

ADVENT

# ADVENT

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## **ADVENT RESOURCES**

### **Books -**

The Dawning of Indestructible Joy by John Piper

From Heaven by A.W. Tozer

Gifts of Grace by Jared Wilson

### **Right Now Media -**

Advent by J.D. Greear

Advent by Derwin Gray

The Greatest Gift by Ann Voskamp

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WHAT'S  
ADVENT?

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**For over 1500 years, the church at large has seen opportunities for reflection and wonder in the story of Jesus through seasons of the year. This is commonly known as the church calendar. These seasons typically start with Advent and end after Pentecost with ordinary time. The seasons are based on the life of Jesus Christ and follow a distinct pattern:**

**Advent - The Birth of Christ**

**Epiphany - The Manifestation of Christ**

**Lent - The Temptation and Death of Christ**

**Easter - The Resurrection of Christ**

**Pentecost - The Holy Spirit Comes to God's People**

**Sometimes the church calendar can be seen as legalistic or ritualistic, but joining with the overall body of believers for over a thousand years in remembrance of Jesus can be a beautiful exercise. While we won't follow the other parts of the calendar for this coming year, Advent is a time of beauty and reflection as we await the coming of Christ. For 400 years, the people of Israel waited after the last words of the prophets for the coming of the Messiah. Advent is a season of desperation coming to fruition through a season of hope as Christ is made known as Emmanuel, God with Us.**

## **Advent Traditions**

Through the years there have been several traditions to celebrate Advent. Some of these might be familiar or could potentially be something that you and your family decide to embark on in this season.

### **The Advent Wreath**

The Advent wreath is typically made up of five candles which progressively help to anticipate the beauty of Jesus' birth. The symbolism is tied into the truth that Jesus is the light of the world, so as each candle is lit throughout the season, we remember the truth of who Jesus is and what He would do for His people. Each week a new candle is lit (Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy), leading up to the final candle on Christmas Eve - The Christ Candle.

### **The Advent Calendar**

The Advent calendar has been a symbol of joy and excitement for years, as it is typically a daily activity that leads up to Christmas. Each day a window or box is opened which contains a poem, a scripture, a story, gifts, or other items that help us remember to anticipate the coming of Christ. This guide will act as a sort of Advent calendar as each day provides a different experience to join together and anticipate the coming of Christ.

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**Throughout this guide,  
we will be looking at Jesus -  
who He is and what it means for us.**

**Each week will focus on one aspect  
of Him - The Prophet, The Priest,  
The King, The Savior.**

**Each aspect of who Jesus is  
provides an opportunity for us to  
find joy and hope as we encounter  
Christ in new ways.**

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# PROPHET

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*SUNDAY - WEEK ONE*



As we begin each week, we will take time to encounter Jesus through one of the aspects of who He is. This will provide a filter and also allow us to live in a moment of anticipation. Then each day you will encounter brief and intentional opportunities to draw your heart towards the light of Christ in this season.

God worked through prophets throughout the Old Testament. These prophets were often called to declare judgment on the nation of Israel and to declare the coming of the Lord. The messages spoke to the heart and character of God and provided the listeners with the desire of God's heart - for His people to turn from their evil ways and return to Him.

Jesus was the greatest prophet who ever lived. When he began His earthly ministry, He declared that the Kingdom of God was at hand and that the Gospel (good news) had arrived. He then followed this by sharing the common words of the prophets before Him - repent and believe. (Mark 1:14-15)

Hebrews 1:1-3 furthers our understanding of the role that Jesus played as the prophet -

*“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...”*

The role of a prophet was to always declare the word of the Lord, the heart of the Lord, and the steps that God's people needed to take to follow the Lord. Jesus as the great prophet provided a message of hope instead of a message of destruction.

As you consider Jesus the Prophet this week, take time to think through some of the thoughts below:

*Why is Jesus as the great prophet good news for me?*

*Why does Jesus being the great prophet bring hope for the people?*

*What hope do I need in this season?*

*What words do I need to hear Jesus speak over me*

*(love, a call to repentance, a step to believe and follow?)*



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## MONDAY - WEEK ONE

*Each Monday throughout this guide you will encounter a scripture that embraces the idea of the theme of the week, take time to read it slowly and pick out any words that stand out to you. Pray through the scripture and allow yourself to soak in the truth.*

This week we sit in the HOPE of the Lord.  
Meditate on the hope you have in Him as you read this passage.

“BUT THIS I CALL TO MIND,  
AND THEREFORE I HAVE HOPE:  
THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD  
NEVER CEASES,  
GOD’S MERCIES NEVER COME TO AN END;  
THEY ARE NEW EVERY MORNING;  
GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS.  
“THE LORD IS MY PORTION,” SAYS MY SOUL,  
“THEREFORE I WILL HOPE IN THE LORD.”

LAMENTATIONS 3:21-24

Each Tuesday throughout this guide is an opportunity to join in with others who will be praying the same prayer. Take your time praying this prayer intentionally and allow your heart, mind, and soul to be open to God.

