 - PRAY



STEP 4 - ACTIVITY

ABOUT THE 4 DOMAINS

There are endless ways to use this discipleship guide but the hope is that you would use it to continue to seek true fulfillment in Jesus Christ, starting in your own heart and home this Christmas season. The guide can be used individually or with your family to spark gospel centered family discipleship.

The four domains of the Christian life are designed to help believers experience true fulfillment in Jesus Christ. We "START WITH THE HEART" - our personal relationship with Jesus. If we are experiencing true fulfillment in our heart domain we see the habit of RESTING in the truth of God's

love. Next, the Home Domain reflects true fulfillment in Jesus through BLESSING those in our home and family. Then if we are experiencing true fulfillment in Jesus in the Gather Domain, we prioritize GATHERING with a community of believers. Lastly, the Go Beyond Domain expresses true fulfillment in Jesus through the GOING OUT and sharing His love with others. The focus of the next four weeks will be to examine the themes of Advent through the domains of our lives.

DOMAINS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

LIFE BEYOND

THE GO BEYOND DOMAIN

WE GO! WE WANT TO FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE OF MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF PEOPLE IN NEED.



LIFE TOGETHER

THE GATHER DOMAIN

WE MAKE GATHERING WITH OTHER BELIEVERS A PRIORITY FOR OUR FAMILY AS WE SHARPEN, EQUIP, LOVE, AND SERVE ONE ANOTHER.

START

LIFE IN CHRIST

THE HEART DOMAIN

THROUGH DEVOTION TO PRAYER AND THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE, WE REST IN THE TRUTH OF GOD'S LOVE.



LIFE AT HOME

THE HOME DOMAIN

WE BLESS OUR FAMILY BY ASCRIBING GOD'S PROMISE OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE TO THEM.

DECEMBER 2023

SUN

MON

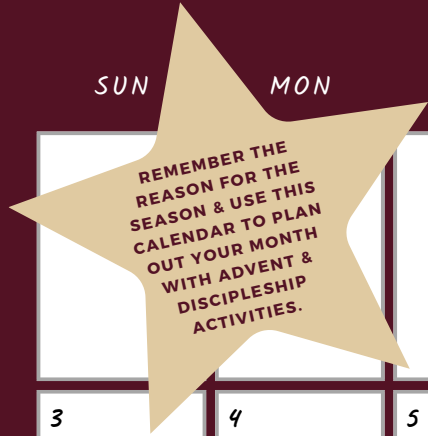
TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT



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31						

WEEK 1: BEHOLD THE PROMISES

GRAB YOUR BIBLE

READ: Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the Lord of Armies will accomplish this.

This passage points to hope, promise, and anticipation. It speaks of a Messiah who would bring light, peace, and justice to a world in darkness. For Christians, it is a central text that points to the birth and mission of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of this prophetic promise. His birth, life, and ministry are often seen as the embodiment of the "great light" and the fulfillment of the titles given in verse six. Reflect on the questions on the next page.



ACTIVITY

Light a Candle & Reflect

Take time with family or friends to sit down and set a new pace for this Advent Season. Commit to scheduling time together to be intentional about reflecting on God's goodness and peace through the gift of his son, Jesus. Celebrate and give thanks and praise to God.

READ THE VERSE (V.) FROM THE PASSAGE AND WRITE OR DRAW ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS EITHER BELOW OR ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

V. 7 HOW MIGHT THESE VERSES INSPIRE US TO PURSUE PEACE, WISDOM, AND JUSTICE?



V.6-7 FOR BELIEVERS, THESE VERSES ARE OFTEN SEEN AS THE PROPHECY FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST. AS THE CHURCH, HOW DO THESE TITLES RESONATE WITH OUR COLLECTIVE UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS?



V. 6 WHAT DO EACH OF THESE TITLES GIVEN TO THE MESSIAH REVEAL ABOUT HIS CHARACTER AND ROLE? PERSONALLY, HOW DO THESE TITLES RESONATE WITH YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS?



