The Daily Advent



DEVOTIONAL

PAGES

1

WEEK 1
THE PROMISE OF THE COMING MESSIAH

15

WEEK 2
PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD

30

WEEK 3
THE ARRIVAL OF THE SAVIOR

45

WEEK 4
THE GLORY & REIGN OF CHRIST

ELEMENTS FOR EACH DAY

SCRIPTURE READING

CHRISTMAS HYMN

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

WEEK ONE

THE PROMISE OF THE COMING MESSIAH

O Lord our God, we thank You for the promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ, for His birth among us, His life of perfect obedience, His death for our sins, and His resurrection in glory. As we begin this season of Advent, keep our hearts fixed upon Him. May the light of Christ guide our steps, the grace of Christ shape our lives, and the hope of Christ sustain us until the day when we see Him face to face. To You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, honor, and praise, now and forever. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:14–15
So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you
have done this,
“Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!
You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.
And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.

Devotional Reflection: Irenaeus of Lyons
The story of Advent begins not in Bethlehem, but in Eden. When sin entered the world, God did not abandon humanity. Even as He pronounced judgment upon the serpent, He promised that one would come who would defeat the power of evil.

Irenaeus emphasized that Christ came to restore what humanity had lost through sin. Jesus is the promised Redeemer who enters our broken world to make all things new. Advent reminds us that God's saving work began long before the manger.

Practical Application

Consider the places in your life where you need God's redemption. Rather than allowing discouragement to have the final word, remember that God has been working out His promise of salvation from the beginning.
Place your hope in Christ.

Prayer

Almighty and everlasting Creator, we praise You because Your mercy endures from generation to generation. Even when humanity turned away from You, You promised a Redeemer who would overcome sin and death. We thank You for Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of that first promise. Deliver us from the power of sin, strengthen our hope, and teach us to walk faithfully in the light of Your salvation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Genesis 12:1–3
The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your
country, your people and your father’s household to
the land I will show you.
“I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.

Devotional Reflection: Augustine of Hippo

God's promise to Abraham reaches far beyond one family or nation. Through Abraham's descendants, all the families of the earth would be blessed. Augustine understood the unfolding story of Scripture as the story of God's gracious purpose to redeem a people for Himself. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this promise. In Him, God's blessing reaches every nation, tribe, and people. Advent reminds us that the birth of Jesus was never meant to be good news for only a few.

Practical Application

Look for an opportunity to be a blessing to someone outside your usual circle. Show the generosity and compassion that reflect the heart of Christ.

Prayer

O King of Kings, we praise You for Your faithfulness and for the promises You made to Abraham. We thank You that through Jesus Christ, Your blessing has been extended to all peoples. Make us instruments of Your grace. Give us generous hearts, welcoming spirits, and a desire to share the good news of Christ with those around us. May our lives reflect the blessing we have received. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 7:14
Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
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Until the Son of God appear.

Devotional Reflection: Gregory of Nazianzus

The name Immanuel means “God with us.” This is one of the most remarkable promises of Scripture: God would not remain distant from His creation. He would come near. Gregory of Nazianzus reflected deeply on the mystery of the incarnation, the eternal Son of God taking on human nature. In Jesus, God entered our human experience. He knows our weakness, understands our sorrow, and comes to dwell among us. Advent celebrates the wonder that God has drawn near.

Practical Application

Where do you feel alone, anxious, or uncertain? Take time today to remember that Christ is Immanuel. Invite His presence into the ordinary details of your life.

Prayer

Lord God, Maker of heaven and earth, we praise You because You are not distant from Your creation. You have drawn near to us in Jesus Christ, our Immanuel. Thank You for entering our world and sharing our humanity. Comfort those who are lonely, strengthen those who are weary, and remind us that we are never beyond Your presence. Let the wonder of Your nearness fill our hearts with peace. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:6–7

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.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.

Devotional Reflection: Athanasius of Alexandria
Isaiah's prophecy announces a child whose names reveal His divine authority: Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. The child born into the world would also be the King whose kingdom has no end. Athanasius defended the truth that Jesus Christ is truly God, not merely a messenger or teacher. The One who came as a child is the eternal Son, worthy of our worship and trust. Advent invites us to behold both the humility and majesty of Christ.