*Gracious God, as the Advent season begins, we cry out to you. We come to you looking for hope. When everything else we rely on fails us, our only hope is in You. When we do not understand what has happened, we hope in You. We can hope for better days because we trust You. We know You and we know You are here with us no matter what we are facing. Some of us see only darkness this time of year. Some of us find life overwhelming. Some of us are filled with Advent joy. Wherever we find ourselves today, remind us that our hope is in You. Be with us on this journey. Amen.*



Wednesday - Week One

Playlist for Hope



<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7rLK-2kJC1XRilJ442e-JVaF?si=01f6ed3395d240da>

Each Wednesday throughout this guide, you will find a song that you can both listen and read the words to. The hope is that these songs will point your heart towards the meaning of Advent as you dig into their rich lyrics and theology.

## COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

Come, Thou long expected Jesus  
Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us,  
Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's Strength and Consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear Desire of every nation,  
Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,  
Born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit,  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

By Thine all sufficient merit,  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.



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## THURSDAY - WEEK ONE

### EMMANUAL

Each Thursday you will encounter a common element of the Biblical account of Jesus' birth and have an opportunity to take a deeper dive on why these aspects are important.

Have you ever wondered if it's 'Emmanual' or 'Immanuel'? And what does that word mean anyway? In the Biblical story, we see angels appear and use this term to talk about Jesus (see Matthew 1:22-23). It was also prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 that Christ would be called Emmanuel. In the simplest terms, the word Emmanuel means "God with Us." The funny thing about the word is that both spellings can be correct - they were romanized from the original Hebrew and Greek texts and mean the exact same thing.

The beauty of the term is that it provides for a very clear picture. We see through the Old Testament that God desires to be with His people, but is separated from us due to our sins. He sends angels, shows up in fiery bushes, even spends time speaking to Moses and showing Him a glimpse of who He is, but God was never truly with His people after the Garden of Eden. Until Jesus burst forth on the scene. The true promise is not only that Jesus was God with us, but through His life, death, and resurrection, we have the ability to always be with God. This is a beautiful truth that we have the opportunity to live in every day.

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EMMANUEL  
GOD WITH US

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## FRIDAY - WEEK ONE

CHECK OUT OUR  
'ADVENT CALENDAR'  
SECTION ON OUR  
PINTEREST PAGE FOR  
INSPIRATION

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calendar/](https://www.pinterest.com/gracespringbiblechurch/advent-2022/advent-calendar/)





# ADVENT CALENDAR

While December 1 was yesterday, consider putting together an Advent calendar of sorts if you haven't. Feel free to include some sort of treat for fun, but work to include a verse or promise of God that helps you draw near to and focus on the Lord. We want to continually draw ourselves back to God throughout this season, keeping the birth of Christ and the love of our Father at the center of our celebrating!

Another idea is to include an activity or act of kindness prompt for you or your family on certain days.

You can purchase an Advent calendar box or hanging, make your own version (like DIY kraft paper envelopes hung on string for each day), or just set a reminder for each day to spend time focusing on that verse or promise that speaks to God's glory!

# TRUTH IS ABOVE CIRCUMSTANCE

If you haven't already this week, spend some time reflecting on the sovereignty of God that is displayed through His appointment of prophets and that which was fulfilled through the coming of Christ. We read earlier this week in Hebrews that "[Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power."

His power is absolute, and His ways are above our ways.

It is so easy for us to get caught up in our circumstances, to not be able to look past our situation, and to feel that the odds we face are insurmountable. In this season, remember that God is not swayed or ruled by circumstance and that when we stand in Him we are shielded by His love and faithfulness. Invite Him into those seemingly crushing circumstances and proclaim that His power is greater than what we experience in this world.

Spend time remembering and meditating on these verses:

**“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.” -Psalm 32:8**

**“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.” -Psalm 91:4**

Before heading into this next week, reflect back on what you've learned about Jesus as Prophet and where you feel the Lord directing you in this week to come.

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# PRIEST

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*SUNDAY - WEEK TWO*



The role of the priest throughout the Bible was primarily to go before the Lord and offer sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people of God. The priest was also in charge of maintaining the dwelling place of the Lord, settling disputes with the wisdom of the Lord, and declaring the goodness and justice of God over the people. A priest was responsible to live a holy and upstanding life. The priest always came from the line of Aaron and was chosen by God to be the intercessor between God and the people.

Hebrews 4:14-16 tells us:

*“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

Jesus, who was fully God and fully man, lived a perfect life, was tempted and tried, and became the perfect sacrifice before God that would ultimately forgive the sins of anyone who would repent and follow Him. Jesus was the greatest priest of all time, going between the people and God and providing for atonement through His perfect blood being shed. This ultimately provided peace with God because while we were still His enemies in sin, He called us sons and daughters through the blood of Jesus that was poured out for us.

As you encounter the message of peace throughout the week, consider:

*What does Jesus being the great priest mean for me?*

*What message is Jesus speaking to me as the priest?*

*What peace do I need during this season?*

*How has God shown me His love through the priesthood of Jesus?*

MONDAY - WEEK TWO

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*“Peace I leave with you;*

*my peace I give to you.*

*I do not give to you*

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As we thank God for His PEACE which surpasses all understanding, let us pray over where that PEACE may need to be applied in our lives.

