

Advent Guide

~ 2019 ~

Introduction

Advent is the traditional celebration of the first coming of Jesus in humility and the anxious waiting of His second coming in glory.

Advent comes from a latin word which means “coming” or “arrival. This year we are focusing on His second coming in glory.

This season is a time for remembering and rejoicing, watching and waiting.

It’s about stepping into the shoes of the Israelites, longing and crying out for the Messiah to come. It’s about reflecting on our sin and shortcomings and our need for a Savior. It’s about looking around at our broken world and hoping for the second coming of Jesus. And, once we get to Christmas Day, the celebration of Jesus’ birth reminds us of the certainty of His second coming.

We’ve provided this Advent guide for you to help you make the most of this important season.

There are four weeks in Advent and each week includes a reading plan, reflection questions and a prayer. Our greatest desire is for you to know Jesus by spending time with him in his word. The questions and prayers are meant to supplement the reading and can be used whenever you desire throughout the week.

Throughout this guide you will also find ideas for family discipleship.

The greatest responsibility God gives parents is to raise their kids to know Jesus. We want to do everything we can to help you win in this essential area of parenting. What a great season to utilize the greatest story ever told to stir our kids hearts towards their Savior.





Week 1 | December 1-7

During the Christmas season we usually focus on Jesus as a baby in swaddling clothes laid in a manger. Although this is good and right, let's not forget that he only lived as a human for a very short period of time. We see Jesus in Revelation as He always was, how He is today and how He will return - as the rightful King, on His throne with all power and glory. As we anticipate Jesus' coming this week we want to focus on having the right picture of who He is.

Reading Plan

Sunday:	Message: <i>Jesus</i> Revelation 1:1-18
Monday:	Revelation 4
Tuesday:	Revelation 5
Wednesday:	Isaiah 9:1-7
Thursday:	Luke 1:39-56
Friday:	John 1:1-18
Saturday:	Reflect and catch up

Reflection

Think of an event in your life where you waited with long anticipation. What were you waiting for? How did you feel in the waiting? What was it like when it finally happened?

What is some of the evidence of the brokenness of this world that you've seen this week? How does the return of Christ help reframe the way you see them?

How does reflecting on who Jesus is in Revelation change your picture of him?

Prayer

Reflect on this song, using it as a guide to talk with God and thank Him for what He's done in your life and who He is.

What Child Is This?

What Child is this
Who laid to rest
O Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come Peasant, King to own Him,
The King of Kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.

This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and Angels sing
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the Son of Mary.

Oh raise, raise a song on high,
His mother sings her lullaby.
Joy, oh joy for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary.

This, this is Christ the king.
Whom Shepherds guard and Angels sing.

Family Discipleship - Lighting the Candles

This Advent we are focusing on the second coming of Jesus. As we anxiously await his return it's important we help our kids learn and remember He's coming back and coming soon. Lighting candles is a tangible way to show every week we are week closer to Jesus' return and our annual celebration of Christ's coming - Christmas. Kids love fire, so this should be a big hit! Below you'll find an emphasis each week you can talk about as a family. Each week you'll add another candle as the anticipation builds.

- Week 1 - **Hope:** We can have hope today because Jesus is returning.
- Week 2 - **Peace:** We can have peace in our lives because Jesus has won the battle.
- Week 3 - **Joy:** We are confident Jesus is coming back so we can live with joy every day.
- Week 4 - **Love:** We will get to love Jesus forever when we are home with Him.



Battle

Week 2 | December 8-14

There's a battle. It comes with all the scary aspects of a war but we know one thing for certain - Jesus wins. From before the moment He was born Jesus won the eternal battle with our spiritual enemy. Even though the war was won, we live in a battle until Jesus returns to claim the final victory. As we read and reflect this week, let us be encouraged that as we wait for Jesus we know we have the victory.

Reading Plan

Sunday:	Message: <i>Battle</i> Revelation 12
Monday:	Isaiah 11
Tuesday:	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Wednesday:	Colossians 2:6-15
Thursday:	1 Peter 4:1-11
Friday:	Revelation 19:11-20:15
Saturday:	Reflect and catch up

Reflect

How does this different perspective on the nativity story change the way you think about the birth of Jesus?

Where in your life do you feel like you're in darkness or that you're losing the battle? How does the light of Jesus and His future victory give you encouragement?

Through Jesus, we get to be a part of the battle pushing back the darkness and bringing in the light. How can you bring light to your community this season? Is it through generosity, serving or a conversation with someone? Is it with a neighbor or family member in need, or maybe a local charity?

Prayer

Reflect on this song, using it as a guide to talk with God and thank Him for what He's done in your life and who He is.

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Your people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in You.

Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth You are;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Born your people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now your gracious Kingdom bring.

By your own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Your all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Your glorious throne.

Family Discipleship - Be a Light

Talk with your kids about how Jesus has won the war against evil. Until he returns, we get to join him in battle and push back against the darkness. We ARE the light. What can you do as a family to be a light in the community? Is it through generosity, serving or a conversation with someone? Is it with a neighbor or family member in need, or maybe a local charity? Let your kids generate ideas, contribute and maybe even pick what you do!