Practical Application
Consider what it means to allow Jesus to rule your life. Identify one area where you need to surrender control and trust the wisdom of your King.

Prayer
Almighty God, we praise You for the gift of Your Son, the Wonderful Counsellor and Prince of Peace. We thank You that the child born in Bethlehem is the everlasting King whose kingdom shall never end. Rule in our hearts, guide our decisions, and establish Your peace within us. May we honor Christ not only with our words but with our obedience.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Micah 5:2–4

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”
Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.
He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.

Devotional Reflection: Thomas Aquinas

The prophet Micah points to Bethlehem, a small and seemingly insignificant town, as the birthplace of Israel's coming ruler. God's purposes often emerge from places the world overlooks. Thomas Aquinas emphasized that Christ's coming reveals the wisdom and goodness of God. Jesus is the Shepherd-King who stands in the strength of the Lord and brings peace to His people. Advent reminds us that God's greatness is often revealed through humility.

Practical Application

Do not underestimate the value of small acts of faithfulness. Serve someone today without seeking recognition, trusting that God often works through humble obedience.

Prayer

God of mercy and majesty, we praise You because Your wisdom surpasses all human understanding. From little Bethlehem You brought forth the Shepherd of Your people, Jesus Christ our Lord. Guide us by His truth, protect us by His power, and teach us to follow His example of humility. May His peace rule in our hearts and homes.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 11:1–2
A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
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Devotional Reflection: John Calvin

Isaiah describes a shoot growing from the stump of Jesse[King David's Father]. Though the royal line appeared cut down, God promised new life. The Spirit of the Lord would rest upon this coming King, giving Him wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and reverence for God. Calvin emphasized that Christ is the promised source of true righteousness and wisdom. Advent reminds us that God can bring new life where hope appears lost.

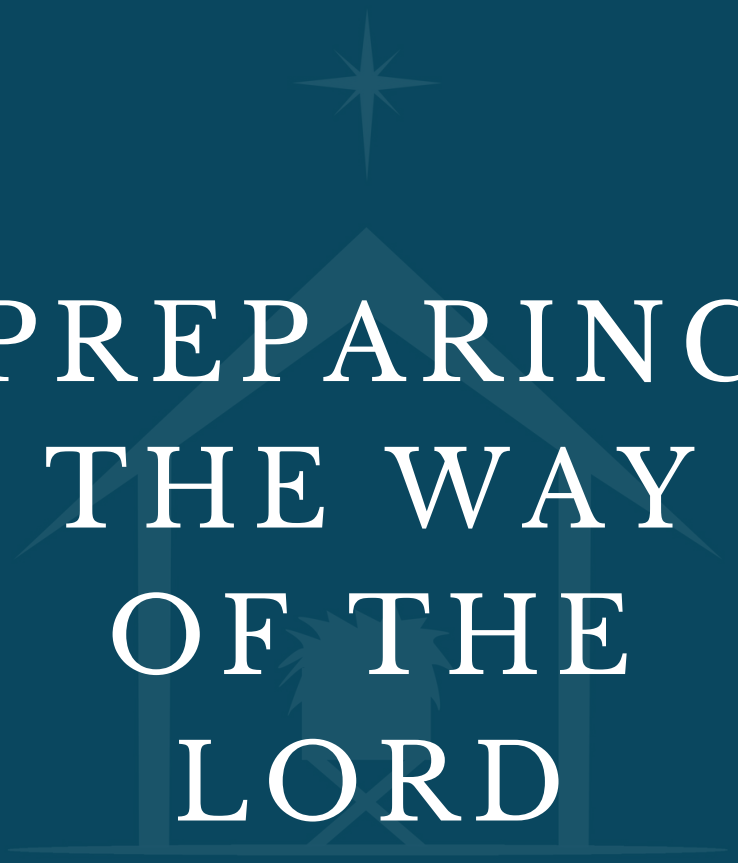
Practical Application

Bring a seemingly hopeless situation before God. Ask Him to renew your hope and give you wisdom to take the next faithful step.