***as the world gives.***

***Do not let your hearts be troubled,  
and do not let them be afraid.”***

***John 14:27***

*Prince of Peace, please reveal yourself to us today.  
Only in You can we know real peace, God, and only You  
know what peace needs to look like. Peace is needed in our lives,  
our homes, our families, our church, and our whole world.  
Help us to slow down and seek out the peace You provide,  
so we may become peacemakers for ourselves and others in Your name.  
We thank you for Your guidance. Amen.*





## O HOLY NIGHT!

O Holy Night!

The stars are brightly shining

It is the night of the dear Savior's birth!

Long lay the world in sin and error pining

Till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth.

A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Fall on your knees

Oh hear the angel voices

Oh night divine

Oh night when Christ was born

Oh night divine

Oh night divine

Wednesday - Week Two

Playlist for Peace

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5cKyNdOV18m-jeLoXUT1ohU?si=c37e-85c7230d4ac4>



Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming  
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand  
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming  
Here come the wise men from Orient land  
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger  
In all our trials born to be our friend

Truly He taught us to love one another  
His law is love and His gospel is peace  
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother  
And in His name all oppression shall cease  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,  
Let all within us praise His holy name

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## THURSDAY - WEEK TWO

### BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem is a place that most of us grew up knowing as the birthplace of Jesus. However, this small town on the West Bank has so much rich biblical history that has occurred within it. In the Old Testament we see in Genesis 35 that Rachel, Jacob's wife, was buried there. In the book of Ruth, many of the events that happened took place in Bethlehem! King David was born in Bethlehem and it is where he grew up and was anointed king in 1 Samuel 16.

Most importantly of all, in Micah 5:2, Micah prophesied that "from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days." For Jesus to be born here meant the fulfilling of Micah's prophecy. And coincidentally, the name Bethlehem means, "house of bread"; how fitting is it that the Bread of Life should be born there?



# NATIVITY

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FRIDAY - WEEK TWO  
CHECK OUT OUR  
'NATIVITY' SECTION ON  
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FOR INSPIRATION

[https://www.pinterest.com/  
gracespringbiblechurch/  
advent-2022/nativity/](https://www.pinterest.com/gracespringbiblechurch/advent-2022/nativity/)



Whether you are of the DIY sort or not, spending time living in the structure of the 'nativity' can be a great practice. Look at the many elements of the nativity and consider why God brought each of those to life during the birth of Christ. From the star in the sky to shepherds to the animals to Jesus' parents to Jesus Himself, ponder God's purpose and take time to sit in His perfect plan.

For those wanting to take on a project, walk through the same considerations while constructing a nativity of your own!



# HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

How incredible a gift we have been given in Jesus.

Looking back over this past week, we read this in Hebrews:

**“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**

In our flesh and through our worldly vision it can be difficult to fathom that Jesus wants us to draw near, that mercy and grace are simply waiting there for us. Grace means to receive something undeserved. That undeserved gift is that Jesus Christ is the source of eternal salvation.

Remember that there is nothing that can stand between you and Jesus when we confess and believe. Insecurities, strongholds, guilt, anxiety, your past, your future—He is bigger than all of those, and simply wants you to move into His embrace.

**“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”**  
**-2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

Before heading into this next week, reflect back on what you’ve learned about Jesus as Priest and where you feel the Lord directing you in this week to come.

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# KING

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*SUNDAY - WEEK THREE*



Jesus descended from the line of kings - the lineage of David. In His death, we see Jesus exchange a crown of thorns for an eternal crown. The people who followed Jesus assumed that the Messiah would overthrow the Roman government and provide peace for His people. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus showed that He had a greater plan as the King who would be crowned.

In Isaiah 9:6-7, the prophet Isaiah declared these words about Jesus:

*“For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”*

The government will rest upon His shoulder. Jesus will sit on the throne of David and He will rule in justice with righteousness. This great King of Kings - Jesus, has been crowned once and for all. Who we crown is who we worship. We can become so comfortable with the idea of Jesus who saves us from our sins, but are we bending the knee to the King who has established the Kingdom of God on the earth? This King has poured out a new law - love. To love the Lord with everything in us and to love our neighbors as ourselves. As you consider Christ the King this week, think through these questions:

