



ADVENT 2021

*Bay Life Kids
Family Devotional and
Activity Book*





ADVENT 2021

Bay Life Kids

Bay Life Church
1017 Kingsway Road, Brandon, FL
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INTRODUCTION

Christmas is a time to rejoice and spend time with those we love. It is so special that we go the extra mile to decorate our homes, choose special gifts, have parties, look at Christmas lights, make special treats, and eat large feasts. It is truly a wonderful, yet busy time of the year.

For believers, it is a special time because it is another chapter in the greatest love story of all time. It is a time for us to celebrate the birth of our Savior. So often we get caught up in the busyness of the season that we take our sight off of the real reason to celebrate each year – that God sent His only Son to Earth to save us all. Our prayer for your family is that you would continuously have your sights on Jesus not just during the holiday season, but every day.

WHAT IS ADVENT?

The season of Advent begins on a Sunday, four weeks before Christmas. Advent means “arrival.” There are three meanings of Advent, or coming, that we recognize as Christians. One, of course, is when Jesus came into the world as a baby to live as a man and die for us. The second, can happen now as Jesus wants to come into our hearts. The third happens in the future when Jesus comes back to the world as King.

Advent is a time for believers to prepare for the celebration of the hope, faith, joy, peace, and love that Jesus gave us through His birth, death, and resurrection. It is also a time for us to reflect on what Jesus commanded us to do while we prepare and wait for His return.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK.

The goal of this devotional is to enable you and your family to obey one of the most frequent commands of Scripture, “Remember!” Again, and again, God calls His people to remember what He has done for them so they can face the days ahead. Each day, you will find Scripture to read, a short devotional, questions for reflection, suggested prayers, and activities for your family. There is no right or wrong time of day to do this, but we encourage you to commit to the same routine each Sunday: set aside your phones, turn off the distractions, and open your Bibles together.

We look forward to celebrating with you and we pray that God blesses you as you celebrate this season of Advent, remembering all that Jesus brought when He was born.

PRAISE AND PLAYLISTS

If you would like to incorporate worship into this process, you can use the playlist where we have compiled songs that capture the themes for each week of Advent.

The links will be posted on our Bay Life Kids Facebook page in the days leading up to the start of Advent.

Week One: HOPE

Hark the Herald Angels Sing
Mary's Boy Child – Toby Mac

Week Two: FAITH

O Holy Night
It Is Well
Waiting Here for You – Chris Tomlin

Week Three: JOY

O Come All Ye Faithful
Joy to the World
Jump for Joy – Promiseland
You're Here – Francesca Battistelli

Week Four: PEACE

Away in a Manger
Let There Be Peace on Earth
Silent Night
I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day – Casting Crowns

Week Five: LOVE

O Come O Come Emmanuel
O Come Let Us Adore Him
Happy Birthday Jesus – Promiseland
How Many Kings – Downhere
Christmas Offering – Casting Crowns
He Shall Reign Forevermore – Chris Tomlin



WEEK ONE

HOPE



Week 1

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Advent wreath, candles
- Construction paper, scissors, markers or crayons

SCRIPTURE

Read aloud the following passages of Scripture.

Isaiah 9:2 and 9:6-7

DEVOTION

As you reflect on these passages, read over the commentary below.

Who gets super excited when their birthday is coming? What is your favorite part? Do you count down the days? Do you plan a party and talk about who to invite? Isn't it so much fun when your family starts to talk about how you want to celebrate your birthday? I am sure the gifts are pretty fun too!

December is a very special month because we celebrate the most important birthday of all. Everyone can come to the party, but many choose not to and ignore how special this day really is. I am sure that you already know who we are talking about. Of course! We celebrate Jesus' birthday in December. Just about four weeks before Jesus' birthday we start really celebrating. Although Jesus should be celebrated all year, this is a very special time of remembrance, called Advent. The word "advent" means "arrival". We celebrate the arrival of the hope that was delivered when Jesus was born.

