



HE SHALL BE CALLED



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



## INTRODUCTION

Throughout scripture we see many different names for Jesus. He is referred to as a king, a lion, a lamb, a son, a teacher, a counselor, a prophet, and Savior just to name a few. The beautiful thing about Jesus is that He has characteristics and traits that represent all of these different names at any given time.

During this season of Advent we are going to focus on several of these names that we see written in Old Testament prophecy in Isaiah chapter 9. This is one of the most famous passages in scripture surrounding the prophecy of Jesus as our coming Savior King. It is our hope that this Advent guide will help you connect these different attributes of Christ to various aspects of your current life.

There are three unique devotional guides each week to work through. You can work individually, as a family, as a couple, or in a small group setting. The important thing is that spend time reading through scripture, praying and reflecting upon who Jesus is and find hope and assurance that He is a God that is alive and available to you at every moment of every day. Seek Him in this season and you will find Him.

\*This study will follow the **SOAP** method of study. Please refer to the explanation guide on the next page before you begin.





## SOAP METHOD

For this study we will be using the SOAP Bible study method. Review the chart below before you begin this study. It will be a helpful tool as you look at scripture and work through this book.

S

### SCRIPTURE

Read through the passage of scripture and devotional and write down any verse or thought that stands out to you.

O

### OBSERVATION

After reading, what did you observe? Who were the main characters or what central theme did you find?

A


### APPLICATION

What areas of your life can you apply this to? What can you take away? Was the Spirit Prompting you in any way?

P

### PRAYER

After reading, is there anything on your heart that you to lay before God? Do you need to repent? Do you have a need or something on your mind that needs prayer?



## PART 1



# IMMANUEL

HE SHALL BE CALLED







## IMMANUEL: STUDY 1



*The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. 19 So her husband, Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly. 20 But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*

*22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel, which is translated "God is with us."*

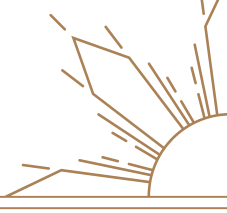

*24 When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord's angel had commanded him. He married her 25 but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. And he named him Jesus.*

*Matthew 1:18-25*

It is important to remember that we not only worship a God who created us and watches over us. We worship a God who is WITH us! The Israelites had been waiting for hundreds of years for the Messiah to fulfill the prophecies that God would one day return to them. The fact that Immanuel had come to earth was good news to God's people over two thousand years ago and should be a constant assurance for us in our present day.

This is why the name "Immanuel" is such an important pillar for us to remember when we think of the character and nature of God. He has sent us His Holy Spirit to walk with us and guide us, yet we still find ourselves so distracted and busy that our sinful nature and desires often are often in the driver's seat of our lives while the Holy Spirit takes a back seat. If we were honest with ourselves I bet we can all recognize that life is much better and far more balanced when we hand the keys over and let God drive. Our God is not distant! Just let that sink in for a few moments. Be reminded that He is right there with you.

Ok...now that you've been reminded that God is with you, this should have a great impact on how you walk in your daily life. If you have anxiety or worry over a certain circumstance, cast your cares on Him. He is right there! We have the presence of the Holy Spirit in us and we don't have a bunch of religious laws and practices to keep in order to have access to God like Israelites had. We simply need to just talk to Him. He is there. He cares for you. He is listening to you. He is for you and he wants to see His will worked out in your life. Take heart, Immanuel is here.





# IMMANUEL: STUDY 1

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER





## IMMANUEL: STUDY 2



*16 The eleven disciples traveled to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped, but some doubted. 18 Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*



Matthew 28:16-20

Could you imagine being a disciple in that moment? Think about it for a second...these guys had been witnessing the ministry of Jesus first hand every day for the last three years, and suddenly He's disappearing into heaven right in front of them! They've witnessed miracle after miracle and sat under the teaching of God on earth, and now He's gone! They had just seen him after resurrecting from the dead, and now He's leaving again! I think freaking out would be a natural response in this moment. Maybe they had forgotten the promises that Jesus had made to them throughout His ministry about coming back in the future but also that they are now filled with the power of the Holy Spirit?