*Is Christ enthroned in my heart?*

*What does Christ being King mean for me?*

*What does the rule of Christ mean for the way I live my life?*

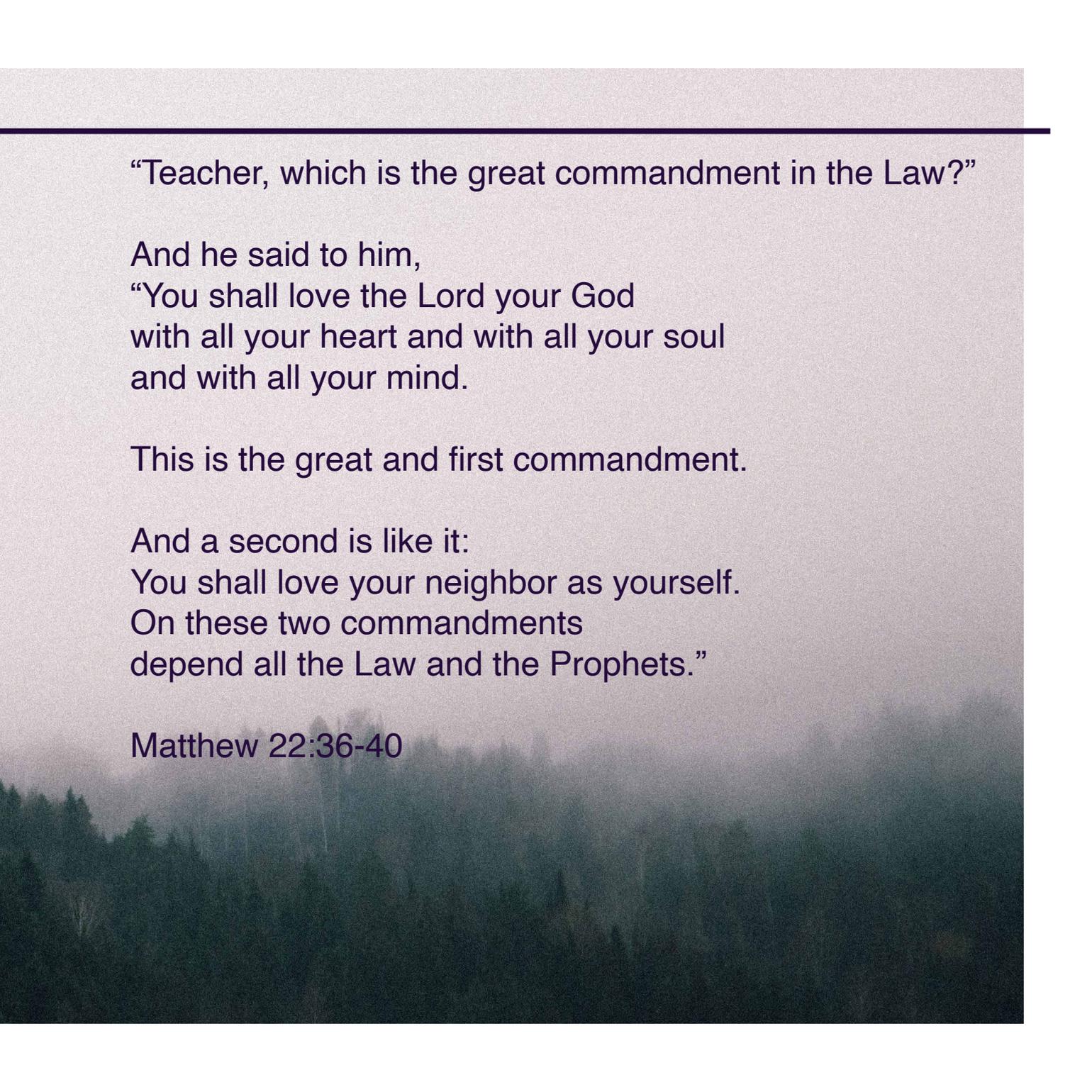
*How am I loving the Lord and loving my neighbor during this season?*

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**MONDAY - WEEK THREE**

As we revel in the  
LOVE of our Savior,  
let us ask Him how  
we would continue to  
share that love with the  
world around us.





“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”

And he said to him,

“You shall love the Lord your God  
with all your heart and with all your soul  
and with all your mind.

This is the great and first commandment.

And a second is like it:

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.  
On these two commandments  
depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:36-40

*Lord, we know that You are love.*

*Anything we know about love, we have learned from being loved by You.*

*God, we ask you to help us to enact that love, to live out that love  
that you have offered to us by sharing You with those around us.*

*We know that what the world needs now is You.*

*Help us remember Your love, see Your love, and share Your love. Amen.*



Wednesday - Week Three

## Playlist for Love

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0Q18ll-rqtbyeKkgHRs5F6l?si=2e0adf6f526747f7>



## O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold Him born the King of angels;

O come let us adore Him,  
O come let us adore Him  
O come let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord

Sing choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation  
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God in the highest:

O come let us adore Him,  
O come let us adore Him O come let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

O come let us adore Him,  
O come let us adore Him O come let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.





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THURSDAY - WEEK THREE



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FRIDAY - WEEK THREE

CHECK OUT OUR 'PROPHECY  
ORNAMENTS' SECTION ON OUR  
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# ORNAMENTS

As we draw nearer still to the celebration of Jesus' birth, consider creating a set of ornaments that show the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus' birth and their fulfillments in the New Testament. For you, this may be writing the citations or prophecies fulfilled on pieces of paper and tucking them in your tree, or perhaps you make some salt dough ornaments and write the prophecies on those. Whatever helps this to touch your heart as an individual or a family, revel in the fact that God saw those prophecies fulfilled!

Think about sharing these ornaments with friends, family, or neighbors as a way to spread the Good News of Jesus.

