

ADVENT

2017



# A D V E N T

The season of Christmas can be a time of great joy and happiness. But more often than not, it can seem stressful and hectic as our “to do” list grows. So, this Christmas, Fellowship Kids staff would like to encourage all families to take time to come together and focus on the true meaning of Christmas. We have designed this Advent devotional booklet to help guide your family as you focus on Jesus through activities, readings and discussion questions.

## **What is Advent?**

The word “advent” comes from the Latin “adventus” meaning “arrival” or “coming.” In Western cultures, we celebrate Advent starting four weeks before Christmas Day. Therefore, we have set aside four Sundays and Christmas Eve as special days.

This Advent season we are using Romans 15:13 as our Scripture:

*May the God of hope  
fill you with all joy and peace  
as you trust in Him,  
so that you may overflow  
with hope by the power of  
the Holy Spirit.*

## Activity Ideas:

1. Make an Advent wreath. Use any five candles and some sort of green base. You can search online for ideas. Most wreaths use four candles: one for each Sunday before Christmas, but we are adding one more for Christmas Eve. Candles can be any color, size or shape. Let your kids share in the making of your wreath.
2. Put the wreath in an open place in your home.
3. Beginning four weeks before Christmas, use the Sunday devotionals to begin that week's focus on Advent.
4. During each day of the week, choose an activity to do as a family that corresponds to that week's focus.
5. We pray that each day helps your family focus on the hope, love, joy and peace of Jesus.

We recommend using *Jesus Storybook Bible (JSB)* for children ages 1-5 and *The Big Picture Interactive Bible Storybook (BPBS)* for children ages 5-10.



# HOPE

## WEEK 1 DEVOTIONAL

Light one candle on your Advent wreath. This is the **HOPE** candle.

### Talk

What's something that you want but is hard to wait for? (Encourage everyone to share.) Hope is the desire for a certain thing to happen. We have a lot of hope during the Christmas season.

### Read: Isaiah 9:1-7

*(Jesus Storybook Bible, p.144-151; The Big Picture Interactive Bible Storybook, p.118)*

The Book of Isaiah was written almost 700 years before Jesus was born. God's people had already been waiting thousands of years for the Savior to come. While they waited God used Isaiah and other prophets to give them signs and clues about how Jesus would come, what He would do, and what He would be like (Micah 5:2; Isaiah 53). So, Isaiah was telling everyone that HOPE was coming. It was hope for the Messiah, the rescuer. God had promised a Savior that would save us from our sin. It is sin that separates us from God. But people had hope that the Savior, the rescuer would come! And He did come!

### Truth Takeaway

We can trust God and His promises. We can be confident in our hope in Him no matter what happens or how long it takes.

### Pray

Before you conclude your family time with the prayer below, pray for our global partner in Peru. Visit [FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org](http://FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org) to find out more about this partner and how to specifically pray for their needs.

God, thank you for the hope You have given us through Your son Jesus. Help us to share Your hope this week with others.



# LOVE

## WEEK 2 DEVOTIONAL

Light the HOPE candle and one more candle. This is the **LOVE** candle.

### Talk

Love is a word we often overuse. We say we love everything from pizza to sunsets to people. Name some things that you love. Do we really love those things or are they just our favorites? Or do we just love how they make us feel? Are these things you would die for?

### Read: Micah 5:2-4

*(Jesus Storybook Bible, p.170-75; The Big Picture Interactive Bible Storybook, p.120)*

The love that God has for us is infinitely greater than we can ever imagine. In Micah, we see God's love for His people take action when He names the city from which the Messiah will come. And then, on an ordinary and normal night, God came just as He said He would. He came, full of pity, compassion and power, to rescue those lost in darkness and carry them into the Kingdom of everlasting light. His promise has now come to earth. And just like that, a whisper in the town of Bethlehem, a Child was born, a Son was given.

### Truth Takeaway

When we trust Jesus as our Savior, we can trust that God loves us. We can also know and show His love to others in confidence.

### Pray

Before you conclude your family time with the prayer below, pray for our global partners in South Sudan and Nigeria. Visit [FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org](http://FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org) to find out more about this partner and how to specifically pray for their needs.

God, You are loving and merciful. Thank you for the love You have given to us through Your son Jesus. Help us to share Your love this week with others. Amen.



## Activities with HOPE:

- Make a paper chain that counts down the days until Christmas.
- Bring food to a food bank. Pray for those who are hungry.
- Decide as a family what to give to the Global Christmas offering.
- Make cookies and give them to neighbors/friends.
- Share one thing you would love to give someone for Christmas.
- Read Psalm 71:14. Give praise to God for each member of your family.
- Find Peru on a global map.

## Activities with LOVE:

- Read John 3:16.  
What does love look like to you?
- Make a heart ornament for your Christmas tree.
- Write a thank you note to someone NOT in your family.
- Read a favorite Christmas book together.
- Sing a song that mentions Bethlehem.
- What do you love most about Christmas?
- Locate South Sudan and Nigeria on a global map.



# JOY

## WEEK 3 DEVOTIONAL

Light the HOPE, LOVE candles and one more candle. This is the **JOY** candle.