Part of advent includes a wreath with five candles on it. The first candle that we are going to light tonight is for hope. A very long time

before Jesus was born, when Adam and Eve were the only ones on the Earth, they made a bad choice that caused sin to enter the world and broke God's heart. Right then and there, God told of His plan to make everything right and He promised a son that would crush the serpent's (Satan's) head (Genesis 3:15).

Read the verses from Isaiah. That was written almost 700 years before Jesus was born! This scripture is a prophesy of hope and a promise from God. Jesus' birth was the fulfilling of the promise that God would send a Savior in the form of a baby, Jesus.

Light your first candle. This represents the hope of Jesus coming to rescue us from sin.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Answer these on your own or discuss them as a family.

Do you think that God was surprised about sin entering the world?

Not at all! God knows everything and He already had a plan to defeat the enemy by sending a baby who would be fully man and fully God.

What exactly is sin? How serious is sin to God?

Anything that is against the will of God is a sin. It is very serious because God hates sin. The Bible says that the "wages for sin is death."

Hope is a feeling of expectation and a desire for something to happen, like when you are counting down the days to your birthday. What are some things that you can do to celebrate the hope of Jesus?

Answers will vary. One idea is to plan a birthday party for Jesus.

Do you know someone that is hopeless because they do not know about or believe in Jesus?

If so, write that person's name on a piece of paper and put it somewhere to remind you to pray for that person every day.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY.

Cut out simple ornament shapes from construction paper and let your children write the names of Jesus from Isaiah 9:6-7. Help them as needed.

Place the ornaments where you can see them throughout Christmas and reflect on the hope that was promised so many years before Christ was born.

PRAYER

Take some time to pray through the themes for today, you can say something like this:

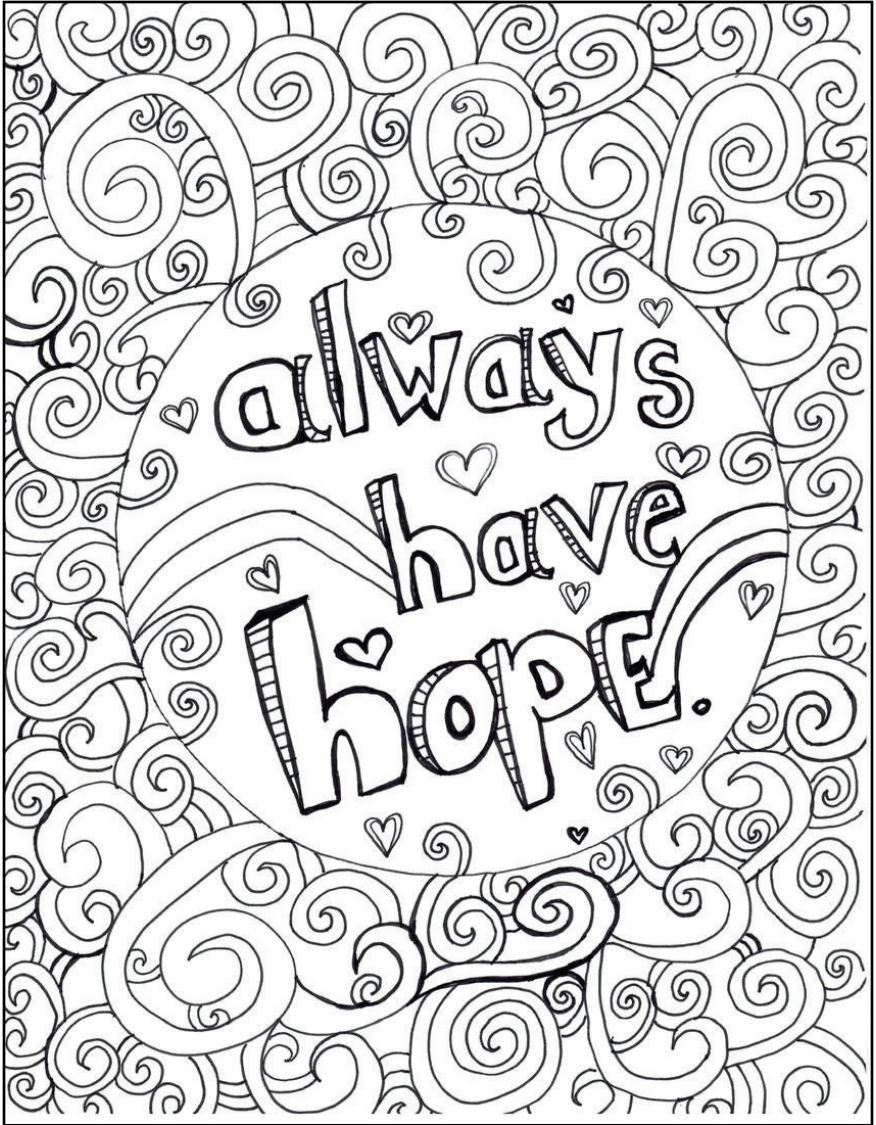
Dear God, thank You so much for Your promise to save us from the darkness of sin. Thank You for giving us hope through Jesus. God, turn our hearts towards You as Christmas approaches. Help us to not get caught up in the busyness of the season and miss the chance to celebrate the gift of hope You sent to us on the night Jesus was born. Amen.