# GOD IS SOVEREIGN

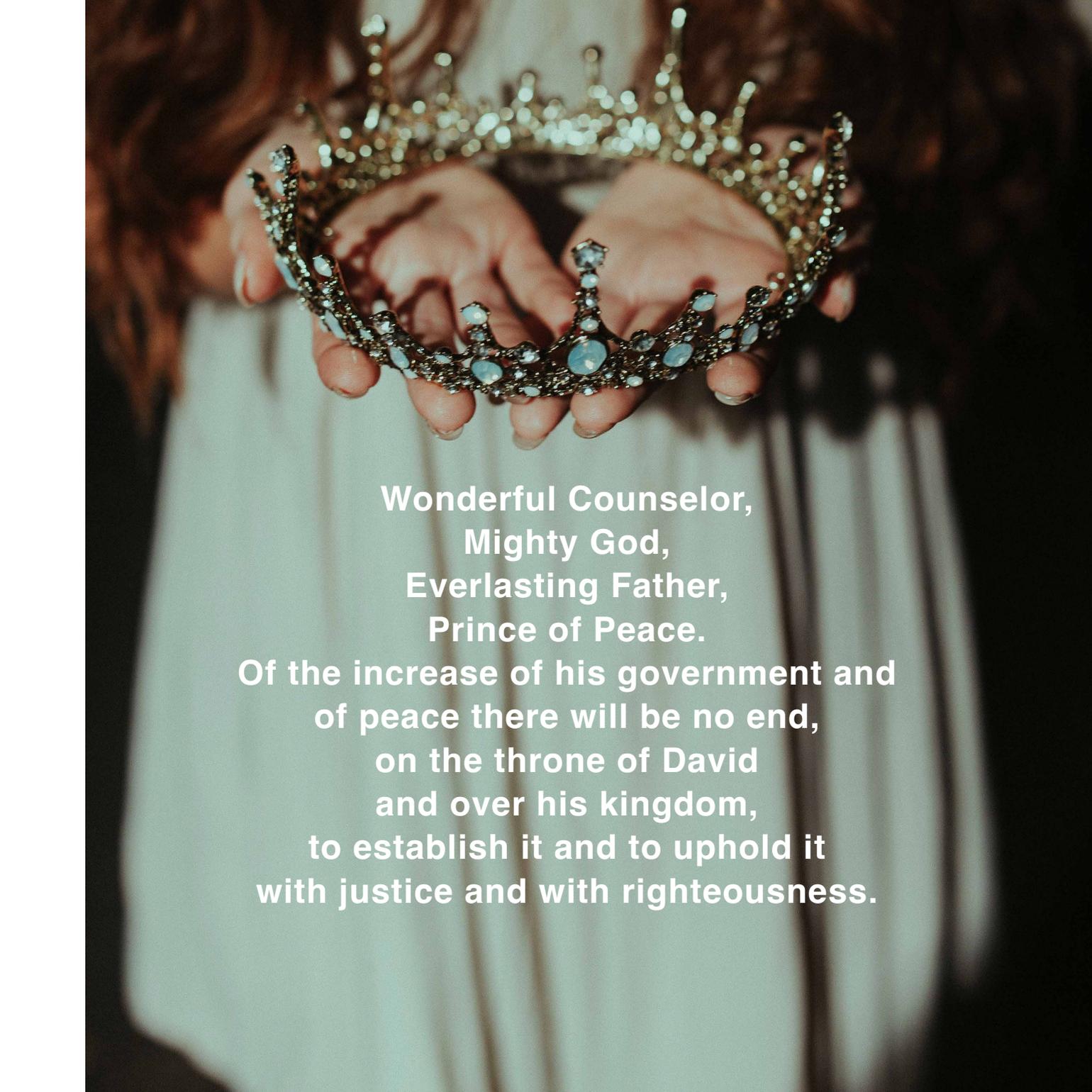
We live in times where it is easy to feel discouraged over the state of the world or where we live, and it is difficult to navigate what to do, how to do it, if we are meant to do something or not. A great help to us can be found in what we read from Isaiah this week (see next page).

While Jesus did come in flesh as a man to know us and to be known by us, to be the perfect sacrifice for us, He also came up with all the authority and power of Heaven.

**“Behold, your King is coming to you...”**  
**-Matthew 21:5**

Jesus is our perfect King, and we can have all confidence that it is both in His power and in His intention for justice and righteousness to be upheld. Our King is one who is both just and merciful, and He is not an earthly sovereign, susceptible to the ways of the world. We have the assurance that we can give Him our full confidence and submit heart, mind, body, and spirit to Him, knowing that He will not fail.

Before heading into this next week, reflect back on what you’ve learned about Jesus as King and where you feel the Lord directing you in this week to come.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding two crowns. The crown in the foreground is silver with several large, oval-shaped blue stones and smaller clear stones. The crown in the background is gold and appears to be made of a mesh or chain-link material. The person is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, garment. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.**

**Of the increase of his government and  
of peace there will be no end,  
on the throne of David  
and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness.**

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# SAVIOR

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*SUNDAY - WEEK FOUR*



Jesus is the ultimate savior. Before Him, the curse of our sin meant that the blood of a perfect sacrifice must be shed to be in relationship with God. Because of the fall from the Garden of Eden, we deserve death in our sin because we can never meet the standard of our holy and perfect God. So every year, a perfect sacrifice had to be made to shed the blood and stand in the place of our sins.