Prayer

O Lord, fountain of wisdom and strength, we praise You for raising up the promised Branch from the house of Jesse. We thank You that Your Spirit rests upon Jesus Christ, our righteous King. Fill us with wisdom, courage, and reverence for You. Bring new life to places of discouragement and make our lives fruitful through the work of Your Spirit.
Amen.

WEEK ONE



PREPARING THE WAY OF THE LORD

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:1–5

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.
A voice of one calling:
"In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.

Devotional Reflection: Bernard of Clairvaux

The prophet Isaiah announces comfort for God's people and calls for a highway to be prepared for the Lord. Valleys are lifted, mountains are brought low, and the glory of the Lord is revealed. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote often about the coming of Christ into the human heart. Advent is not only a season for remembering that Jesus came into the world; it is also a time to prepare our hearts for His presence. The Lord comes to comfort, restore, and transform His people.

Practical Application

Make room for Christ by identifying one distraction, resentment, or habit that is keeping your heart from being attentive to God. Take a practical step toward clearing that obstacle.

Prayer

Gracious and merciful God, we praise You as the Lord who comforts Your people and reveals Your glory. Prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. Lift the burdens that weigh us down, humble the pride within us, and straighten the paths that have become crooked. May we behold Your glory and faithfully proclaim Your salvation.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Malachi 3:1–2
“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty.
But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
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From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.

Devotional Reflection: John Wesley

Malachi announces that a messenger will prepare the way for the Lord, who will come to purify His people. The coming of Christ brings both comfort and holy transformation. John Wesley emphasized the necessity of a faith that changes the heart and produces a life of holiness. Advent calls us to welcome Christ not merely as a comforting presence but as the Lord who purifies and renews us.

Practical Application

Ask God to reveal an attitude or behavior that needs to be refined. Respond honestly and take one step toward repentance and renewal.

Prayer

Holy and refining God, we praise You because You are righteous, faithful, and merciful. Thank You for sending the promised Messenger and for coming to Your people in Jesus Christ. Purify our hearts from selfishness, pride, and sin. Make us sincere in our repentance and joyful in our obedience. Prepare us to welcome Christ with lives devoted to Your glory. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:13–17
But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

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Devotional Reflection: John Chrysostom

Before the birth of Jesus, God announced the birth of John, who would prepare the people for the Lord. John's calling was to turn hearts toward God and make ready a people prepared for the coming Messiah. Chrysostom frequently emphasized the importance of repentance and a life shaped by the gospel. Advent reminds us that the coming of Christ calls for a response. We are invited to turn our hearts toward Him.

Practical Application

Consider someone who needs encouragement to draw nearer to God. Offer a word of hope, share Scripture, or pray with that person today.

Prayer

Blessed Lord, God of Israel, we praise You because You visit and redeem Your people. Thank You for raising up John to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. Turn our hearts toward You, renew our faith, and make us faithful witnesses to Your salvation. May Your light guide those who sit in darkness and lead our feet into the way of peace.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:30–33
But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

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Devotional Reflection: Martin Luther

The angel's announcement to Mary reveals the extraordinary grace of God. She is told that she will bear a Son who will be called the Son of the Highest and whose kingdom will have no end. Luther often emphasized that God's promises are received through faith, even when their fulfillment is beyond human understanding. Mary is invited to trust the word of God. Advent reminds us that God's promises are greater than our fears and limitations.

Practical Application

Is there an area of your life where God is calling you to trust Him? Practice surrender by praying over that concern and choosing to act in faith rather than fear.

Prayer

O Lord, who is mighty to save, we praise You for Your faithfulness and for the grace revealed in the announcement to Mary. Thank You for the promised Son whose kingdom shall never end. Give us Mary's willingness to trust Your word. Quiet our fears, strengthen our faith, and teach us to surrender ourselves to Your purposes.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:20–23
But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."
All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, EmmanuelO come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
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Devotional Reflection: Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Joseph faced a difficult and confusing situation, yet he responded to God's message with obedience. He accepted Mary and took responsibility for the child who would be called Jesus, for He would save His people from their sins. Bonhoeffer wrote about the cost of discipleship and the necessity of obedient faith. Joseph reminds us that following God sometimes requires courage, trust, and action before we understand everything.