WORSHIP

Use one or more of these songs to worship as a family.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Mary's Boy Child – Toby Mac



**“For I know the plans I have for you,”
declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you
and not to harm you, plans to give you
HOPE and a future.”**

Jeremiah 29:11



WEEK TWO

FAITH



Week 2

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Advent wreath, candles
- Cornstarch and water (optional)

SCRIPTURE

Read aloud the following passages of Scripture.

Luke 4:16-21, Matthew 24:36, John 14:1-3

DEVOTION

As you reflect on these passages, read over the commentary below.

Light the first candle and see if the kids can remember the meaning of that candle.

The future is something that has not happened yet. At the end today, you will go to bed. That is something that WILL happen later or in the future. Sometimes it is really hard to wait for something you know will happen. This happened to us when we were waiting on you to be born. We waited for you for a long time, we packed our bags and got a room ready for you. We could not wait for you to arrive. We knew it would happen, but we did not know EXACTLY when. We were so excited. Is there anything that you are really excited to have happen, but you have to wait for it? Did it seem like it took forever while you counted down the days?

The Israelites were waiting on a Messiah and they did not know when to expect the Savior to arrive. For many years they suffered many hardships. They were sinful and disobedient and very unhappy because they were separated from God. God sent prophets to give hope that a Messiah was coming. They waited many more years until the Savior arrived that first Christmas day.

After Jesus came, many people who waited on Jesus did not accept that He was the Messiah. He was not what they expected. They expected the Messiah to be a conquering king, not a tiny baby or a humble servant. Like the Israelites, we are also waiting for something and it is not just Christmas. Do you know what it is?

Jesus! We are also waiting on Jesus. We do not know when He will come again. Jesus told us that He will return and that we should watch and be ready for Him. We have faith that Jesus will return because it was a promise and God always keeps His promise. We do not know the day or the hour, but we can have faith that Jesus will come again and take us to the house that He has prepared for us. Faith is believing in what we have not yet seen.

Light your second candle. This represents the faith that one day Jesus will return.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Answer these on your own or discuss them as a family.

Many Israelites, even religious leaders, did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah because He was not what they expected. They missed the blessing of knowing Jesus here on Earth because they were waiting on their own expectations instead of God's design. Have you ever missed one of God's blessings because you had your own plan or were expecting something different?

Discuss the answers your children provide.

What do you think it means to have faith?

Faith is believing that God will take care of us, even though we cannot see what His plan is or where He is leading us. Faith requires us to obey, even though we do not know the end and trusting our God who knows everything that the future holds.