Coming

Week 3 | December 15-21

When the birth finally happened people came from miles away to see Jesus. Their hopes of a Messiah to restore the darkness in the world became a reality. The first coming of Jesus was a cause for joyous worship and celebration. His second coming will be a final release from all evil in the world and we will worship and celebrate forever.

Reading Plan

Sunday:	Message: <i>Coming</i> various texts
Monday:	Matthew 24:36-51
Tuesday:	Mark 13
Wednesday:	Luke 21:5-38
Thursday:	Revelation 21
Friday:	Revelation 22
Saturday:	Reflect and catch up

Reflection

What are you most thankful for about Jesus during this season? How does this make you want to worship and follow him more?

How does the coming of Christ impact how you view what you're doing in the here and now? How does the way you live reflect a belief that Jesus really is coming back?

Is there someone in your life who is struggling to believe that God will fulfill all that he has promised? How can you encourage them in light of the hope of Jesus' return?

Prayer

Reflect on this prayer, using it as a guide to talk with God and thank Him for what He's done, what He will do and who He is.

"The Second Coming" from The Valley of Vision

O Son of God and Son of Man,
You were incarnate, and you did suffer, rise, ascend
for my sake;
Your departure was not a token of separation

but a pledge of return;
Your Word, promises, sacraments, show your death
until you come again.
That day is no horror to me,
for your death has redeemed me,
your Spirit fills me,
your love animates me,
your Word governs me.
I have trusted you and you have not betrayed my trust;
waited for you, and not waited in vain.
You will come to raise my body from the dust,
and re-unite it to my soul,
by a wonderful work of infinite power and love,
greater than that which bounds the ocean's waters.
ebbs and flows the tides,
keeps the stars in their courses,
and gives life to all creatures.
This corruptible will put on incorruption,
this mortal, immortality,
this dishonored body, a glorious body,
this weak body, a body of power.
I triumph now in your promises as I will do
in their performance,
for the head cannot live if the members are dead;
Beyond the grave is resurrection, judgement,
acquittal, dominion.
Every event and circumstance of my life will be dealt with
the sins of my youth, my secret sins,
the sins of abusing you, of disobeying your Word,
the sin of neglecting leader's admonitions,
the sins of violating my conscience -
all will be judged;
And after judgement, peace and rest, life and service,
employment and enjoyment, for your elect.
O God, keep me in this faith,
and every looking for Christ's return.

Family Discipleship - Sing Together

Singing to Jesus doesn't just happen on Sundays. When we love Jesus, we can't help but give Him praise! After dinner one night, go to the Homecoming Series Spotify playlist (located with the message) using the BP App or Website. Choose a couple of songs as a family to sing together to Jesus right around your dinner table. Jesus is coming back and we can sing his praise every day!



Week 4 | December 22-25

The anticipation and angst was worth it. The culmination of our celebration has arrived. Christ has come and he will come again. Take a moment to truly celebrate His birth for yourself. Celebrate with family! Celebrate with friends! What can you do to help others celebrate Christ's birth with you?

Reading Plan

Sunday/Monday:	Home. Revelation 21
Tuesday:	Matthew 1-2
Wednesday:	Luke 1-2

Reflection

As reflect on the Christmas story, what part amazes you the most? How does turning back to this story annually influence your relationship with God?

What was Christmas typically like when you were growing up? What event signaled the end of Christmas for you? How did you feel as the season came to a close?

As we think about how one day Christ will bring us home with him, what are you looking forward to the most about being home with Him?

Prayer

Reflect on this song, using it as a guide to talk with God and thank Him for what He's done in your life and who He is.

He Shall Reign Forevermore

In the bleak midwinter
All creation groans
And for a world in darkness
Frozen like a stone
Light is breaking
In a stable for a throne

And He shall reign
Forevermore, forevermore

Unto us a child is born
The King of kings and Lord of lords
And He shall reign
Forevermore, forevermore

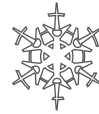


If I were a wise man
I would travel far
And if I were a shepherd
I would do my part
But, poor as I am
I will give to Him my heart



And He shall reign
Forevermore, forevermore

Unto us a child is born
The King of kings and Lord of lords
And He shall reign
Forevermore, forevermore



Here within a manger lies
The One who made the starry skies
This baby born for sacrifice
Christ the Messiah



Into our hopes, into our fears
The Savior of the world appears
The promise of eternal years
Christ the Messiah



And He shall reign
Forevermore, forevermore

Family Discipleship - The Birth of Jesus

Read the story of Jesus' birth together as a family. If your kids are younger, read the story "He's Here" in The Jesus Storybook Bible (p. 176). If you have older children reading the account from the Bible can be a sweet time to grow together as a family. (Luke 2:1-7) Help your kids find the story in their Bibles using the table of contents and the chapter and verse numbers.

After reading the account of Jesus' birth talk about where Jesus was born. Was He born in a hospital? Was it warm and clean? Was it quiet and calm? Jesus is God. He left heaven to be born a helpless baby. This was part of God's good plan to save sinners! Then draw a list of how you think the stable and manger looked, smelled and felt. Praise God for being generous and humbling Himself to be born as a baby.



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