



~A Baby Changes Everything~

Take a few minutes with your family each day to think about Advent and the amazing prophecies, people, and events that led up to the birth of Jesus. Advent is a time of expectation and hope, and it means “arrival” or “coming”. Each Sunday in Advent will help us remember that God made a promise from the beginning that He would send a Savior. Let’s pause each day in December and remember why Jesus came at Christmas. Our family Christmas traditions are a wonderful way to share Christ with friends, family, and people we meet. A Baby truly changes everything! Unwrap the beautiful gift of His Presence and find joy in knowing that Jesus is the real reason for the season. God orchestrated every moment of Jesus’ life, and He has a plan and a purpose for yours too.

November 30	Advent Focus: Hope Advent is a time of waiting and a time of hope. Jesus freely offers us forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life according to John 3:16. Begin this Advent season by reading verses that tell of the hope of Christ, such as Isaiah 40:31 and Jeremiah 17:7-8. <i>“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”</i> (Romans 15:13). May you be blessed with overflowing hope, peace and joy by trusting in the God of hope. Memorize this verse and share it as a prayer today.
December 1	Whether you pull out an artificial tree or pick out a fresh Christmas tree, take time today to think about the Tree of Life. “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30). Are you developing your fruits of the Spirit? Are you winning souls for Jesus? Read Genesis 2:9, Proverbs 13:12, 15:4, and Revelation 22:1-2, 14 and 19.
December 2	Decorating the tree can be fun and joyful. Be sure to include ornaments that share your Christian faith with friends and family. Most of us have several ornaments that are unique and special to us that we enjoy seeing each year as we decorate. Think about how unique and special God has made YOU today. (Read Psalm 139:14, Ephesians 2:10, Isaiah 64:8)
December 3	Nothing makes a Christmas tree sparkle like twinkling lights. Read Matthew 5:13-16 and ask the Lord to inspire you to <i>“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”</i> Shine for the Lord by glorifying him before others. Do the right thing even when no one is looking. Shine bright!
December 4	Do you place an angel or a star on top of your Christmas tree? Read about the angels guarding you in Psalm 91:11 and the stars God has set in place in Psalm 8:3-4. Did you know Jesus is the bright Morning star in Revelation 2:28 and 22:16? What an incredible gift!
December 5	Every Christian home should have at least one nativity scene. Your faith should be on display for all to see. The Wise Men traveled a long distance to see the King of Kings. Be willing to “go the distance” for the Lord. <i>“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart”</i> (Jeremiah 29:13). Read Psalm 40:16. Wise men still seek him!
December 6	Christmas cards are such a blessing to give and receive. Save the cards you receive this year and pray over the people that sent them during the year. <i>“Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well”</i> (III John 1:2). <i>Thank You, Lord, for the card writers in our lives!</i>
December 7	Advent Focus: Peace When God sends an angel with a message, the words “do not be afraid” are always spoken first to bring peace to the one receiving the message. There is no reason to fear when you know God is in control. Just as the angel spoke to Zechariah and Mary, God also sent one to Joseph so that he would be at peace with the miraculous work God was doing. <i>“The angel appeared to Joseph saying, “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”</i> (Matthew 1:20). <i>Thank you, Lord that You can do great things with ordinary people. Help us to look at our situations and circumstances with godly wisdom. We can trust that You are in charge of our lives and will bring good out of everything that happens. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.</i>
December 8	Baking cookies to give away is a favorite holiday pastime. Bake some delicious cookies with your family this week and share Scripture with the people on your cookie list. <i>“How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth”</i> (Psalm 119:103). <i>“Taste and see that the Lord is good!”</i> (Psalm 34:8).
December 9	As you prepare your gift list this year, think about ways you can share the greatest gift of all, Jesus Christ. Write a verse on your Christmas cards and even on the outside of the envelope telling others about Jesus’ birth. Share His love with family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, shut-ins, and random people you meet. Read Daniel 12:3 and I Peter 4:10
December 10	Read Philemon verse 6. Take the month of December to intentionally tell about Jesus’ birth. Family Project: Cut the back off your old Christmas cards and write a verse on the back telling about Jesus’ birth. Lay them around in public places and pray for the people who will find and read them. Ask the Lord to touch their hearts with hope, peace, joy and love.