Jesus was fully God and fully man and lived a perfect life. When He died, He provided the ultimate sacrifice for our sins because only a man can pay the price of our sin and only God can withstand the judgment of God. Jesus was our perfect savior who shed His blood to satisfy the wrath of God.

Jesus was so confident in this that He spoke these words to Thomas in John 14:6,

***“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.  
No one comes to the Father except through me.”***

Jesus is our perfect savior and the only way into relationship with the holy and perfect God is through His perfect sacrifice. This provides the ultimate joy which produces steadfastness in our hearts and minds. As you consider Jesus as our savior in this season, think through the following questions:

*What do I need saving from?*

*What words does Christ the Savior speak over me?*

*Where is my joy found?*

*How do I share Christ the Savior with others in this season?*

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## MONDAY - WEEK FOUR

During this fourth week of Advent,  
we spend time thinking about JOY.

Rejoice, rejoice over His saving grace!

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“BUT LET ALL  
WHO TAKE REFUGE  
IN YOU REJOICE;

LET THEM EVER SING FOR JOY.

SPREAD YOUR  
PROTECTION OVER THEM,  
SO THAT THOSE WHO  
LOVE YOUR NAME  
MAY EXULT IN YOU.”

PSALM 5:11

*Father, we thank you for today, and we ask that we would find joy simply by being alive in You. Too often we equate joy with comfort or met desires or fun. Lord, help us to remember that our joy comes from You and therefore cannot be taken from us. We may have days where it is harder to see, but remind us that we are never without You, that joy is always available to us. Help us to not overlook the simple joys that peek into our lives daily. This week in our Advent journey, open our eyes to the joy that surrounds us. Amen.*



Wednesday - Week Four

Playlist for Joy

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4HD1uE5My-9R1M1bRt1RRc7?si=-9c99a0249aa840af>



## HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Hark! The herald angels sing  
“Glory to the new-born king  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled”  
Joyful all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With angelic host proclaim  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem”  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
“Glory to the new-born king”

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings  
Risen with healing in His wings  
Mild He lays His glory by  
Born that man no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth  
Born to give them second birth  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
“Glory to the new-born king”

Hark! The herald angels sing  
“Glory to the new-born king  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled”  
Joyful all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With angelic host proclaim  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem”  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
“Glory to the new-born king”  
“Glory to the new-born king”

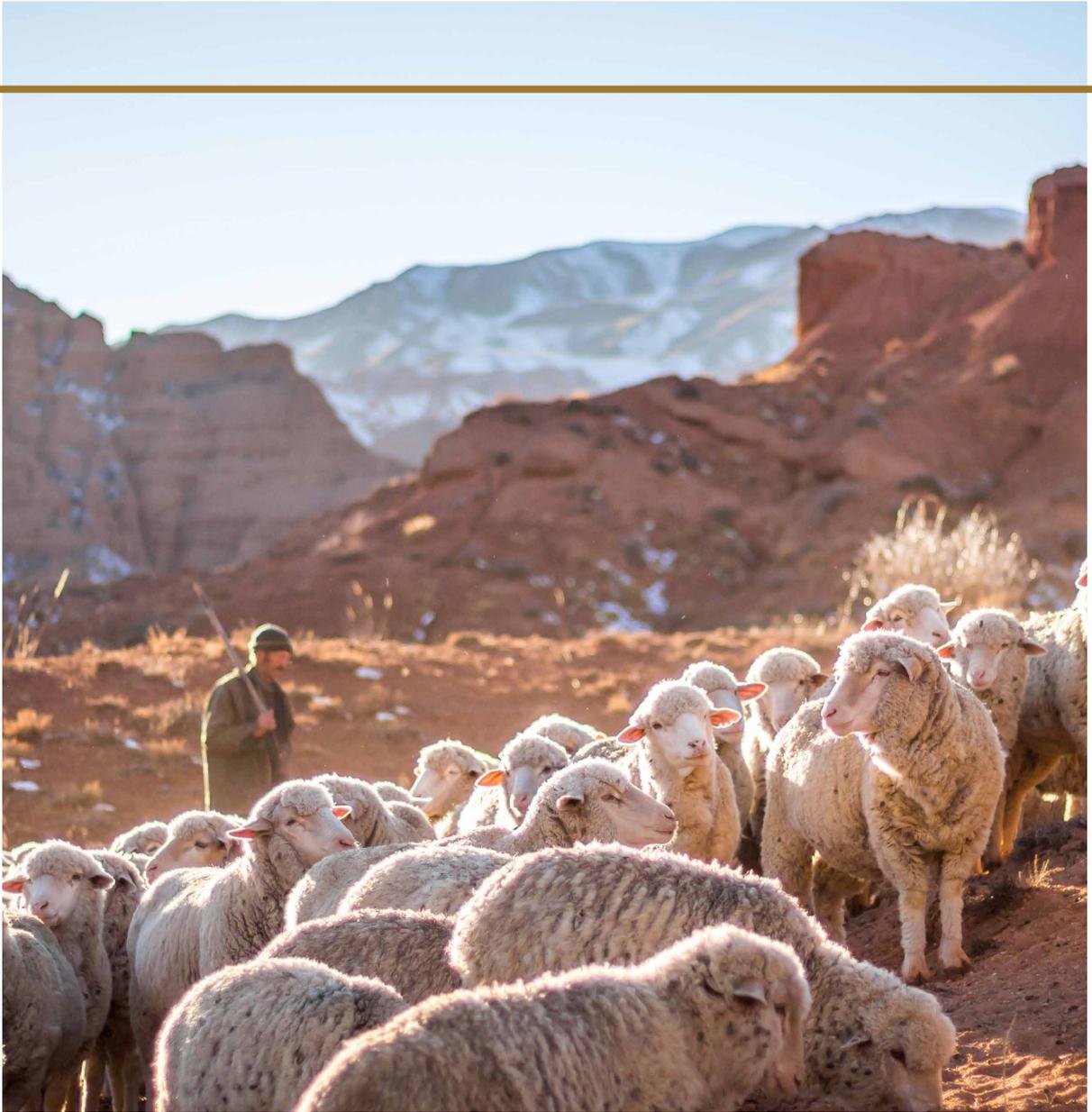
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## THURSDAY - WEEK FOUR