Waiting is really hard! What are some things we can do while we wait for Jesus to return?

Answers will vary, but some options include telling others about Jesus, think about Jesus and His love, worship, and praise, and serve.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Have you ever made oobleck? It is a super fun thing to play with. We are going to mix 2 cups of cornstarch with one cup of water. Let the kids mix it with a spoon while you talk about waiting.

Waiting is really hard! Waiting requires patience. Patience is waiting without complaining. The Israelites had to learn to be patient and wait on God, there are lots of examples of times where they did not wait with patience. We want to do better than the Israelites while we wait for Jesus and we have an important job to do while we wait. We have to tell others about Jesus.

Oobleck is both a solid and a liquid! If you hit it too hard, it does not move. However, if you go slow you can break through the mixture and soften it. This is a lot like sharing Jesus with others. If you are too hard when telling people they are wrong, they may not listen to you about Jesus. If we learn to be patient in loving others and go slow, people will start to soften and be more likely to hear what you have to say.

PRAYER

Take some time to pray through the themes for today, you can say something like this:

Dear God, help us to look to the future with great joy for the celebration of Jesus' birth and towards the day when He comes again. Amen.

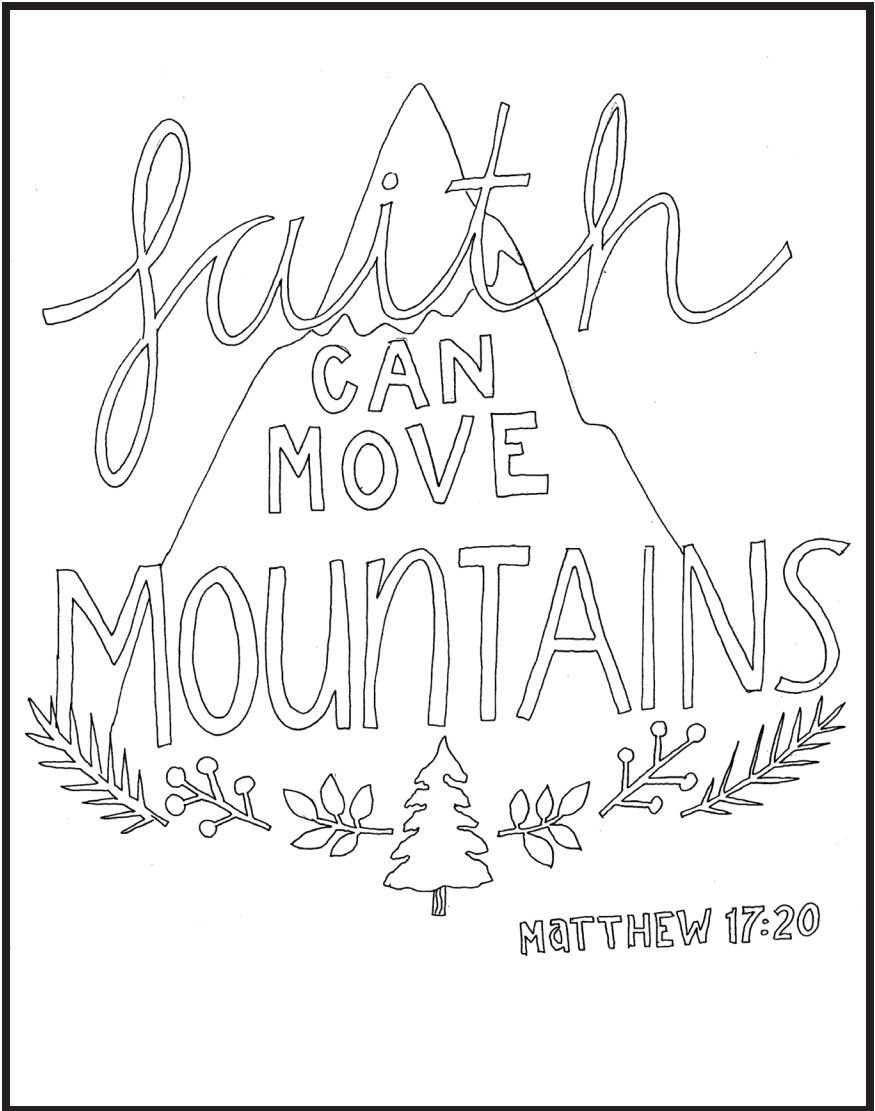
WORSHIP

Use one or more of these songs to worship as a family.

