



Advent Calendar

Instructions:

Advent: Advent means arrival, the anticipation that something is about to happen. It is an adventure! We invite you to the adventure of Christmas.

Choose a Day: Typically, families count back the four Sundays before Christmas. This Advent set is designed to be used for those four Sundays and on Christmas Eve. You can also choose to do this the week leading up to Christmas. This is about anticipation and reminders, not about rituals and rules!

Choose a day each week to sit together as a family and count down the advent season. Many families choose Sunday to mark off their Advent Calendars. However, for other families, the ministry commitments on Sundays make this special time with their families rushed. Choose a day and time each week where your family can enjoy the time together. If on a particular week, you are not able to gather, do not skip the week. Simply come together the next.

You may find that between school, work, and holiday events, you missed the start of advent. Instead, consider counting down the last 5 days before Christmas! Begin on December 20th. Often, many of the extras are done and you'll have time to enjoy making memories.

The Order: Other than the Christ candle, you can celebrate advent in any order. In the mid 1800s, Johann Hinrich Wichern, a German missionary, created the advent wreath as a way for the children in his orphanage to anticipate Christmas. He covered an old wheel with evergreens to represent the everlasting life given to us by our eternal God. The children lit one candle per day as they counted down to Christmas Eve. Each Sunday, they would light a special candle and he would teach them about our Hope in Christ, salvation through Faith in His grace, the Joy we have in His salvation, and the love God has for us in sending Jesus. Advent is an extra biblical way people have created to help families focus their hearts in worship of God. Feel free to adjust the method as you teach the good news of Jesus and salvation in Him alone at Christmas!

Coloring Count Down: Print a copy of the Advent Coloring Countdown page for each person in your family. The tree and design can be colored at any time. However, reserve the four ornaments and star for your family gathering and devotional time. Color the corresponding ornament each week after you do the devotional.

Family Devotional: As a family come together and read the interactive family devotional together. Engage your family to answer the questions. The time is focused and brief. It is designed for families of all ages.

Coloring Pages: Visit multiplyministries.org/resources and download coloring pages for each advent theme.

Jumpstart3 Songs: There are five memory verses with corresponding Jumpstart3.com songs associated with this Advent calendar. Sing the songs together when you gather. Memorize the Scripture verse. Sing the songs all week as you anticipate the celebration of the coming of Christ! multiplyministries.org/songs-of-advent

Tell others: Share this resource with your friends, family, and church. Encourage others to be intentional about preparing their family's hearts for advent season. We would love to see you post pictures on social media!

Christ

hope

faith

joy

love

Advent Week 1: Love – John 3:16

Ask: Who is someone who loves you? (Allow for answers.)

Ask: How do they show that love to you? (Allow for answers.)

God is love. God is compassionate. God is full of grace and mercy. He made us and desires a relationship with us. Our sin separates us from Him.

Ask: How would you feel if someone stole something from you? (Allow for answers.)

Ask: How would you feel if someone lied about you to someone else? (Allow for answers.)

It would not be right. It would not be just for someone to hurt you by stealing or lying. When we sin, we hurt God. We choose to do what we desire rather than to live justly. Anything we think, say or do that goes against the will of God is sin. God's justice requires that the penalty for sin must be paid.

Read Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." We are separated from God through death.

Read Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We are all sinners. Therefore, we are all separated from God because of the choices we make.

God's love provided a way for that justice to be satisfied while we are able to be redeemed through Jesus' death on the cross for our sin.

Read Romans 3:24 "and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

To be redeemed means to be purchased. Sometimes at Christmas, someone may give you a gift card as your present. The giver has already paid for the gift, it has been redeemed for you. However, you must go and get the gift from the store by showing your gift card and exchanging it for your present. You do not need to pay anything else because the purchase was already made, it has been redeemed. You only need to go receive the gift.

Read John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 tells us that God loved the world so much that He sent His Son. God showed His love by sending Jesus to reconcile us to Him, to redeem us. Without the gift of His Son, there is no way we could have a proper relationship with God. Therefore, God sent Jesus to pay the penalty of our sin, even though His Son never sinned.