Jesus' final words to his disciples were for them to REMEMBER that He is with them always, to the end of the age. That had to be a huge sigh of relief for them! The disciples had left everything behind to follow Jesus who made claims to be the Savior. He was then crucified and buried which started to cause some doubt amongst the group (see John 20:24-29). I am guilty of this sometimes too. I need to be able to see things for myself before I believe them.

If we were to be honest with ourselves, it can become easy look at the life and ministry of Jesus and only get caught up in what He did on earth over 2000 years ago and forget that He's right here with us now in Spirit and one day He is coming back in all of His glory to reconcile the world back to Him. When we have our own "freaking out" moments, we need to remember His promises to us. He has not left His children and He never will (Romans 8:31-38).

Today as you study and reflect, remind yourself that Jesus is there with you. No matter what the circumstance or situation, breathe deep and know that His Spirit is with You. Allow his goodness and promises to reassure you and give you peace.





## IMMANUEL: STUDY 2

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

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## IMMANUEL: STUDY 3





*12 So then, brothers and sisters, we are not obligated to the flesh to live according to the flesh, 13 because if you live according to the flesh, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all those led by God's Spirit are God's sons. 15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" 16 The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, 17 and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.*

*Romans 8:12-17*

Now that we have been reminded the God is with us through the gift of the Holy Spirit, it is essential that we live our lives in such a way that we allow Him to speak to us. God did not come to earth, die on a cross, rise again, and ascend into heaven just so that we can go on sinning. He did these things so that we can have a clean slate and be counted righteous in His sight. We have to be in tune with those Holy Spirit prompts in our lives that lead us back to the Father instead of back into sin.

I love the imagery in this verse of us being adopted by God. When we know Christ and have been saved, we should have our eyes and our hearts set on things that are eternal because we are inheriting the Kingdom and will be raised to a new life in full glory with Him. We are His children and our goal on earth should be to live a life that pleases our Father.

I know this isn't the case for everyone, but I have been blessed to not only have a great Heavenly Father, but also a great father here on earth. I can remember countless times in my life where I have done things that I know would disappoint him and cause pain, but I can also remember times in my life where I made decisions to do the right thing because I did not want to disappoint him or cause him pain. My dad would do everything in his power to provide for our family while showing us love and grace. As a result, I want to live a life that makes him proud and represents our family well. I definitely did not always have that mindset in my younger days, but now that I am also a dad, I am starting to realize these things on a much more profound level and I am thankful for that earthly example in my life.







## IMMANUEL: STUDY 3

I wish that I always had that same attitude when it comes to living a life that is pleasing to my Heavenly Father. Just like Paul talks about in verse thirteen of this passage, our sinful nature will only lead to more pain and death, but if we allow the Spirit to lead us, we can put that sinful nature to death and live a life that is in alignment with His will for us.

What would it look like if that mindset and heart posture was applied to how we live every day for Jesus? What if we lived in such a way that our first thought was how can I bring glory and honor to Him through my actions? What do you need to ask the Holy Spirit to "put to death in your life?" Is there a sin that is keeping you in bondage? Is there a toxic relationship that is speaking louder than The Holy Spirit in your life? Is there a motivation to please others around you before you take into consideration what God might have for you? Do people around you see evidence that God is leading your life, or are you blending in so much with the rest of our culture that there isn't noticeable fruit? Maybe it's none of these specific things, but odds are there is something that comes to mind that you need to allow the Father to speak into.

In your time of prayer and reflection, write these things down. Give these areas of your life to Him. Remember that Jesus is right there with you. Ask Him to reveal these things in your life so that you can lay them at His feet and walk in a new life that is pleasing to Him.





# IMMANUEL: STUDY 3

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER



## PART 2



# WONDERFUL COUNSELOR







## WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 1

*2 There was a certain man from Zorah, from the family of Dan, whose name was Manoah; his wife was unable to conceive and had no children. 3 The angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, "Although you are unable to conceive and have no children, you will conceive and give birth to a son. [...]" 6 Then the woman went and told her husband, "A man of God came to me. He looked like the awe-inspiring angel of God. I didn't ask him where he came from, and he didn't tell me his name. [...]" 8 Manoah prayed to the Lord and said, "Please, Lord, let the man of God you sent come again to us and teach us what we should do for the boy who will be born." 9 God listened to Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman. She was sitting in the field, and her husband, Manoah, was not with her. 10 The woman ran quickly to her husband and told him, "The man who came to me the other day has just come back!"*