O Holy Night

It Is Well

Waiting Here for You – Chris Tomlin



“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Ephesians 2:8-9



WEEK THREE

JOY



Week 3

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Advent wreath, candles
- Coffee filter, blue and green markers, water, construction paper

SCRIPTURE

Read aloud the following passages of Scripture.

Luke 1:39-47, Luke 2:10, Matthew 2:10, John 16:16-24, Philippians 4:4

DEVOTION

As you reflect on these passages, read over the commentary below.

Light the first two candles and review their meaning.

Christmas is such a joyful time of the year. It is a festive time where we spend more time with family, eat special treats, and give and receive gifts. What are the things that bring you joy at Christmas?

Joy is a main theme throughout the accounts of Jesus' birth in the Bible. When Mary visited Elizabeth and shared the good news about being pregnant with Jesus, the baby in Elizabeth's womb, jumped for joy. Even an unborn baby was excited about the news of a coming Savior.

When Jesus was born, the shepherds were told of the good news. The angels said they were bringing good news that would bring great joy to all the people.

When the Wise Men saw the star that would point them to Jesus they were filled with great joy.

Jesus' birth was certainly something joyful! When we celebrate, we

should be filled with joy over God sending His son to be fully present with us on Earth. It was a miracle. Though it was a miracle, the greatest joy ever was still to come. In Jesus' own words, joy would come after grief and mourning. Jesus was talking about the grief that His death on the cross would bring and the JOY that His resurrection would bring.

We can be filled with joy while we celebrate His birth. We can be filled with joy of the hope that Jesus brought when he defeated the grave. Death could not hold Him, and sin no longer has a hold on us. We can be filled with joy while we wait for His return and the promise of eternity with Him.

Light your third candle. This represents the joy of His birth, resurrection, and waiting on His return.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Answer these on your own or discuss them as a family.

Are joy and happiness the same thing?

No. Happiness usually depends on how we are feeling or what is happening to us. It is based on our circumstances. For example, if you win a competition you may be happy, but if you lose you may feel sad or angry.

Having joy is different. Joy comes from knowing the truth about God and His promises for us. Our joy comes from the forgiveness we have through Jesus and from knowing where we will spend eternity. When things are not going our way, we can remember that our joy comes from the Lord. We can have joy, even when we are not happy.

Philippians 4:4 says “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” What do you think it means to rejoice always?

Rejoicing is a way of telling people to be joyful in the Lord. We can always choose to rejoice and praise the Lord for all the good things He has and will do. Even in the hard times and even in the waiting we can find joy in His promises.

When you know Jesus and have chosen to follow Christ, you should be bubbling over with joy.

What are some ways that Jesus brings joy to your life?

Answers will vary.

What are some ways that you and your family can help spread joy?

Discuss ideas with your family and choose at least one to put into action this holiday season.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Give your child a coffee filter and let them scribble all over it with blue and green markers. (Be sure to put it on a plate or cookie sheet to protect the surface underneath.) Lightly mist the coffee filter with water from a spray bottle. If you do not have a spray bottle, just sprinkle water over it. The colors will spread and make the coffee filter look like the Earth. Tell them that this should remind us how Jesus' birth brought joy to everyone and we too, should be spreading the joy of our excitement that one day He will return.

When it dries, write the word "Joy" on the coffee filter, and display it somewhere to remind you to share the joy of Jesus during Christmas and always.

