

ADVENT
THE NAMES OF JESUS

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Thank you for setting aside time to focus on and worship Jesus during this Advent season. “Advent” means “arrival” or “appearing” and is a time of preparation for the celebration of Christmas. Jesus came to earth to save us from our sins. Advent is also a time of anticipating Jesus’ second appearing or return.

This devotional was designed to point us to Jesus and remind us of all He came to bring into our lives. Each day will focus on a name of Jesus that helps us better understand His nature and character. This devotional goes from December 1-25. There are five days of devotions followed by two days of reflection throughout the weeks of Advent. On the days of reflection we encourage you to look back over what you have read and prayed for the five days prior, study other names of Jesus, or read additional Scripture surrounding Jesus’ birth.

Each devotional contains Scripture to read, a short reflection about that Scripture, and a prayer prompt with space to journal. Our prayer is that as you study some of the names of Jesus, you will discover Him – who is our Savior, Good Shepherd, King of Kings, and more.

DECEMBER 1
IMMANUEL

READ

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

*“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”
(which means, God with us).*

Matthew 1:18-23

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

REFLECT

The word Advent comes from the Latin words for “coming” or “arrival.” For followers of Jesus, Advent is the season that we celebrate the coming of Christ to Earth as our Savior. Fully man. Yet fully God. Advent is the season we remember that God came. But it wasn’t as if God had not been here all along. God was and is always present, always moving. From before creation, God was present. Yet in Advent, God came near. He came in a way that we could feel and touch. So much so that when He arrived, Joseph was instructed to call Him Immanuel, which means “God with us.”

As you begin Advent this year, be reminded that God is still Immanuel, God with us. He is still coming near to those who seek Him. He promises in James 4:8: “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.” Advent is near. Immanuel is near. Over the next few weeks as you look towards Christmas, will you draw near?

PRAY

In what areas of your life do you feel weary or overwhelmed? Ask God to help you lay any burden from this past year at His feet and to help you draw near to Him. Ask God to renew and refresh your mind and heart during this Advent season.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 2
LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 8:12

So, if this season feels shadowed by fear, anxiety, guilt, or grief, just remember – darkness never gets the final say. The Light does. The One who spoke, “Let there be light,” still speaks the same thing over you. Follow Him, and even in the darkest valley, your next step will shine, because the Light is with you, in you, and all around you.

Jesus, thank You for being my light. When I can't see what's ahead, remind me You already see it all. Chase out the darkness with Your presence. Help me walk in the light and reflect it wherever I go. Amen.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 3
BREAD OF LIFE

READ

I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

John 6:48-51

REFLECT

Following the feeding of the 5,000, that same crowd began to search for Jesus. When they found Him, Jesus called out their intentions, revealing they didn't want Him or an extraordinary sign – they wanted another free meal. While a miraculous meal from Jesus would be tasty, He offered much more. Jesus said, “I am the Bread of Life” and referred to Himself as “bread that has come down from heaven.” He desired to give them Himself, resulting in eternal life for all who would believe.

The skeptical crowd would compare Jesus' multiplication of bread and fish with the miraculous manna in Exodus. The manna would originate in the morning and spoil by day's end. Jesus, the Bread of Life, had always been and would return to Heaven to reign eternally. Jesus was offering them eternal substance and sustenance – everlasting life in Himself. Many, however, rejected His offer and never followed Him again.

As you think about Jesus as the Bread of Life, will you receive or reject Him? May our response be as Peter's: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Only you have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God".

PRAY

Do you desire the gifts of Jesus more than Jesus Himself? Ask God to reveal any place in your heart that your desires are misplaced and for God to help you to daily receive Him as the Bread of Life – your ultimate sustenance and satisfaction.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 4
PHYSICIAN

READ

Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to Him, "Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

Matthew 11:2-6

REFLECT

One of the most prominent displays of Jesus' power and one of the greatest expressions of the inbreaking power of the Kingdom of God was healing. Jesus continually set people free from blindness, paralysis, leprosy, demon-possession, etc. There was no sickness that could stand in the way of Jesus proclaiming and demonstrating that the Kingdom of God had come. When John asked if Jesus was truly the Messiah for whom they had been longing, Jesus used these examples of healing as evidence of his Messiahship. And Jesus is still the Great Physician making us whole even now.

If you find yourself in a place of sickness and struggle, ask Jesus as your Great Physician for healing. If for some reason that healing delays, ask Jesus to teach you something in the waiting. In the midst of the healing journey, ask the Lord to show you how to be an example to others for how to trust and have faith. Jesus didn't heal everyone who was brought to Him in Scripture, but we never want to miss out on God healing someone we love because we didn't ask. God is good and is working for our good, so we can trust Him in these seasons. (Rom. 8:28)

PRAY

If you have loved ones struggling with sickness, pray daily in faith for their healing. In the midst of sickness, pray for peace and joy despite the sickness. Pray for opportunities to use this time of sickness to share about God's power and faithfulness regardless of the circumstances in which you find yourself.