START

V. 6 WHAT DOES "PRINCE OF PEACE" MEAN TO YOUR HOME AND FAMILY LIFE? IS YOUR HOME A PLACE OF PEACE?



WEEK 2: BEHOLD THE MIRACLE

GRAB YOUR BIBLE

READ: Luke 1:26-38

26 In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you." 29 But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be. 30 Then the angel told her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end." 34 Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?" 35 The angel replied to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 "Behold, I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

This passage marks the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary, delivering the astounding news of God's plan for her to bear the Savior, Jesus. Mary's response, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word," demonstrates her humble and obedient heart. It represents a profound moment of surrender to God's divine will and highlights the promise of Jesus' birth as a pivotal moment in human history. Reflect on the next page.



ACTIVITY

The Names of Jesus

Turn to the back page of the booklet to find the Names of Jesus Word Search. As a family, grab different colored pens or highlighters to see who can find the most names.

READ THE VERSE (V.) FROM THE PASSAGE AND WRITE OR DRAW ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS EITHER BELOW OR ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

V.38 HOW CAN MARY'S RESPONSE TO THE ANGEL ENCOURAGE US TO MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF SOMEONE IN NEED?



V.31 THE NAME "JESUS" MEANS "GOD SAVES" OR "GOD IS SALVATION." HOW DOES THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE IN THIS PASSAGE CONNECT AND INSPIRE THE CHURCH COMMUNITY?



V. 29 MARY EXPRESSES FEAR INITIALLY WHEN SHE ENCOUNTERS THE ANGEL. HOW DOES HER FEAR TRANSFORM INTO FAITH? CAN YOU RELATE TO MOMENTS OF FEAR IN YOUR OWN LIFE THAT LATER LED TO A DEEPER FAITH OR UNDERSTANDING?



START

V.34 CONSIDER THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT IN WHICH MARY LIVED. HOW MIGHT HER RESPONSE TO THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE HAVE BEEN VIEWED BY HER COMMUNITY AND FAMILY? HOW DOES THIS HISTORICAL CONTEXT ADD DEPTH TO THE STORY?



WEEK 3: BEHOLD THE CHILD

GRAB YOUR BIBLE

READ: Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. 2 This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3 So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. 4 Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, 5 to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. 8 In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: 11 Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger." 13 Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: 14 Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors! 15 When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the manger. 17 After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard, which were just as they had been told.

This passage narrates Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem for the census, culminating in the humble birth of Jesus in a manger. Despite their challenging circumstances, this event fulfills Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah's birthplace. It serves as a poignant reminder that God often works through the ordinary and the unexpected to fulfill His divine purposes. Reflect on the next page.



ACTIVITY

Create a Names of Jesus Garland

- Cut 1 by 10 in (2.5 by 25.4 cm) strips from colorful pieces of paper.
- Choose several names of Jesus from the word search activity & write one name on each strip.
- Attach the ends of one strip, then glue them together in a loop.
- Slide another strip through the first loop, then glue the ends together.
- Keep adding loops each day & talk about the names of Jesus as you do.

READ THE VERSE (V.) FROM THE PASSAGE AND WRITE OR DRAW ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS EITHER BELOW OR ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SHEPHERDS' ROLE IN SHARING THE NEWS OF JESUS' BIRTH FOR OUR OWN RESPONSIBILITY IN SHARING THE MESSAGE OF JESUS WITH OTHERS?



V. 9-10, THE ANGEL BRINGS GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY TO THE SHEPHERDS. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS JOY, AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE MESSAGE OF JESUS' BIRTH?



V. 4 WHY DID MARY AND JOSEPH HAVE TO TRAVEL TO BETHLEHEM FOR THE CENSUS, AND WHAT CHALLENGES MIGHT HAVE THEY FACED DURING THEIR JOURNEY?



START

V. 6-7, WE SEE THAT THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR MARY AND JOSEPH IN THE INN. WHAT DOES THIS REVEAL ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF JESUS' BIRTH? HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THEMES OF HUMILITY AND SIMPLICITY?