PRAYER

Take some time to pray through the themes for today, you can say something like this:

Dear God, thank You for filling the world with Joy when Jesus was born. Thank You, Jesus, for Your death on the cross and for the joy You brought when You rose from the grave. Help us to be filled with joy at the promise of Your return and let us bring joy to people by sharing the Gospel with them. Amen.

WORSHIP

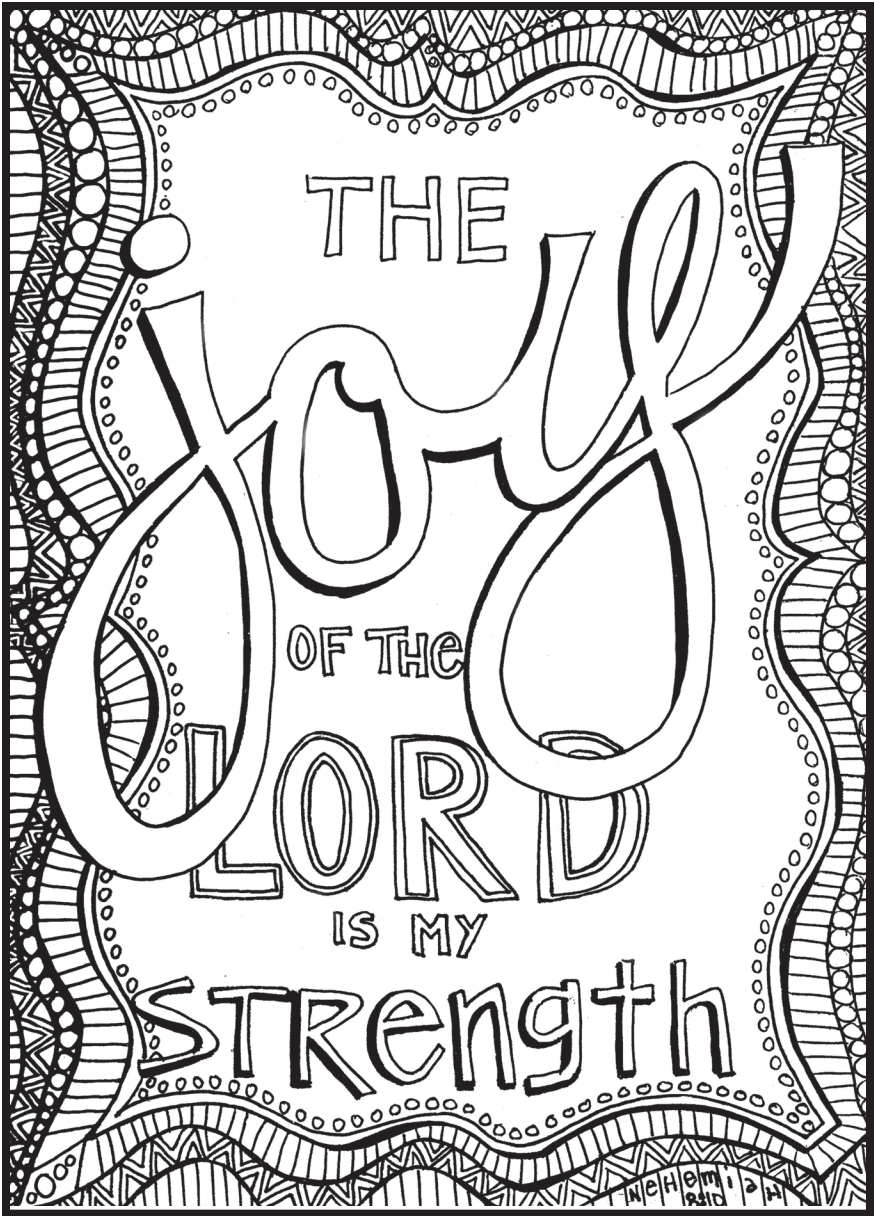
Use one or more of these songs to worship as a family.