Just as with that gift card you must go and receive the gift. Jesus has already paid the price for your sin. However, you must receive that forgiveness. John 3:16 says that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. We believe by trusting that He died for our sins so we can live with Him forever.

Response: Do you trust that Jesus did this for you? Take a moment to pray to God, thanking Him for the gift of His Son.

Advent Week 2: Joy – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Review: Last week, we talked about why Jesus came at Christmas. He came to redeem us. He died so we could live with Him forever. What does that “living with and for Jesus here on Earth” look like? (Allow for answers.)

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstance; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Ask: What does rejoice mean? (Allow for answers.)

Ask: Do you know a Christmas carol with the word joy in the lyrics? (Allow for answers, examples include:

- *Joy to the World* (Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king!)
- *Oh Come All Ye Faithful* (Oh come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, oh come, oh come ye to Bethlehem, Come and adore Him...Christ the Lord!)
- *Here we Come A Caroling* (Love and joy come to you, and to you glad Christmas too!)
- *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* (Hark! The herald angels sing, “glory to the newborn 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!”)

Many of our Christmas carols contain the word “rejoice” or “joy.” It was probably difficult for you to name songs without singing some of them! It probably made you smile too!”

To rejoice means to have joy. Joy means to delight. We are delighting in that Jesus came to redeem us. One of our family’s favorite Christmas carols is *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*.

God rest ye merry gentlemen let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Savior has come on Christmas day
To save us all from Satan’s power when we have gone astray
Oh tidings of comfort and joy!

Ask: As Christians, where do we find our source of joy?

We find our joy in Christ. It starts with being redeemed by Christ so that we have a right and just relationship with God. To have joy is an expression of our thanksgiving to God, for what He has done for us and who He is. It is worship. And because God never changes, He is faithful regardless of circumstances. Regardless of any present circumstance in our lives, we can continue to give thanks to God above, praising Him for His loving gift. We can bring worship to God in good times and in troubling times because He is faithful and worthy of praise!

Response: How can you show joy in your everyday life as an act of worship to God? Pray in thanksgiving to God, telling Him reasons why you are joyful.

Advent Week 3: Faith – Ephesians 2:8-9

Review: Why do we celebrate Christmas? (Allow for answers.) We celebrate Christmas because God showed His love by sending His Son Jesus to redeem us, so we can have eternal life.

As Christians, we have joy because of what Jesus has done for us. We can live our lives as an act of worship by delighting in who God is and what He has done. We can choose joy even when our circumstances are not happy because we know that God is love and God is just. He demonstrated this through sending Jesus to redeem us.

Ask: What kind of gifts are you giving to others this Christmas? (Allow for answers.)

What kind of gifts would you like to receive? (Allow for answers.)

It's easy to give gifts to people who live in our house. For some, they will have to come to our house, or we will have to go other's homes to deliver the gift. In some cases, we might have to mail a gift to someone who lives far away.

Read: Ephesians 2:8-9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast"

We cannot earn our salvation through works. Works are something that we do. At Christmas, we like to give gifts to our family and friends. We often work or do chores to earn money to buy gifts or the supplies to make them. We can not work or sell anything to get salvation. It is available only as a gift of grace. Grace is made available to us only through Jesus. Our faith is accepting that grace. It is our belief in the gospel.

Read: James 2:18 "But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds."

Ask: What do you think James meant when he said this? Does it conflict with Ephesians 2:8-9? (Allow for answers.)

Read: Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Usually, when we have questions about Scripture, we simply need to read a larger portion of the text to find the answers. We are God's handiwork, His masterpiece! He created us in Christ Jesus to do good works. Remember week 1 when we read in Romans that we are separated from God through death because of our sin? Our works are meaningless when we try to do them on our own. However, when we have new life through Jesus, we can live for Him even now on earth. God created us to do good works. When we have faith in Jesus, we show our faith by doing the work God prepared before the beginning of time for us to do!

Read: Turn a page in your Bible and read Ephesians 5:8-9 "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord."