### Talk

Joy is a feeling of great pleasure or happiness coming from our confidence and trust in God. What is the difference between joy and fun? What are some fun things you do at Christmas? What brings you joy? When life gets tough, joy is a choice. What do you think Mary was thinking when she found out she would be the mother of Jesus?

**Read:** Luke 1:16-17, 31-33, 41-43, 46-49

*(Jesus Storybook Bible, p.178-179; The Big Picture Interactive Bible Storybook, p.178)*

Mary's visit with Elizabeth shows us that God was working all things and details together to bring about the birth of His son Jesus to be the Savior of the world. John leaped for joy in Elizabeth's womb at the presence of the Savior in the womb of Mary. The presence of Jesus leads us to rejoicing and praise. Because of their joy they worshiped and praised God. Likewise, we too can worship and praise God with great joy during this Christmas season.

### Truth Takeaway

When we know and trust God, we can experience joy no matter what.

### Pray

Before you conclude your family time with the prayer below, pray for our global partners in Germany and Slovenia. Visit [FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org](http://FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org) to find out more about this partner and how to specifically pray for their needs.

God, You are holy and righteous. Thank You for the joy You have given us through Your son Jesus. Help us to share the joy of the Lord this week with others. Amen.



## Activities with JOY:

- Pile in the car to go look at Christmas lights.
- Watch a favorite Christmas movie together.
- Research Christmas traditions in other cultures.
- Sing a Christmas song or praise song that mentions JOY.
- Read James 1:2. Discuss why Christmas might be difficult for others.
- Read Psalm 95:1. Praise God for all He has done for you and your family.
- Locate Germany and Slovenia on a global map.



# PEACE

## WEEK 4 DEVOTIONAL

Light the HOPE, LOVE, JOY candles and one more candle.  
This is the **PEACE** candle.

### Talk

There are a lot of events that happen in our world that are not how God created them to be. People hurt one another, people cause war, or treat others wrongly. Can you think of some other examples of how we as people hurt each other?

God wants us to live in peace with each other. God wants us to love each other and take care of each other no matter what country we are from or the color of our skin, or who our friends are. But, we can't live in peace with others by ourselves, we need help.

### Read: Matthew 1:18-25

*(The Big Picture Interactive Bible Storybook, p.176)*

Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, probably felt like things were out of control. But God used an angel to speak to Joseph's heart and calm his spirit. God gave him peace in the midst of his concerns. We can have that same peace when we turn to God.

### Truth Takeaway

When we trust in Jesus, we can have peace with God and with others.

### Pray

Before you conclude your family time with the prayer below, pray for our global partners in Russia and Croatia. Visit [FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org](http://FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org) to find out more about this partner and how to specifically pray for their needs.

God, You are just and everlasting. Thank you for the peace You have given us through Your son Jesus. Help us to share the peace that we have in You with others. Amen.

## Activities with PEACE:

- Go outside on a clear night and look at the stars together.
- Make a family favorite warm beverage. Talk about what warmth does for your soul.
- Read Philippians 4:6-7. Pray for peace during the hectic season.
- Pick one neighbor and sing *Silent Night* at their door.
- Build a blanket fort and read a favorite Christmas book together in the fort.
- Discuss which character from the Nativity story is your favorite and share why.
- Locate Russia and Croatia on a global map.





# CHRIST

## CHRISTMAS DAY DEVOTIONAL

Light the HOPE, LOVE, JOY, PEACE candles and the FINAL candle.  
This is the **CHRIST/SALVATION** candle.

### Talk

The time has come! We have been patiently awaiting and now we can light all our candles! We have hope, love, joy, and peace. When we celebrate Christmas, we celebrate that our Savior is born! We know that it has been a great time of anticipation leading up to this day, but just think about how God must have felt. He had been waiting to send His son, Jesus, into the world to save us and restore us to a relationship with Him.

**Read:** Luke 2:1-20; Galatians 4:4

*(Jesus Storybook Bible, p.180-191; The Big Picture Interactive Bible Storybook, p.182-183)*

### Truth Takeaway

The Messiah has been born! The King is here! The birth of Jesus is indeed good news. Jesus was not an ordinary baby. He was God's son sent to earth from heaven. Jesus has come to save us from our sins and to set us free. We can rejoice and celebrate together!

### Pray

Before you conclude your family time with the prayer on the next page, pray for our global partner in Jordan. Visit [FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org](http://FellowshipGlobalChristmas.org) to find out more about this partner and how to specifically pray for their needs.





*Dear God,*

*You are perfect and glorious.*

*We cannot contain our love for You.*

*We ask that You forgive us from  
the sins that separate us from You.*

*Thank You for the salvation that comes  
through Your son Jesus.*

*Help us to share Your salvation  
with the world.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

***In the same region there  
were some shepherds staying  
out in the fields and keeping  
watch over their flock by night.***

*And an angel of the Lord suddenly  
stood before them, and the glory of the  
Lord shone around them; and they were  
terribly frightened. But the angel said  
to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I  
bring you good news of great joy which  
will be for all the people; for today in  
the city of David there has been born  
for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.  
This will be a sign for you: you will find  
a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a  
manger." And suddenly there appeared  
with the angel a multitude of the  
heavenly host praising God and saying,*

***"Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace among men  
with whom He is pleased."***

**Luke 2:8-14**





[FellowshipBibleChurch.org](http://FellowshipBibleChurch.org)