*11 So Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he asked, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?"*

*"I am," he said. [...]"*



*17 Then Manoah said to him, "What is your name, so that we may honor you when your words come true?" 18 "Why do you ask my name," the angel of the Lord asked him, "since it is beyond understanding?"*

*Judges 13:2-18*

### "Pretty Good God"

The word, Wonderful, has really lost its luster over the last century. Considering the original definition is revealed in the literal word, what one should surmise upon hearing the adjective, Wonderful, is that whatever it describes causes the observer to be full of wonder. But today, we use the word to describe many things with varying degrees of wonder. It is akin to the phrase "pretty good". We don't question the intelligence of someone who says, "This is a wonderful hot dog." because we don't assume they are truly baffled or dumbfounded by the fundamental essence of a tube of processed meat.

Verse 18, in the English Standard Translation reads, "And the angel of the Lord said to him, 'Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?'" It uses the original word of Wonderful, where a more modern translation, recognizing the increasing lack of weight to the English word (wonderful), expanded the single word to two - "beyond understanding." Right there, we begin to observe the fact that the very name of God is outside our intellectual grasp. One thing to point out, in case you are unaware, is that the term "Angel of the Lord" is used in scripture to identify a visible manifestation of God, or a "Theophany". Look it up. Although this passage describes events leading up to the birth of Samson, Jesus is present, and He delivers this message while also making His holiness - that is, His "beyond-ness" - known.





## WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 1



The prophecy in Isaiah 9 calls Jesus “Wonderful Counselor” not because He is pretty good, but because He inspires awe. His nature is wildly above what we can fathom. The many attributes of Christ, which we read about in scripture, should fill us with wonder, as we contemplate the infinite disparity between that which is natural to God and that which is natural to us.

The very arrival of Christ is beyond our understanding, as he was born of a virgin. How can that be? That does not fit the constructs of our universal sciences, but, to our great benefit, God is not confined by our limited genius.

Take some time to consider some of the wildly incomprehensible facets of our God. Search for examples of God's nature in scripture. Here are a few:

God existed before time began  
He spoke the universe into existence  
God became human, performing many miracles  
Jesus, after dying on the cross, rose from the dead

As we approach Christmas, we should do so with a sense of awe and wonderment. Hopefully, this devotional conjures a new meaning to the lyrical phrase, “It’s the most wonderful time of the year!”





# WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 1

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## WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 2



*21 They went into Capernaum, and right away he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and began to teach. 22 They were astonished at his teaching because he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not like the scribes.*

*Mark 1:21-22*

*29 This also comes from the Lord of Armies. He gives wondrous advice; he gives great wisdom.*

*Isaiah 28:29*

*2 I want their hearts to be encouraged and joined together in love, so that they may have all the riches of complete understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery — Christ. 3 In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*



*Colossians 2:2-3*

### "Pretty Good Advice"

As the saying goes, "wisdom comes with age." The beauty about wisdom is that it can be passed from one person to another without the need for firsthand experiences. It is a blessing to have a mentor - someone to offer wisdom and perspective to set us up for success. But we have all experienced occasions when we have followed bad advice. Whatever the intentions of our source, the results could be regrettable. It turns out that little bush was poison ivy! The fact is no one has infallible wisdom. A person can be very confident and very wrong at the same time.

But Jesus has seen eternity. All things were created in Him (John 1), thus all things are known by Him. So often, our wisdom and understanding does not match up with that of Jesus. The gospels show the discrepancies between the wisdom of man and that of God. In fact many of Jesus' sermons and parables taught lessons and truths which contradict the philosophies and conventional thoughts of us humans.

The difference between us and Jesus is in our biases. We lack the awareness - be it of self, circumstances, history, the intentions of others, and so on - to have perfect perspective in our assertions and decisions. Our biases have the power to undermine us, while the philosophies of Christ are rooted in perfect truth.





## WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 2

For our Lord, there is no lack of awareness. He knows who He is. He knows our circumstances more fully than we ever could. Jesus knows the minutiae of history from every angle because He is omnipresent and existed before time. Jesus also fully knows the heart of every man, woman and child, so that He can speak truth to our motives while we actively fool ourselves. He cannot be fooled, and He cannot be mistaken.