Ask: How can we "find out what pleases the Lord?" (Reading the Bible, praying, serving alongside other Christians.)

Response: What are ways we can live out our faith as an act of worship to God? (Allow for answers). Pray and thank God for His Word and ask for opportunities where we can live out our faith by trusting and serving Him.

Advent Week 4: Hope – Hebrews 11:1

Read: Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Ask: Name someone from the Bible who had faith in God. (Allow for answers.)

Today, we use the word hope differently than it is used in the Bible. We might say something like “I hope it doesn’t rain today,” or “I hope I get a unicorn for Christmas.” Today, we use the word hope to mean that we don’t expect it to happen, but it would be so great if it did. In Scripture, the word hope actually means “anticipate.”

When we go to bed at night, we expect that the sun will rise again in the morning. We expect we will wake up and start a new day. This expectation is very reasonable. It has happened night after night, and day after day for months and years on end in our lives, and in the lives of those who lived before us.

Ask: What is something you have confidence in, that you are pretty certain will happen because it has happened before? What can you be assured of in life? (Allow for answers.)

We can have faith that if Jesus died and rose again to give us new life, that He will come again to take us to be with Him. We can have faith because what He has promised in the past has come true. Therefore, we can trust, we can anticipate, we can hope for what he will do in the future.

Read: John 14:1-4 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Ask: What promise has Jesus made to us in this passage? (He is going to prepare a place for us in Heaven, and will come back to take us there.)

Read: John 14:25-29 “All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.”

Ask: Who did God send to be our advocate, our helper, when Jesus went to Heaven? (The Holy Spirit)

Ask: What will the Holy Spirit do? (teach us and remind us about Jesus)

Read: Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Ask: What will the Holy Spirit give us? (Power)

Response: What is our responsibility now that Jesus has returned to Heaven? How do we show our hope of the return of Jesus? (To be His witnesses). Let’s pray now that we will use the power of the Holy Spirit to be the witness of what Jesus has done. Let’s pray for those who do not know Jesus.

Advent – Christmas Eve: Christ – Isaiah 9:6

Ask: Have you ever been in a dark room for a while when someone suddenly turns on the light? How does it feel when that light turns on? How do you think the shepherds felt that dark night when the angels appeared to them? (remember to give time for answers)

Read: Luke 2:8-12 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Ask: What are the three names the angel called Jesus? (Savior, Messiah (or Christ), Lord)

Many passages in the Old Testament refer to a Messiah who will come to save Israel. Messiah means “anointed one” and the word “Christ” comes from the Latin and Greek word that means messiah or anointed one. Since Genesis 3, humanity has been waiting for the promised one who would crush the head of the Serpent. Since Abraham, the Israelites had been waiting for the one through whom all nations of the world would be blessed. Jesus is the fulfillment of these prophecies. That the angel identified Jesus as the coming savior and Messiah who is also Lord connects him directly with God above.

Read: 1 Peter 1:10-11 “Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.”

The Israelites were hoping for, and expecting the Messiah because God, through His prophets, has been announcing Jesus since the beginning of time.

Read: Isaiah 9:6 “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Since we know that God prepared this before creation, is it any wonder why the Magi (wise men) were able to know that a great king was born? God used the gifts that they brought to Mary and Joseph, when Jesus was a toddler, to prepare them for their coming flight to Egypt (see Matthew 2). God knew these things would happen before they did.

Ask: If God knew about these events before they happened, does he know about your life as well? (yes, of course He does!) How does knowing God is aware of all circumstances give you comfort today? (Answers will be personal, but we can be assured that all things happen for God’s glory, and that we will never be separated from the love of God regardless of life’s circumstances: see Romans 8:18-39 for more detail.)

Response: Love, joy, faith, hope; these all rested in the little baby boy lying in a manger. Because of what the birth of Jesus meant to mankind; God sent angels to the shepherds to celebrate his birth. God sent the wisemen to bring gifts to provide for his son and family during the flight to Egypt. God planned the way of salvation from before creation, and God knows the details of your life as well. Celebrate the birth of God’s son here on earth and be encouraged that God is watching over you, too!