O Come All Ye Faithful

Joy to the World

Jump for Joy – Promiseland

You're Here – Francesca Battistelli



“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

John 15:11



WEEK FOUR

PEACE



Week 4

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Advent wreath, candles
- Blue and white construction paper, markers or crayons

SCRIPTURE

Read aloud the following passages of Scripture.

Isaiah 9:6-7, John 14:27, Colossians 3:15, 2 Thessalonians 3:16, John 14:27, John 16:33

DEVOTION

As you reflect on these passages, read over the commentary below.

Light the first three candles and review their meaning.

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to live during the same time as Jesus? Wouldn't it have been awesome to see Him lying in that manger right after He was born? Or watching Him do all those miracles? How about going to see the empty tomb? It would have been so cool! However, during the time that Jesus was born the world was full of sin and there was very little peace in Israel. Israel was ruled by an evil king named Herod. He was so awful, he tried to kill Jesus! When Jesus came to Earth, it was a scary time. On top of an evil king, Israel was being ruled by Rome who had another king, Caesar Augustus. Rome had fought and won a war against Israel and was ruling over them. The people in Israel did not like being ruled by another country.

Therefore, they were excited when Jesus was born because the Scripture that told of His coming said He would reign on David's throne with justice and righteousness forever and ever. It said He would be the

Prince of Peace. None of that happened the way they thought when they looked to that Scripture. Jesus died and we still have wars today. Was the prophesy wrong? No way!

Jesus sits on the highest throne at the right-hand of our God. Jesus is indeed the Prince of Peace. What exactly is peace? The dictionary describes peace as a state of tranquility or quiet such as a freedom from war. The word “shalom” in Hebrew means “peace.” Jehovah-shalom is God of Peace. Peace from God is different from the world’s definition. Peace from God is perfect peace.

Does anything ever worry you? Everybody worries some of the time. Bad things happen. People hurt each other, there are wars, and people get sick. All these things have the same root cause, the world is broken because of sin. The world could certainly make us afraid with all its problems. But God gives us peace through the Holy Spirit when we trust Jesus. Just like we have talked about in all our lessons. We can have peace that God has a plan for the world, a plan to restore it to perfect peace. That plan started with Jesus’ death and resurrection and will be finished when Jesus returns and makes everything right. While we wait, we can pray for peace in every situation. We do not need to be afraid because we know that Jesus has overcome the world.

Light your fourth candle. This represents the peace Jesus brought to Earth when He was born, the peace of the Holy Spirit when we trust God, and the perfect Peace He will bring when He returns and restores the world and we live with Him forever.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Answer these on your own or discuss them as a family.

When you do not feel peace, what can you do?

Pray for God’s peace and know that He will be with you no matter what the outcome is. Tell others about how you are feeling and ask them to pray for you. Memorize Bible verses about peace.

Is it still important for us to pray for peace in the world too?

Yes, because Jesus still desires for us to live in harmony with one another, especially those of us who trust in Jesus.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

The dove is commonly used as a symbol of peace during Christmas. It is also used to describe the form of the Holy Spirit that came down from heaven when Jesus was baptized. Since we have been talking about peace in the world and peace inside us, which is where the Holy Spirit lives when we have accepted Christ, we are going to make a dove to remind us of the peace that Christ brought when He was born, the peace that lives in us when the Holy Spirit lives in our heart, and the perfect peace we are waiting for when Christ returns.

Use your child's hand to make a handprint dove on white paper. Cut it out and glue it to the blue paper. Use the markers or crayons to make an eye and a beak. Then, display the dove to help remind you that even when the world seems in a frenzy or times are tough, that you can have peace in Jesus.

PRAYER

Take some time to pray through the themes for today, you can say something like this:

Dear God, thank You we can have perfect peace in You. Thank You for sending Jesus and the Holy Spirit to bring peace to our hearts. Help us to handle any situation that tries to steal our peace. Help us to not be anxious, but to trust completely in the plan You have for our lives. Amen.