That is where the wonder comes from when considering the counsel of Jesus. His wisdom is perfect and infinite. It is beyond our understanding. Not only can we find ourselves awestruck and even perplexed when we consider the wisdom of Jesus, but we can plant our footing firmly on His teachings with great confidence. This is good news for us as we struggle with life's many challenges. We have a Wonderful Counselor who loves us deeply.



Take some time to reflect on the various teachings of Jesus which contradict conventional human wisdom. A few examples are:

Jesus challenged the status quo of religion

He was a friend of sinners

Jesus taught us to love our enemies

The sermon on the mount is full of unconventional wisdom (Matthew 5)





# WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 2

SCRIPTURE

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## WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 3

*5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding;  
6 in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight.  
Proverbs 3:5-6*

*It is from him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom from God for us—  
our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption  
1 Corinthians 1:30*

*Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God—who gives to all generously  
and ungrudgingly—and it will be given to him.  
James 1:5*



*Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died, but even more,  
has been raised; he also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us.  
Romans 8:34*

### "Pretty Good Helper"

When Eve ate the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge, she did so on the counsel of Satan the great deceiver. So often we can be manipulated or deceived when seeking a deeper understanding of the world around us. Millions of dollars are spent every day to perpetuate untruths. It can range from political propaganda, to product reviews, to dating services, even to a commercial telling us we “deserve” a really good hamburger. We have all experienced deception. Those experiences can lead to a cynical posture towards new information.

However; we don't have to be skeptical when it comes to the wisdom we receive from The Lord. If you look through the above passages, you can see that the counsel of God comes from a place of love and generosity. Because God loves us, He is generous to share His wisdom with us. All we need to do is ask for it! In our pursuit of knowing Jesus, He will make our paths straight. The more we know about Him, the more we can confidently follow His ways.

Beyond imparting wisdom to us, Jesus is a counselor who intercedes for us. Professional counselors and therapists are very helpful, and they are a very good resource for us when we may need to talk through a crisis or concern with another person who can give an impartial third-party perspective. Whereas, the counsel of Jesus comes with an all-knowing perspective which is not impartial. Our Wonderful Counselor cares deeply for our well being, and He has the ability to affect outcomes for us. Jesus, seated at the right hand of God the Father, intercedes on our behalf.







## WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 3

Furthermore, Jesus interceded for us on the cross. He fulfilled God's plan to redeem humanity after Adam and Eve's sin cursed mankind to death. Charles Spurgeon points out in his commentary that it was by a counselor (Satan in the serpent) that this world was ruined. How fitting to have it restored by a better, and wonderful Counselor!

*Take some time to remember and marvel at some biblical examples when the Wonderful Counselor interceded for someone in scripture. Here are a few:*

*His many miracles of healing  
He defended the adulteress (John 8)  
Jesus calmed the raging storm  
He drove out demons*

*Give thanks for the gift of your Wonderful Counselor!*







# WONDERFUL COUNSELOR: STUDY 3

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PART 3



MIGHTY GOD





## MIGHTY GOD: STUDY 1



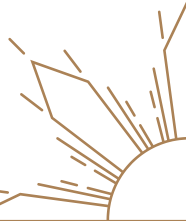

*7 He stretches the northern skies over empty space;  
he hangs the earth on nothing.  
8 He wraps up the water in his clouds,  
yet the clouds do not burst beneath its weight.  
9 He obscures the view of his throne,  
spreading his cloud over it.  
10 He laid out the horizon on the surface of the waters  
at the boundary between light and darkness.  
11 The pillars that hold up the sky tremble,  
astounded at his rebuke.  
12 By his power he stirred the sea,  
and by his understanding he crushed Rahab.  
13 By his breath the heavens gained their beauty;  
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.  
14 These are but the fringes of his ways;  
how faint is the word we hear of him!  
Who can understand his mighty thunder*

*Job 26:7-14*

The Hebrew word we translate mighty God from is El Gibbor. El from Elohim, meaning “one true God” and Gibbor, which means “strength, power and hero.” This verse from Job truly shows our Heavenly Father’s mighty power. It shows us that His strength is unfathomable. His power is so far from what we as humans could even dream of being close to.

The Christmas season is often called the “most wonderful time of the year” but, as we all know, it is more often found to be the most difficult time of year. The holidays can open old wounds for many families. Add to that the stresses of gift buying, holiday to-do lists, financial trouble and end-of-year deadlines, and the joy of Christmas can suddenly disappear.