Jesus, in this Christmas season, would you show us your grace and mercy by being our Great Physician in all the things our enemy uses to try and destroy and dishearten us. Lord, heal our loved ones. Lord, give energy and strength in the midst of the struggle. Lord, help us to lean on You as our Great Physician.

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DECEMBER 5
CHRIST

READ

Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

Luke 2:25-26

REFLECT

For centuries, his people waited. Through exodus and exile, in thick darkness and deafening silence, the longing for redemption remained. Even when the prophets' words were drowned out by the heavy march of occupying forces, Simeon kept watch for the Messiah. And then one day, as a young peasant family walked through the temple doorway, he knew the wait was over. Christ had come.

Calling Jesus “Christ” is an audacious thing. It is an entire confession of faith wrapped up in one small word. With a breath, we are proclaiming that thousands of years ago, the Son of God came, lived, died—and lived again. We are declaring that upon his shoulders, we can rest the hope of the entire world. To call Him Christ is to gaze at our humble Savior with the tear-filled eyes of Simeon, and say, “It’s you! You are the one we’ve been waiting for.” In doing so, we remember that we were a people walking in darkness, but we saw a great light.

*Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart*

Charles Wesley, “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

PRAY

Spend time today confessing Jesus as the Christ. Tell Him what this means to you, naming the ways He is the answer to your deepest hopes and needs.

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DECEMBER 6
REFLECTION

Think about how God has spoken to you over this past week. Write any prayers, reflections, or confessions here.

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OTHER NAMES OF JESUS TO STUDY

LAMB OF GOD – John 1:29-35; Isaiah 53:7

DECEMBER 7
REFLECTION

As you look to a new week, what worries and cares do you need to lay at the feet of Jesus? Write any prayers, reflections, or confessions here.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

OTHER NAMES OF JESUS TO STUDY

KING OF KINGS – Revelation 19:11-16; Matthew 21:1-9

RABBI & TEACHER

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

REFLECT

Who was your favorite teacher? Just pondering on that person's name probably brings about feelings of affection and fond memories. The disciples likely had those same feelings about Jesus, their rabbi, their teacher. In Jewish culture, a rabbi was more than a teacher; His disciples learned by walking closely with Him, reflecting his actions, speech, and way of life. The disciples learned to pray, forgive, and love because they watched their rabbi, their teacher. Not only were they informed by the teachings of Jesus, but they were also transformed because they walked with Him daily.

During Advent, we look forward to the coming Messiah, our Savior, our King. But Jesus also came as a rabbi, a teacher who invites us to not just learn about Him but become like Him. The word rabbi means “my teacher” or “my master.” For the disciples, it was a personal relationship—Jesus was their own teacher. Jesus desires to become our rabbi too. He wants us to learn to walk daily with Him, be in His presence, and know His posture, pace, and priorities. Jesus, your rabbi, calls you just as He called the first disciples, “Come, follow me.”

Where do you need to be transformed to look more like Jesus? Ask God to help you lay aside anything keeping you from walking closely enough to Jesus to be able to reflect who He is.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 9
WORD

READ

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:1-14

REFLECT

From the very beginning, Jesus, the eternal Word, was with God and was God. Through Him, all things were made, and in Him, everything holds together. He stands above creation in glory and power, fully divine and eternal.

Yet during Advent, we remember something astounding! The Word who created all things did not remain distant or far removed. He became flesh and made His dwelling among us.

It can be hard to imagine how a God so holy and different from us could be approached, much less known. But the wonder of Advent is that God came near. Jesus took on human form. He walked the same ground we walk. He shared in our weakness and our pain so that we could know the God who has always been.

Jesus, the Word made flesh, is the promise that we are not forgotten and never alone. If His Word had the power to bring the universe into being, then that same Word can still speak into the broken and weary places in our lives. He brings life, light, and hope.

PRAY

As you walk through this Advent season, consider where you need Jesus, the Word, to speak. Where do you need His light to shine? What areas of your life do you need to hear His voice and be reminded that He is near? He has come close. He is still speaking. Will you listen?

[illegible]

DECEMBER 10
CORNERSTONE

READ

And he began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while. When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. And he sent another servant. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "Surely not!" But he looked directly at them and said, "What then is this that is written:

*“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?”
Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls
on anyone, it will crush him.”*

Luke 20:9-18

REFLECT

The coming of Jesus is not a backup plan for God. He has been preparing His people for the coming of the Son in the person of Jesus ever since the exile of Adam and Eve from the Garden. In this parable, Jesus explains how God's people, Israel, have mistreated the prophets that were sent by God and foretells of His death at their behest. It is the killing of the beloved Son, which Jesus connects with the prophecy of the cornerstone in Psalm 118:22. Through the actions of the Jews in the killing of Jesus, He becomes the cornerstone of the true people of God. To reject Him is to be rejected. To come to Him is to be built up on the foundation of the prophets and apostles into the true people of God (Eph 2:20).