WORSHIP

Use one or more of these songs to worship as a family.

Away in a Manger

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Silent Night

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day – Casting Crowns

Peace ON Earth



“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33



WEEK FIVE

LOVE



Week 5

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Advent wreath, candles
- Construction paper and markers or crayons

SCRIPTURE

Read aloud the following passages of Scripture.

Luke 1:26-2:20, Genesis 1:27, 1 Corinthians 13:4-13, John 3:16,
John 13:34-35

DEVOTION

As you reflect on these passages, read over the commentary below.

Light the four candles for the previous weeks and discuss each of the meanings.

Merry Christmas and Happy Birthday to Jesus! During the season of Advent, we have learned how Jesus' birth, death, resurrection and one day His return brings us hope, faith, joy, and peace. These are the things that Jesus gives us when we trust in Him. Today we are going to talk about why God would send His only Son to Earth as a baby and let Him die on a cross. Can anyone tell me why in one word, God would do this?

Love. God created us in His image and God is Love. Every single one of us was made in love and for love. Sadly, sin entered the world, and it prevents every one of us from being who we were created to be, it separates us from God. Sin makes us impatient and unkind, jealous, and envious, boastful, and rude. Sin causes division in our families and robs us of peace in the world. None of this was what God intended for the beautiful world and people He created. Sin greatly grieved the heart of

God. But God had a plan. “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” “For God so loved the world that He sent His one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Love, that is the answer to why. Love is why we celebrate Jesus’ birthday because it was the start of fulfilling God’s greatest gift of Love to us.

Just like the other weeks we talked about what Jesus’ birth, death, and resurrection brought to the world. We have also talked about what to do while we are waiting for His return. Just like Christ loved us, we are to love others. Jesus commanded us to love others. We are to share His love for us so that everyone has a chance to know Jesus and live with Him for eternity. As we say farewell to 2021 and usher in 2022 may we keep the love story of Christmas in our hearts all year, not just at Christmas.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Answer these on your own or discuss them as a family.

Advent is a season of waiting. In Biblical times, they were waiting on the Savior to arrive. Just like them, we are waiting for Christ’s return. How can you keep God’s love first on your mind all year long?

Remember to thank God everyday for His love and the gift of His son. Make a point of sharing the hope, faith, joy, peace, and love of Jesus all the time.

Make a list of people that you think need to hear about and see Christ’s love and put it somewhere you will see it. Pray for them everyday and make a plan to show them Jesus.

We use the word love a lot in our world. We say we love ice cream, pizza, or presents. Love in our culture is something that focuses on our feelings. Love in the Bible is different. In 1 Corinthians 13, every description of love is a verb, it is an action. What are some ways that your family can put love into action every day, not just at Christmas?

Make a list of things that your children suggest and then put them into action. Some ideas are helping people who are in need, serving at church and in the community, showing random acts of kindness, look for ways to make your community better.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Cut a large heart out of construction paper. Then, cut the shape of the cross out of the middle. Write the names of each person in your family on the heart. Display this somewhere to serve as a reminder of the love that brought Jesus, the love He poured out on the cross, and the love we are to put into action while we wait on His return.

PRAYER

Take some time to pray through the themes for today, you can say something like this:

Dear God, there are not enough words of thanks for the love You have shown us. Thank You for creating us in Your image. God, help us to reflect Christ's love in everything we do. Help us to turn away from sin and to instead find ways to put love into action, not just at Christmastime, but in everything we do. Thank You for the greatest gift of love, Jesus. God, we love You. Amen.

WORSHIP

Use one or more of these songs to worship as a family.

O Come O Come Emmanuel

O Come Let Us Adore Him

Happy Birthday Jesus – Promiseland

How Many Kings – Downhere

Christmas Offering – Casting Crowns

He Shall Reign Forevermore – Chris Tomlin



“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35