During this time, don’t forget who is for us. The one who stretched the northern skies over empty space and hung the earth on nothing. The only true hero. God is the only one that can give us real peace during this stressful season. Let’s make sure we spend time thanking our Mighty God for his blessings and provisions. Even when we are in the middle of holiday stress, sadness or disappointment, let’s make sure we understand that our God never fails us.





# MIGHTY GOD: STUDY 1

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## MIGHTY GOD: STUDY 2



*35 On that day, when evening had come, he told them, "Let's cross over to the other side of the sea." 36 So they left the crowd and took him along since he was in the boat. And other boats were with him. 37 A great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38 He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. So they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher! Don't you care that we're going to die?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Silence! Be still!" The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 Then he said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

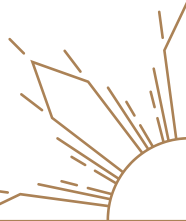

Mark 4:35-40

This account in Mark 4 shows God's mighty power through His son Jesus Christ. Jesus is able to stop an intense windstorm with three words, "Silence! Be Still!" What is even more powerful is his question to the fearful disciples, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

The disciples knew who Jesus was by this time. They had seen the amazing things that he had done first hand. Yet they still had fear in their hearts. They were in a boat with the King of Kings and thought they may not make it through the storm.

Jesus was asleep while the first waves crashed over the boat. He knew His Father would not fail him. He had so much confidence that even in this intense windstorm with water pouring into the boat, he was sleeping soundly. In Psalm 3 David writes about his lack of hope in the face of enemies plotting against him, but in verses 5 and 6 he says; *"5 I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. 6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around."* (ESV) David had faith that his Heavenly Father would sustain him and he was able to rest.

We all have windstorms in our lives. Some are bigger than others, but they are almost always there. Fear can take over so quickly in our minds when it comes to changes and strife that will surely come. Do you have faith in our God during these times? Do you trust that our Father can guide you through the storm? Do you believe that He can make it be still?





## MIGHTY GOD: STUDY 2

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## MIGHTY GOD: STUDY 3



*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."*

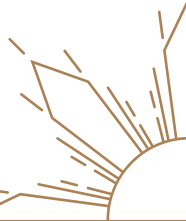

*16 They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the manger. 17 After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her 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.*

*Luke 2:8-20*

The Bible doesn't say much about the shepherds who were told the good news of Jesus Christ before any others. They were looked down upon as a lower class at that time. Yet these shepherds were the first witnesses to the birth of Jesus. Why would God choose shepherds to be the first to see the savior of the world?

Imagine what these humble shepherds might have felt during this angelic encounter. The might of God's power shown before them — close enough to touch. I wonder what they might have been thinking. The fear they feel, at first. The sound of the multitude saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to the people he favors!"

The shepherds are the perfect picture of who Jesus would become for all of us. Jesus is our shepherd. He protects us day and night. There couldn't have been a better group of men to see the newborn king on that glorious night.





## MIGHTY GOD: STUDY 3

SCRIPTURE

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## PART 4



# EVERLASTING FATHER





## EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 1

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, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

*Isaiah 9:6*



One of beautiful realities of this passage is that not only does it declare the promise of the coming Messiah, it also gives us insight into who that Messiah will be. These names are not meant to be seen as literal titles but as aspect of His character and nature.

As we know, this prophecy points to Jesus Christ as the coming the messiah. As God is speaking thru Isaiah, He makes it clear that Jesus will be and is the Everlasting Father. While that characteristic communicates power and the transcendence of time, it can also be a little confusing.

How is Jesus both the Son of God and the Everlasting Father? Well, what we have to understand is that God is revealing more to us than just the nature of Jesus. God is also revealing His own nature. At His core, God is triune. Meaning, He is three in one. This is known as the Doctrine of The Trinity. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Another way to understand this is seeing God as one being with three equal, yet separate personalities. While fully grasping the depth of the triune nature of God is impossible on this side of Eternity, there is a powerful truth that this prophecy is communicating.