### SHEPHERDS

“Why were shepherds the first to see baby Jesus?” is a common question. In Luke, we see that right after he tells of the birth of Jesus, there were shepherds keeping watch over their flock. Shepherding has a very rich history within the people of Israel, and we know that Abraham, Moses, and David were all shepherds at one point. Shepherds have a very important job when they are with their sheep. Sheep are, by nature, rather helpless creatures. A shepherd’s job meant that they stayed with their sheep, caring for them, feeding them, and healing them when they were injured.

In John 10, Jesus refers to Himself as the “Good Shepherd”; we are His sheep and He is our shepherd. In a way, God is foreshadowing His son’s role as our shepherd by having shepherds be the first to meet this brand new baby! God is the great physician, He cares for our needs, feeds us and clothes us, and shepherds us. In this way, it makes perfect sense that shepherds would be the ones to hear the good news first! They were able to be the ones that came to greet this small baby that would soon become the Good Shepherd, who would soon shepherd them, their children, and their children’s children.





FRIDAY - WEEK FOUR

CHECK OUT OUR  
'LUMINARIES' SECTION  
ON OUR PINTEREST  
PAGE FOR INSPIRATION

[https://www.pinterest.com/  
gracespringbiblechurch/  
advent-2022/luminaries/](https://www.pinterest.com/gracespringbiblechurch/advent-2022/luminaries/)



# LUMINARIES

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior in a couple days, think about creating luminaries for your front yard, sidewalk, or porch as reminders of the star God put in the sky to tell of Jesus' birth. You can draw on stars or cut or punch out the shape of a star on a paper bag, and place a candle inside to be lit in the evenings. Each time you see the luminaries as you leave your home and return again, remember and express thanks to God for the way He ordained the birth of Christ and what His advent in this world has meant for us.

Once again, think about sharing these creations with your neighbors or other people who may be blessed by that reminder!

# OUR SAVIOR HAS COME

As we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Savior tomorrow, spend time remembering who He is to you and for you. He is Prophet, Priest, and King, and He is the one who took our place, endured the death that we deserve, and atoned for our sins. In His perfect love He became our Savior.

**John 14:6 says: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

**And Isaiah 54:10 reminds us: “For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you...”**

Through Jesus we find our salvation, and we are covered by His love.

Let us sit in our knowledge of who Jesus is and ensure that our hearts have an eternal focus as we celebrate Christmas. Bring His Truth before any strongholds of busyness or consumerism or insecurity. Believe that His grace and mercy are endless. Proclaim that His ways are beyond what we can fathom and that He is sovereign over all. Hold His love close in what may be the difficult emotions that come with this time of year, celebrating that you are never alone.

As you prepare for Christmas, reflect back on what you've learned about Jesus as Savior and where you feel the Lord directing you in this week to come.



# THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

Christmas. It's the moment where people across the world stop and remember. No matter what your traditions are, the central message of Christmas is that the long-expected Jesus has come into our midst, providing salvation and hope for anyone who would believe and follow Him.

Whether you are busy with family and meals or celebrating a quiet Christmas, take time today to reflect on the miracle of Jesus and the hope that He provides. Follow some of these prompts to center your heart and rest in Him:

Choose a couple of the songs from the different playlists in this guide and reflect on the wonder of Christ in this season.

Spend time writing out a prayer and focus on gratitude, hope, and wonder about Jesus' birth and salvation.

Spend time reading the Christmas story in Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 1:18-2:12. Spend time thinking about the circumstances and miracle in the birth of Jesus.