Practical Application

Consider a difficult act of obedience you may be postponing. Ask God for courage to do what is right, even when the outcome is uncertain.

Prayer

Faithful God, we praise You for guiding Your people and fulfilling Your promises. We thank You for Joseph's example of trust and obedience. Give us courage to follow Your direction when the way is difficult or unclear. May the name of Jesus, our Savior, bring hope to our hearts and salvation to all who trust in Him.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:41–45
When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

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Devotional Reflection: Thomas à Kempis

When Mary visits Elizabeth, their meeting becomes an occasion of joy and blessing. Elizabeth recognizes the extraordinary work of God and praises Mary for believing that the Lord would fulfill His word. Thomas à Kempis encouraged Christians to cultivate humility, devotion, and a life centered on Christ. This passage reminds us that faith is strengthened in fellowship and that God's promises bring joy to those who trust Him.

Practical Application

Encourage someone in their faith today. Your words may help another person recognize God's goodness and remain steadfast in His promises.

Prayer

Gracious Father, we praise You for the joy of fellowship and for the blessings that come through faith. Thank You for the example of Mary and Elizabeth, whose lives were filled with wonder at Your promises. Make us people who encourage one another, rejoice in Your goodness, and trust Your word. May our conversations bring hope and our fellowship bring glory to Christ.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:46–49
And Mary said:
“My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me
—holy is his name.

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Devotional Reflection: John Calvin

Mary's song is a declaration of praise. She recognizes that the Lord has looked upon her with grace and has done great things for her. Her joy is not rooted in personal achievement but in the mercy and power of God. Calvin emphasized that all true praise begins with recognizing God's greatness and grace. Advent invites us to join Mary's song by magnifying the Lord for what He has done in Christ.

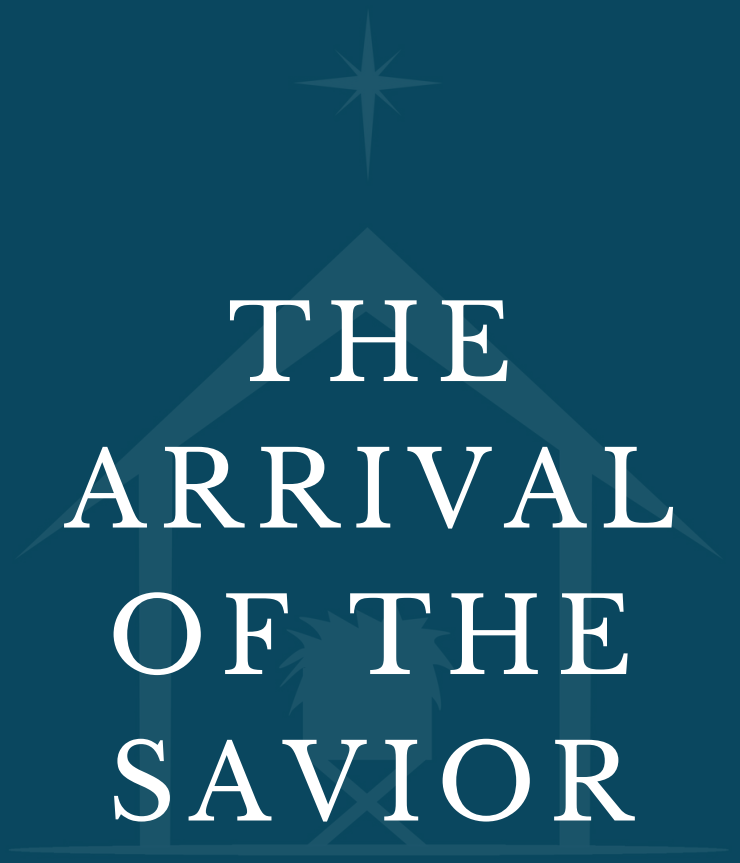
Practical Application

Take time to name three ways God has shown His goodness to you. Let gratitude shape your attitude and your worship today.