In the original Hebrew is the idea that the coming Messiah (Jesus), is the source of all time. Simply put, Jesus is the Creator of eternity. So when we see the title "Everlasting Father," Isaiah is telling us that Jesus is the author of life and has dominion over eternity. His dominion, or fatherhood, will never come to an end. Why is that significant? It's significant because God is revealing that this coming Messiah is able to have authority over eternity because He Himself is eternal. Because Jesus is eternal, He is able to give the gift of eternity to others.

This is exactly what Jesus proved in His death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus died but couldn't stay dead. Why? Because He is eternal. In conquering death He not only showed His true power but also used His power to secure the eternity of those He would call.







## EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 1

Take a look at John 11:25-26, "Jesus said to her, 25 *"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. 26 Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

Jesus is the Eternal Father, the Everlasting Father, who gives eternal life to those who believe. Take a few moments and sit in that reality. Think about the intentional love God has shown you. Thousands of years before you were ever thought of, God had you in mind. He had a plan to secure your eternity so that He could live in relationship with you forever. What an incredible display of love. Take some time and let that truth wash over you. Allow your heart and mind to be in awe of the power, depth, complexity, and goodness of God.





# EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 1

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

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PRAYER





## EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 2

Our goal for today's devotional is to gain a better understanding of the eternal nature of Jesus. To help us, we are going to take an in-depth look at chapter one of the Apostle John's Gospel. Before we do, let's set the stage.

As we saw previously, Isaiah tells us that this coming Messiah is going to be everlasting. Isaiah shared this prophesied roughly 700 years before Jesus was born. Now you would expect that if Jesus were in fact the Messiah, there would be evidence and record of such. Thankfully we have just that. In the beginning of the New Testament we have four individual accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus. These four accounts, or Gospels, gives us a complete picture of Jesus. They do so in an harmonious way and lack contradiction. Each Gospel provides a deeper look and allows us to take the eye-witnessed or investigated accounts of Jesus and match them up with the prophecies of the Old Testament.

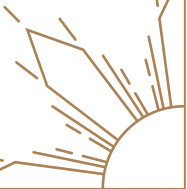

So when Isaiah says that the Messiah will be the EverLasting Father, does that title match up with Jesus? To answer that, let's jump into John chapter one.

*1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it."*

*John 1:1-5*

This is how the Apostle John begins his account of Jesus life and ministry. John, being one of the closest disciples and friends of Jesus, tells us that in the beginning was the WORD. So what does that mean? WORD, in the greek means LOGOS. It can be translated to mean multiple ideas such as "word," "speech," "principle," or "thought." The idea of the logos had deep and rich roots in both Jewish and Greek thinking. In the Old Testament, Jewish rabbis often referred to God in terms of His Word. Because they would never say the name of God, they would speak of God as "the word of God."

For Greek philosophers, they saw the logos as a type of power or force that puts sense into the world, making things orderly. They believed that logos was the "Ultimate Reason" that controlled everything. So taking all of this into consideration, John opens his Gospel in a way that he addressed both Jews and Greeks. He wanted to make it clear that Logos is God. And God has always existed. He makes it clear that "the Word," (GOD) is not just the beginning, but is the beginning of beginning. That before anything existed, God was.







## EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 2

So how does this relate to Jesus? As John continues in verse two we see John make a distinction between God the father and Jesus. It's an important distinction that continues to point us toward the Trinity. John says all things were created through him, yet in Genesis 1:1 Moses tells us that God ( the Father) created all things. So what does this mean? It means that Jesus and the Father are ONE! Therefore Jesus was with God from the beginning, is the author of all things, and is one with the Father. This tells us that Jesus is everlasting. It tells us that Jesus is the Messiah.

John's Gospel illuminates the truth about the everlasting and eternal nature of Jesus. This truth points to Christ's divinity and power. Specifically, it shows the power Jesus has over life. That in Him and thru him the principle of Life has been given.

This should give us confidence in the surrendering of our life to Jesus. Take a few moments and consider the depth of Jesus' power, His divinity, and eternal nature. As you reflect, think about the ways in which you have not trusted in Jesus' power. What do you need lay down? Give some real thought to this question and take a step toward a deeper level of surrender.





# EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 2

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## EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 3

Well, we have come to end of another week in this Advent devotional. Hopefully you have found this to be a profitable study and you've experienced growth in your faith.