WEEK 4: BEHOLD THE GIFT

GRAB YOUR BIBLE

READ: Matthew 2:1-12

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him." 3 When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Messiah would be born. 5 "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet: 6 And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." 7 Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him." 9 After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was—the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

In this passage, we encounter the Wise Men who traveled from afar following the star to worship Jesus. Their journey symbolizes a quest for truth and meaning. The Wise Men's worship and their symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh illustrate their recognition of Jesus as the King, High Priest, and Savior. Reflect on the next page.



ACTIVITY

THANK YOU NOTES

Giving and receiving gifts on Christmas is a blessing. One of the best ways to say thank you is with a written note. Take some time this week to write out thank you notes for all your blessings this Christmas.

READ THE VERSE (V.) FROM THE PASSAGE AND WRITE OR DRAW ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS EITHER BELOW OR ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

JESUS CAME TO THIS WORLD TO SEEK AND SAVE THAT WHICH IS LOST, AND HE WANTS TO USE YOU TO DO IT... GO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS.



HOW MIGHT THE JOURNEY OF THE WISE MEN INSPIRE US TO SEEK JESUS IN OUR LIVES AND FOLLOW HIM, EVEN WHEN IT INVOLVES CHALLENGES AND DIFFICULTIES?



V. 11 THE WISE MEN WORSHIPED JESUS IMMEDIATELY. IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU WORSHIPING AND CELEBRATING JESUS THIS CHRISTMAS?



START

THERE IS A CONTRAST BETWEEN THE HUMBLE ACTIONS OF THE WISE MEN AND THE FEARFUL AND DECEITFUL ACTIONS OF HEROD. HOW DOES THIS HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONDING TO JESUS WITH FAITH AND HUMILITY?



Names Of Jesus

L V R U K R L L I E R P Q V V G J E H O V A H V
 O N E C Q E N O Y L O H W T E L S A V I O U R F
 R E H Q Z K A E S S E N S U O T H G I R W Q D K
 D M T U H A L F I C O U N C E L O R S L S G Z N
 O E A N J M M W W R H M T E R G U X H A U V O L
 F S F B Q E I C C H R I S T M A S G C M S O X D
 L I G E D C G Q X B U Z C C Q Z G W D B E Y N C
 O W N T H A H O M R I P S F A T H E R O J W O Y
 R P I H N E T X T S I R H C S U S E J F Y W S X
 D R T L A P Y L K Q F S R L U N E W X G B F N B
 S I S E M V G E L I Y O E K T M R R H O A T E L
 Q N A H F X O Q V F N U Q H P H E E N D B Y T U
 I C L A O Y D B L E N G E A T X L W X E L Y T I
 J E R M N Q A O P A R L O Q B H U O D O T T O T
 K O E L O E V W M G I L W F X V R P H H O H G H
 H F V B S E L M E G D R A X K C U L B F B G E E
 M P E L N J E B H H X O O S Z I D L H E F I B T
 V E H Y D L K T X L T Q B I T Z N A Y Z Q M Y R
 V A A T H E L I F E T D D Q V I V G U A U L L U
 D C I P O Q S H T U R G D P X A N Y S U F A N T
 R E S H O L I N E S S A N E D T S G M L V K O H
 O N S R Y S Z B R D O G F O N O S U Z G B Z E R
 L Z E I O E F I L L A N R E T E T S I R H C Z L
 J C M N J Z W W Y X P W O N D E R F U L Y C M E

All Power
 Baby Jesus
 Father
 Only Begotten Son
 Almighty God
 Christ
 Messiah
 The Light
 Joy

Ruler
 Wise Men
 Everlasting
 Holy One
 Almighty
 Son
 Jesus Christ
 Christmas
 Peace Maker

Son Of God
 Bethlehem
 Eternal Life
 The Life
 Jehovah
 God
 Everlasting Father
 Prince Of Peace

Rightousness
 Saviour
 Love
 The Way
 Lord of Lords
 Lamb Of God
 Counselor
 Savior

Holiness
 Emmanuel
 Son Of Man
 The Truth
 Lord
 King Of Kings
 Wonderful
 Holy