Prayer

Almighty Lord, we praise You with all our hearts because You have done great things. Your name is holy, Your mercy is abundant, and Your faithfulness never fails. Teach us to magnify You as Mary did. Turn our attention away from pride and self-reliance, and fill us with humble gratitude for the salvation You have given through Jesus Christ. Amen.

WEEK THREE



THE ARRIVAL OF THE SAVIOR

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:68–72
“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people
and redeemed them.
He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—
to show mercy to our ancestors
and to remember his holy covenant,

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Devotional Reflection: Charles Spurgeon

Zechariah's song begins with praise: God has visited and redeemed His people. The birth of John signals that the long-awaited promises of God are moving toward fulfillment. Spurgeon frequently preached about the faithfulness of God and the certainty of His promises. Advent reminds us that God does not forget His covenant. In Jesus Christ, He comes to rescue, redeem, and restore.

Practical Application

Remember a promise of God that has strengthened you in the past. Share that encouragement with someone who may be waiting for God's help.

Prayer

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has visited and redeemed His people. We praise You for Your covenant mercy and for the salvation promised through Jesus Christ. Help us remember Your faithfulness when we face uncertainty. Guide our feet into the way of peace, and make our lives a testimony to Your redeeming love.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1–7
In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.
So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

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Devotional Reflection: Francis of Assisi

The promised Savior enters the world in humility. There is no royal palace, no earthly display of power, and no place prepared for Him in the inn. Jesus is born and laid in a manger. Francis of Assisi was deeply moved by the humility and poverty of Christ. He saw in the manger a powerful reminder that God's love is revealed through humble self-giving. Advent calls us to marvel at the God who came near in such simplicity.

Practical Application

Practice humility through an act of quiet service. Look for someone whose needs may be overlooked and offer practical help without seeking recognition.

Prayer

O God, whose glory fills the heavens, we praise You for the mystery of Your Son's humble birth. Thank You that Jesus entered our world not in earthly splendor but in the lowliness of a manger. Teach us to value humility, to serve others with love, and to welcome Christ into every part of our lives. May the light of His coming shine in us.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:8–14

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.”
Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

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Devotional Reflection: Martin Luther

The first announcement of Jesus' birth is given not to rulers or religious authorities but to shepherds watching their flocks. The angel declares good news of great joy for all people: a Savior has been born. The heavenly host responds with praise, declaring glory to God and peace on earth. Luther emphasized that the gospel is good news for sinners who need a Savior. Advent reminds us that Christ's coming is a cause for both joy and worship.

Practical Application

Share the joy of Christ with someone today. A simple invitation, encouraging message, or act of generosity can become an expression of the good news.

Prayer

Glory to You, O God in the highest, and praise to Your holy name. We thank You for the good news announced to the shepherds: a Savior has been born. Fill our hearts with the joy of Christ and make us messengers of His peace. May our words and actions proclaim the goodness of Your salvation.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1–2, 9–11
After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”
After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

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Devotional Reflection: C. S. Lewis

The Magi traveled from the East seeking the child who had been born King of the Jews. When they found Him, they bowed down and worshiped. Their gifts expressed honor and devotion to the newborn King. C. S. Lewis wrote about the wonder of encountering Christ and the transformation that follows when we recognize His true identity. Advent invites us to come before Jesus not merely with curiosity but with worship.

Practical Application

Consider what gift you can offer Christ today. It may be your time, your attention, your service, or a renewed commitment to follow Him.

Prayer

O King of glory, we praise You because the nations belong to You and all creation is under Your authority. Thank You for revealing Christ as the King worthy of worship. Lead us to seek Him with sincere hearts. Receive the gifts of our lives, our service, and our devotion. May we honor Jesus in all that we do.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 1:1–5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

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Devotional Reflection: Augustine of Hippo

John takes us beyond Bethlehem and back to the beginning. Before creation, the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. The light of Christ shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it. Augustine reflected deeply on the eternal nature of God and the mystery of the Word made flesh. Advent reminds us that the child in the manger is none other than the eternal Son through whom all things were made.

Practical Application

When darkness or uncertainty surrounds you, remember that Christ is the light that darkness cannot overcome. Let His truth guide one decision you face today.