Before we begin our final study, you'll need to get to a quiet space so that you can allow your mind to fully picture the imagery we are about to discuss. Once you're ready, open your Bible to Revelation chapter 22. This is the final chapter in the last book of the Bible. As John closes out the revelation he received, he describes this incredible scene where he has this powerful encounter and conversation with Jesus.

Take a few moments and read verses 1 to 5.



*1 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the city's main street. The tree of life was on each side of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for healing the nations, 3 and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 Night will be no more; people will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever.*

*Revelation 22:1-5*

Can you picture the setting in your mind? Can you see the crystal clear river? Can you see the magnificent throne of God in the middle of city's main street? Picture the beautiful tree of life and the radiant light that is illuminating everything.

This is but a snapshot of the place we will eventually call home for all of eternity. It's a perfect place where we will live with God and all the saints. This little peek behind the curtain is a gift but it's merely the setting for something even greater. It's in this place that an Angel and Jesus share with John, and us as the reader, the final truths we are to know and take to heart.

Of all the truths given, let us focus on verses 12 & 13. Jesus says, *12 "Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to repay each person according to his work. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*









## EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 3

Jesus makes it clear that He will in fact return and upon His return he will bring about judgment and justice. For the believer, Jesus will reward us according to our work. Now this doesn't mean that our works are more important than our faith, it simply means that our work is an evidence of our faith. Having an active and living faith is critical for the believer and according to this, it has an impact on our eternity.

Not only does Jesus tell us that He is going to reward us upon His return, He tells us how to work and why we should work. Notice in verse 12 Jesus says He coming soon. The implication here is that we are to work in such a way that there is urgency. We are to be prepared because we don't know when He will return. Part of that preparation is committing ourselves to laboring each and everyday as though it could be the last.

As an added incentive, Jesus goes on in verse 13 and says that He is the Alpha and the Omega. This declaration is a reminder of why we should work. Jesus is the beginning and the end. It's another irrefutable proof that Jesus is God. He is quoting Himself from Isaiah 41:4 where He says, "*I, the LORD, am the first; and with the last I am He.*" Jesus being the Alpha and Omega points to His everlasting nature. This truth should give us such a great confidence that we cannot help but labor for Him. It should also urge us to be ready and in expectation of His return.

Here are a few practical questions for you to consider. They are designed to help you find confidence in the everlasting nature of Jesus and ensure that your faith is truly alive.

1. Are you ready for Jesus' return?
  2. Are you ready to receive the reward for your work?
  3. Are you resting in the truth that Jesus is the beginning and the end?
  4. What do you need to change so that you can live everyday in service to your King?
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# EVERLASTING FATHER: STUDY 3

SCRIPTURE

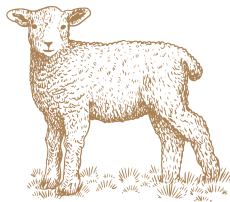
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## PART 5



# PRINCE OF PEACE





## PRINCE OF PEACE: STUDY 1



44 "It was about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three, 45 because the sun's light failed. The curtain of the sanctuary was split down the middle. 46 And Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." Saying this he breathed his last. 47 When the centurion saw what happened, he began to glorify God, saying, "This man really was righteous!" 48 All the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, went home, striking their chests. 49 But all who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things."

Luke 23:44-49

How much are you worth? This may seem like a loaded question, especially with our materialistic society, but does this society not put a monetary value on life every day? For the sake of our exercise today let's look at our worth in the currency of pain. From the moment God created our world, our universe, everything we know and have ever known to exist, He knew that when the time was right He would need to send His son to feel pain for all humanity. Not just the average pain of the comfortable world we know, but the most brutal, humiliating pain that a Godless society, Rome, could devise. Fully God and fully human, Jesus suffered incredible pain and was put on display for those who hated Him and those who loved Him. But God had a plan!

Pain can destroy. Pain can ruin. But, not all pain is bad. Like the gratifying pain of childbirth, some pain leads to good, to peace. The pain Jesus endured was not random, was not senseless, but part of the process to heal our division with the Heavenly Father. Without the blood of the lamb sin would not be defeated. Without fulfillment of the prophecies sin would continue to separate us from God. Jesus had to die to rise again and defeat death. With an open path to God, through the Holy Spirit, we now have the privilege of knowing peace. True peace can only come from a personal relationship with our creator, our savior. His name is Jesus, prince of peace. Opening your Bible, spending time in prayer and serving for His kingdom are ways to cultivate this relationship on a daily basis. Acknowledging that God is in control is critical to knowing peace. The Prince of Peace wants the affection of our hearts.