Throughout your day, set reminders to remember the reason for the hope that we have in Jesus today. *MERRY CHRISTMAS!*

# THINKING BACK & THINKING FORWARD

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This week, take a journey through the last year and think about the year to come. First, take time to think through these questions:

If you could describe 2022 in one word, what would it be?

What are the biggest challenges you've faced in the last year?

What are the biggest victories that you've experienced in the last year?

What does your soul need right now?

Who are the people that have been important to you this last year?  
How can you show them gratitude?

What are the top three things that Jesus has taught you this year?  
How will you remember them?

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Now take time to think about the year coming.

What are you most excited about for next year?

What are you most worried about?

What big goals or resolutions do you have for 2023?

What will you do to accomplish these things?

Spend time in prayer trying to synthesize the last year with the coming year. Thank God for the good, the bad, and the beautiful. Ask Him to guide you as you move into the next stage of life. What does He want for you and how will you be obedient to His calling?

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## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK ONE

#### BELONG

Have you ever had a time where you “predicted the future”? What happened?

Have everyone in the group share a high point and a low point from the time you last met.

#### GROW

As a group, watch this 5 minute video about Prophets in the Bible:

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/player/video/240001?session=329382>

What were the primary goals and methods of the prophets in the Bible?

Read Hebrews 1:1-4 as a group. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?

Think through the Gospels and the attributes of Jesus.

Maybe take time for each person to do a google search on the attributes of Jesus.

How does Jesus perfectly embody the life of a prophet?

What did He do and what did He say? See if you can come up with 10 examples.

Why is it important that Jesus acted as a prophet and shared the word of the Lord with the people?

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## REACH

Think about the Holy Spirit and what He came to do (help and remind, convict of sin, dwells in us and fills us, reveals wisdom and knowledge, guides to the truth of God...) How is the work of the Holy Spirit prophetic for us today?

What is the message that the Holy Spirit is speaking to you? (conviction, encouragement, revelation, repentance...)

This week, take time to be intentional to hear from the Holy Spirit about not only what God calls you, but what He's calling you to do.

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## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS WEEK TWO

### **BELONG**

Who in your life consistently give you encouragement?

What situations are most discouraging for you?

### **GROW**

Hebrews 2:5-9 How do these verses show the value God places on humans?

Hebrews 2:10-15 Based on these verses, why did Jesus die and what did His death accomplish?

Hebrews 2:16-18 Based on these verses, what qualifies Jesus to be our high priest?

What is a high priest and why would a high priest be necessary?

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## **REACH**

Knowing that Jesus is interceding for you, how will you respond to Him?

How does knowing that Jesus has experienced temptation just like you give you encouragement?

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## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK THREE

#### BELONG

Where was your most relaxing vacation? What was it about this place that provided the comfort and peace that helped you unwind? Do you intend to go back? Why or why not?

Where is your favorite place in your home to relax? When you return to this place after a long day/week, how do you feel?

#### GROW

In Hebrews 1:1-14 we are given a short glimpse of Jesus' pedigree and power. Have a member of your group read these verses, considering the environment that Jesus came from in order to take on human form. How do you think Jesus felt when he was with his Father in heaven, surrounded by the angels, and "heir of all things"? Would this have been difficult for Jesus to leave in order to join us on earth? Although it may seem odd to compare Jesus' heavenly life with your relaxing vacation, it is important to appreciate the comforts and that Jesus set aside when He left heaven.

Not only did Jesus leave the comforts of heaven, He did so willingly, mirroring His outward change in environment with an inward humility that placed Him in the form of a servant to all. Have a member of your group read Philippians 2:3-8, and discuss the importance of this inner transformation. Would the Gospels have described a similar life and ministry of Jesus had He not assumed the role of a servant? How might His interactions with the woman at the well, the demon-possessed man, the blind man, etc. been different if He were not in the mindset of a servant? How would His relationship with the disciples have played out if He did not teach them how to serve?...and how would that in turn have affected the ministry of the apostles after Jesus' departure?

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Philippians 2:9-11 goes on to reveal the end result of Jesus' life of service, humility, and sacrifice... He is returned to His rightful place as King! Read verses 9-16 as a group, focusing on the implications of Jesus' life and glorification in verses 12-16. The word "Therefore" in verse 12 ties the preceding verses into the remainder of the passage. How is our call to obedience tied to Jesus' life of humility and eventual exaltation as King?

## **REACH**

Are you willing to set aside your comforts in order to serve others?

Is there anything in your life that you have put in a place of honor or worship that should not be there? Is anything getting in the way of Jesus as the King of your heart?

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**LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS  
WEEK FOUR**

**CONSIDER CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS  
TOGETHER BY THROWING A FEAST  
AND READING THE BIRTH ACCOUNT OF JESUS.**





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**Throughout this guide,  
we will be looking at Jesus -  
who He is and what it means for us.**

**Each week will focus on one aspect  
of Him - The Prophet, The Priest,  
The King, The Savior.**

**Each aspect of who Jesus is  
provides an opportunity for us to  
find joy and hope as we encounter  
Christ in new ways.**

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