Prayer

Eternal God, Father of lights, we praise You for Your glory, wisdom, and power. We worship Jesus Christ, Your eternal Word, through whom all things were made. Thank You that His light shines in the darkness and cannot be overcome. Enlighten our minds, strengthen our faith,
and help us walk in His truth.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 1:9–14

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Devotional Reflection: Athanasius of Alexandria
The wonder of Christmas is expressed in these words: the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The eternal Son entered human history and made His dwelling among His creation. Athanasius taught that the Son of God became human so that humanity might be restored to life with God. Jesus reveals the Father's glory, full of grace and truth. Advent invites us to worship the God who came near and to receive the grace offered through Christ.

Practical Application
Make time today to reflect on the humility of Jesus. Ask how His willingness to enter our world should shape the way you treat others.

Prayer
Lord God, we praise You for the glory of Your eternal Word. We thank You that Jesus Christ took on flesh and dwelt among us, revealing Your grace and truth. Let His presence transform our hearts. Teach us to receive Your grace with gratitude and to extend that grace to others. May we reflect the character of Christ in our words and actions. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Galatians 4:4–7
But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Devotional Reflection: John Wesley

Paul reminds us that Jesus came at the fullness of time, born of a woman and born under the law, to redeem those under the law. Through Him, we receive adoption as children of God. We are no longer slaves but sons and daughters who can cry, "Abba, Father." Wesley emphasized the transforming grace of God and the assurance believers receive through the Holy Spirit. Advent celebrates not only the coming of Christ but also the new relationship with God made possible through Him.

Practical Application

Live today with the confidence that you belong to God. Let that assurance shape the way you face difficulties and the way you welcome others.

Prayer

Loving Father, we praise You for sending Your Son at the fullness of time to redeem us and bring us into Your family. Thank You for the gift of adoption and for the Spirit who enables us to call You Father. Help us live with confidence in Your love, grow in holiness, and treat others with the grace we have received.
Amen.

WEEK FOUR



THE GLORY AND REIGN OF CHRIST

Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:5–8
In your relationships with one another, have the
same mindset as Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to
be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: Dietrich Bonhoeffer
Though Christ existed in the form of God, He humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. His obedience led Him even to death on a cross. Bonhoeffer emphasized that Christian discipleship means following Jesus in the way of humility, sacrifice, and obedience. The manger points toward the cross. The One who came in humility would give Himself completely for the salvation of the world. Advent calls us to receive His grace and imitate His self-giving love.

Practical Application
Choose one way to put another person's needs before your own today. Let the humility of Christ shape your response.

Prayer
Lord Jesus Christ, we praise You for Your humility, obedience, and sacrificial love. Though You are Lord of all, You took the form of a servant and humbled Yourself for our salvation. Forgive our pride and selfishness. Give us the mind of Christ, that we may serve others faithfully and follow You in love and obedience.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:15–17
The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: Thomas Aquinas

Paul declares that Christ is the image of the invisible God and that all things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. Aquinas emphasized the central place of Christ in creation and redemption. Advent brings us face to face with the mystery that the infant in Bethlehem is the Lord of all creation. The One who entered the world is the One who sustains it.

Practical Application

Consider what has become the center of your attention and affection. Reorder your priorities so that Christ is central in your decisions, relationships, and daily life.

Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, we praise You for the glory of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who is before all things and in whom all things hold together. Thank You that the Lord of creation came among us for our salvation. Be the center of our thoughts, our worship, and our lives. Establish our hearts in Your truth and keep us faithful to Christ.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 1:1–4

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: John Chrysostom

God spoke to His people in many ways through the prophets, but now He has spoken through His Son. Jesus is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being. He is greater than the angels and has accomplished purification for sins. Chrysostom emphasized the majesty and authority of Christ. Advent reminds us that God has not remained silent. He has spoken most clearly and fully through Jesus.

Practical Application

Set aside time to listen to God's Word without distraction. Ask how Christ's teaching should shape your choices and priorities.