We have peace and salvation available because God thinks we are worth the pain. Jesus was willing to take the pain so that we can know peace. Once again, how much are you worth? Jesus proved your worth by giving up His seat in heaven to suffer on your behalf, opening the door to know true peace.





# PRINCE OF PEACE: STUDY 1

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## PRINCE OF PEACE: STUDY 2

*13 Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance. 15 But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; 16 for it is written, "Be holy, because I am holy." 17 If you appeal to the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, you are to conduct yourselves in reverence during your time living as strangers. 18 For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things like silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb.*

1Peter 1:13-19

Most people struggle with life at one time or another, in one way or another. These trying times are often a series of painful experiences. Pain is not limited to non-believers of Jesus, but is something that everyone will experience at some point in their life. Many times the pain we experience is our own making. As the scripture details above, we are called to be obedient children of our Heavenly Father. When we stray, when we ignore, when we just want to do things our way, we are often left picking up the broken pieces of our life, soaking in the regret of sin and disobedience. For non-believers, this may just be another day of their life with choices made that never consider the eternal consequences. For believers, choosing the disobedient path carries a burden. Ignoring God's plan, God's way, is sin and sin will always create a divide between us and Him. When someone is living separated from God due to sin it is impossible to have true peace.

Through the loving grace of Jesus Christ, God has given us a path to peace. The Prince of Peace offers grace that is difficult to comprehend, but is there for everyone. There is no amount of money we can pay to have the peace that is offered by Jesus. The peace Jesus offers is a gift to those who love God and place their trust in Him. Jesus can transform people by wiping away their past disobedience and the guilt that often comes with it. The transformation that Jesus makes with erasing someone's sin is a singular life-changing moment and a daily offering of repentance. As we look to God for hope and clarity in all aspects of our life, remember the scripture 1Peter 1:14 that calls us to be obedient children of God. He loves us and He has made a way for true peace in our lives through Jesus.





# PRINCE OF PEACE: STUDY 2

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## PRINCE OF PEACE: STUDY 3

*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.*

*Isaiah 9:6*

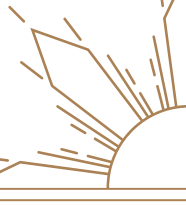

*25 "I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you." 26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you." 27 "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful."*

*John 14:25-27*

There is much to be fearful of in this world. So much so, that being overwhelmed is a daily occurrence for many people. Evil seems to never miss a chance at placing doubt and fear in the hearts of anyone and everyone. Certainly the last two years have done nothing to help this situation. Anxiety, stress, fear, pain, loss, division and general darkness have become an everyday part of life. Rates of depression and anxiety have been at all-time highs. While people in some parts of the world fear for physical safety, others have fear and anxiety of the unknown and everything that can go wrong. We can expect with absolute certainty that at some point things will go wrong.

Where do we turn with these fears and troubles? There are countless unhealthy ways to cope without God, but let's look for something better. The scriptures with this lesson illustrate, in two separate times, by two separate people, that God has given us someone to turn to with the burdens on our hearts. In the first scripture, Isaiah is writing of the Messiah, 700 years before Jesus will be born, and already it is known the peace He will bring. In the second section of scripture, Jesus himself speaks of the Holy Spirit that will be given to the world after he returns to heaven. Consider this gift from God, that he would place part of Himself within His believers, so that we are NEVER without Him. How amazing is that! So, let me recap for you. God sends His son to Earth. He is tortured and dies for us. Jesus is raised from the dead, defeating sin and allowing us to be children of God. Then He leaves part of Himself, within us so we are never alone. We have to be able to put these things into perspective to not overlook these incredible, beautiful gifts. It is only by God's grace that we can know true peace. He is faithful and He is in control.

When we are feeling overwhelmed and fearful, waiting for the next bad thing to happen, I pray that we can take a deep breath and just remember how much God loves us, what he has done for us and that He is with us. The peace that Jesus offers is always with us. We just need to remember to turn to Him.







# PRINCE OF PEACE: STUDY 3

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# NOTES



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2021 Redemption Community Church



HE SHALL BE CALLED