December 11	<i>"Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"</i> (II Corinthians 9:15) Some gifts can't be bought in a store. Share the gift of encouragement with someone today. Hugs and smiles are free. Joy and kindness are contagious. <i>Thank you, Lord, for encouraging people in our lives!</i>
December 12	<i>"A gift opens the way and ushers the giver into the presence of the great"</i> (Proverbs 18:16). Do you get excited just thinking about what you might get for Christmas? Take time today to think about what you might give someone. Giving is a blessing. God loves a cheerful giver!
December 13	A long time before the birth of Jesus, God revealed important pieces of His story to Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah. Today, think about what was foretold by Isaiah. <i>"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel"</i> (Isaiah 7:14). Immanuel means "God with us".
December 14	Advent Focus: Joy Joy is from the Lord. Joy is remembering that God sent Jesus, the Light of the World, so He could be with us. During Advent, think about God's gift of Jesus to the world and how you can share that gift with others. Jesus is the most perfect gift we have ever received. Ever! <i>"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows"</i> (James 1:17).
December 15	Micah's prophecy from God talks about Bethlehem being the place of a very important birth. <i>"But you, Bethlehem, 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"</i> (Micah 5:2). Read Acts 17:26-28 and realize God knew where you would be born and the exact place where you would be living right now. Wow!
December 16	God gave Jeremiah a message of hope to share with the people. <i>"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land"</i> (Jeremiah 23:5). Ask the Lord to increase your faith and help you believe the promises in His Word are true. For 400 hundred years the people remembered what the Prophets (Isaiah, Micah and Jeremiah) had said. All their prophecies of doom had come true, surely their prophecies of hope would too. <i>Lord, help us to have faith in the fulfillment of Your promises. Teach us to be patient and trust that You have a purpose in the process. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen</i>
December 17	An angel appeared to Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph calling them each by name. Today, think about the childless couple Zechariah the priest and Elizabeth (Mary's cousin). <i>"The angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son, and you are to call him John"</i> (Luke 1:5-25).
December 18	When Elizabeth (Mary's cousin) was 6 months pregnant, the angel appeared to the Virgin Mary. <i>"Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be called the Son of the Highest, the Son of God."</i> The angel also told Mary that her relative Elizabeth was pregnant. Read Luke 1:26-38. <i>Lord, give us a pure and faithful heart like Mary.</i> Read Luke 1:45
December 19	Mary went to visit Elizabeth and the baby in Elizabeth's womb leapt for joy and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. Mary had not even announced her pregnancy! <i>"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"</i> (Luke 1:39-45). If you know Jesus as your personal Savior today, leap for joy today, tomorrow and the next day!
December 20	Christmas caroling is such a joy to be a part of and is a beautiful way to share the love of Jesus. Gather around the windows (or porches) of shut-ins, residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with cheerful, smiling faces singing songs about the birth of our Savior. <i>"I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations"</i> (Psalm 89:1). <i>"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness; come before his presence with singing"</i> (Psalm 100:1-2).

December 21	Advent Focus: Love As we look forward to celebrating the birth of Christ, let us not forget the reason for His coming. Jesus put on skin to come to us as a baby, but He was put on a cross to be our Savior. John 3:16 describes how much God loves us. <i>“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”</i> If you have not already memorized this verse, do so with your family today.
December 22	Today, imagine a pregnant Mary and Joseph traveling for 60 miles to Bethlehem. Cars weren’t invented yet. The land consisted of steep hills and rocky mountains. There were also wild animals to watch out for, but God brought them safely to the place where it had been prophesied that Jesus would be born. Read Luke 2:1-5 and Psalm 37:23-24.
December 23	Today, think about the Innkeeper. Someone at the Inn had to tell Mary and Joseph there were no rooms available. Do you have “room” in your heart for Jesus? <i>“In his pride the wicked man does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God”.</i> (Psalm 10:4) <i>“You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart”.</i> (Jeremiah 29:13) <i>Open the eyes of our hearts, Lord and teach us to be truth seekers.</i>
December 24	Think about how Mary and Joseph trusted God with their accommodations for the night. Mary was about to have a baby and God provided the stable. <i>“For our light affliction, which is for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory”</i> (II Corinthians 4:17-18). What we see as an inconvenience or hardship is actually part of God’s plan and has the potential to be our greatest blessing. God can use everything in our lives for His glory. <i>Lord, help us to trust in Your plan for our lives!</i>
Christmas Day	Joy to the World, Jesus the Savior of the world is born! Happy birthday, Jesus! Take time today to thank God for sending his Son Jesus to save the world. Make it a family tradition to read the Christmas story in Luke 2 at your family gathering. Jesus could have been born in a palace, but his humble birth in a stable was part of God’s perfect plan. He experienced the struggles and heartaches of ordinary people just like us. Light a candle today in honor of Jesus, the Light of the world. <i>Lord, help us to understand that You birth great things in our lives in the midst of pain. Teach us to trust Your purpose for the uncomfortable things we go through, for it is nothing compared to the glory that will be revealed in us. Thank You, Lord!</i>
The Angel's Announcement To the Shepherds	Imagine the brightness of the glory of the Lord shining around the shepherds as the angels appeared to them in the field announcing the birth of Jesus. God chose to announce the incredible news of Jesus’ birth to the humblest people on earth. <i>“Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today a Savior has been born to you, he is Christ the Lord.”</i> Read Luke 2:8-14. <i>Lord, thank You that no life is insignificant in Your eyes and that You see value in all of us. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.</i>
The Wise Men	How long does it take you to drive to church? How many steps do you take before you enter the building? Did you use your car heater or your air conditioner on the way? Think about that as you read Matthew 2:1-12. The Wise Men followed the star by camel for several thousand miles to see the Christ child. When they saw Jesus, they immediately bowed down to worship Him. <i>Thank you, Lord that You can be found by those who seek You and that those who follow You will never walk in darkness. Thank You for meeting us right where we are, extending Your love and grace to all. Open our eyes to divine appointments You have for us with people who don’t know You as the Savior of the world. Graciously give us the words to say to answer the deep questions in their hearts and give us a heart full of mercy and grace. We love You, Lord. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.</i> God gives us opportunities to share the good news of His love with people in every season. He places people on our paths for a reason. Be ready, willing, and able to share Jesus every day. <i>“I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ”</i> (Philemon v.6). Be bold!