Prayer

O God, whose glory is beyond our understanding, we praise You for speaking to us through Your Son. We worship Jesus Christ, the radiance of Your glory and the exact representation of Your being. Open our hearts to hear His word, strengthen our faith, and help us live in obedience to His truth. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Titus 2:11–14

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own,
eager to do what is good.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: John Calvin

Paul declares that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation and teaching us to live godly lives as we wait for the blessed hope of Christ's return. The coming of Jesus is both a gift of grace and a call to transformation. Calvin emphasized that God's grace not only forgives but also renews the lives of those who belong to Christ. Advent points backward to the first coming of Jesus and forward to His glorious return.

Practical Application

Ask yourself whether your daily habits reflect the grace you have received. Choose one action that will help you live with greater faithfulness and self-control.

Prayer

Holy and gracious God, we praise You because Your saving grace has appeared in Jesus Christ. Thank You for redeeming us and calling us to live as Your people. Teach us to reject what is ungodly and to pursue righteousness, self-control, and love. Keep our hope fixed upon the glorious appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:9
For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: Gregory of Nazianzus

Paul describes the generosity of Christ in a remarkable way: though He was rich, for our sake He became poor, so that through His poverty we might become rich. The incarnation is the ultimate expression of divine generosity. Gregory of Nazianzus reflected on the wonder of the Son of God taking on human nature for our salvation. On Christmas Eve, we remember that Christ's coming was an act of immeasurable love.

Practical Application

Let the generosity of Christ inspire generosity in you. Allow your heart to return to the idea that “His poverty has brought you riches” throughout the day.

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Prayer

God of boundless love, we praise You for the gift of Your Son, who became poor for our sake. Thank You for the riches of grace and salvation that are ours through Jesus Christ. Deliver us from selfishness and teach us to give freely. May our generosity reflect Your goodness, and may our lives bear witness to the love
revealed in Bethlehem.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1–7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: Bernard of Clairvaux

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. The promise given through the prophets has become reality. The eternal Son has entered human history, and the Word has become flesh. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote about the wonder of Christ's coming and the love revealed in His humility. Christmas invites us to move beyond familiar traditions and behold the extraordinary gift of God: Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Practical Application

Make Christ the center of your celebration. Offer thanks for His coming, share His love with those around you, and allow your heart to be filled with the wonder of Christ.

Prayer

Almighty God, we praise You for the gift of Your only Son, who was born among us to bring salvation to the world. Glory to You for the wonder of the incarnation and for the light that has come into our darkness. Fill our hearts with the joy of Christmas. May we receive Christ with faith, proclaim Him with gladness, and share His love with all whom we meet. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Scripture Reading: Revelation 21:1–5

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

Advent Hymn — O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

Devotional Reflection: C. S. Lewis

Advent does not end with the manger. The story of Christ points toward the day when God will make all things new. John sees a new heaven and a new earth, where God dwells with His people, wipes away every tear, and brings an end to death, sorrow, and pain. C. S. Lewis often wrote about the Christian hope of a renewed creation and the joy of life with God. Christmas reminds us that the One who came in humility will come again in glory.

Practical Application

Let the promise of God's new creation shape the way you live today. Face difficulty with hope, extend compassion to those who suffer, and remain faithful as you await Christ's return.

Prayer

Eternal and glorious God, we praise You because Your kingdom shall have no end and Your promises are certain. Thank You for the hope of a new heaven and a new earth, where death and sorrow will be no more. Strengthen us as we wait for the fulfillment of Your promises. Wipe away our fears, renew our hope, and make us faithful witnesses to the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

O Lord our God, we thank You for the promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ, for His birth among us, His life of perfect obedience, His death for our sins, and His resurrection in glory. As we leave this season of Advent, keep our hearts fixed upon Him. May the light of Christ guide our steps, the grace of Christ shape our lives, and the hope of Christ sustain us until the day when we see Him face to face. To You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, honor, and praise, now and forever.
Amen.

This devotional brings together valuable content. Rooted in scripture and prayer, but also connecting us to Christian thinkers & writers from church history. These thinkers and writers have the ability to reinforce and add weight to our devotional life.

May it feed your soul and bring you ever closer to Christ Jesus this Advent season. If you do not have a family of faith that you are a part. You are invited to connect with other Christ followers at Allen Church (7001 S. Hwy 97, Sapulpa, OK). We meet for worship every Sunday at 10:30am. May God richly bless you and your family this Christmas season.