Advent is a season of invitation to come to the One who came to us. An invitation to come to the Cornerstone and find true belonging with God. The sending forth of the Son to redeem us from the curse of sin and the law was always the plan. He was foretold by the prophets, proclaimed by the Apostles, and is adored by those who find refuge in Him.

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for being mistreated on my behalf. Thank You for laying down Your life so that I could have eternal life. Help me today to find refuge in You as I draw near to You. Amen.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 11
BRIGHT MORNING STAR

[illegible]

LORD

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Christmas decorations are part of what make the season so magical. The lights. The trees. The ornaments. They all add to the feeling of Christmas cheer. But the most meaningful decoration we put out is the nativity scene. Many families will place a small depiction of that first Christmas night in a prominent place in their home to remind them of the real “reason for the season.” And the smallest piece in the nativity scene is by far the most important. He is the One we are remembering in this season.

As you remember Jesus' birth this Christmas, also remember that this infant child is the all-powerful Lord over all the universe. May we worship Him as Savior and surrender to Him as Lord this Christmas.

Jesus, today I confess that You are both Christ and Lord. You have been highly exalted, and Your name is above every other name. Today, I bow my knees in rightful worship to You and surrender in a fresh way to Your rule and reign in my life. Amen.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 13
REFLECTION

Think about how God has spoken to you over this past week. Write any prayers, reflections, or confessions here.

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OTHER NAMES OF JESUS TO STUDY

PRINCE OF PEACE – Isaiah 9:1-7; Luke 1:67,76-79

DECEMBER 14
REFLECTION

As you look to a new week, what worries and cares do you need to lay at the feet of Jesus? Write any prayers, reflections, or confessions here.

[illegible]

OTHER NAMES OF JESUS TO STUDY

LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH – Revelation 5:1-10; Genesis 49:8-10

FRIEND

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

What an astounding thing for Jesus to say. The Son of God, perfect, holy, and eternal, looks at a group of flawed, fearful, and finite men and says, “You are my friends.”

Almost every relationship we have in this life is built on what we bring to the table. But friendship with Jesus starts, not with what we bring, but with what He brings. When He stretched out His arms on the cross, that was His way of saying, “This is what friendship really looks like. This is how much I love you. This is how much I want you to be with Me.”

So, if Advent feels heavy this year, remember this – you have a Friend who came for you. Not when you had it together, but when you didn't. Not because you earned it, but because He wanted you. He wanted you then, and He still wants you today. The same voice that spoke every galaxy into being still whispers, "You're not just my servant. You're my friend."

Jesus, thank You for calling me friend. Teach me to walk closely with You this Christmas season. Help me to trust You, teach me to talk with You, and then cause me to live like You're near. Let Your friendship steady me and make me a better friend to others. Amen.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 16
THE TRUE VINE

READ

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:1-5

REFLECT

Just as grapes must be connected to branches that are connected to living vines to receive nourishment and flourish, we must remain connected to Jesus to do the same. Jesus is the True Vine. All other vines are imitations and cannot start, sustain, or grow our spiritual lives. Jesus often used illustrations to help His disciples understand His teaching. Because vineyards were familiar to His followers, Jesus' reference to them in John 15 drove home vital spiritual truths for His disciples.

Jesus desires His disciples to have a fruitful relationship with Him. If branches disconnect from the vine, their fruit will either never produce or die. Every believer finds the beginning, sustaining, and growing of their spiritual lives in a relationship with Jesus. This is why Jesus said we must abide in Him and He in us. As we abide in Him, He adds spiritual fruit to our lives (Galatians 5:22-23). This comes through Him changing our minds, learning to trust, obeying His Word, and practicing spiritual habits such as prayer, service, fellowship, and reading the Word. The True Vine also prunes dead branches out of our lives, such as sin and destructive habits, so more life-giving sustenance from His Spirit can flow and produce flourishing.

PRAY

From what source are you trying to derive spiritual fruit? In what ways are you abiding in Christ? What “dead branches” does the True Vine need to prune from your life?

[illegible]

DECEMBER 17

READ

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

Revelation 21:5-6

REFLECT

No other name used of Jesus in all of Scripture conveys more power and majesty than His title as the “Alpha and the Omega.” He was the very first word of creation as God spoke everything into being (Jn. 1:1-4). He was the word of God made flesh who came and dwelt among us becoming like us in every way yet without sin (Heb. 2:14-18). He was the author and perfecter of faith showing us how to live with endurance and not give up (Heb. 12:2-3). He was the firstborn from the dead as the first to be resurrected. He spoke the words “It is finished” from the cross revealing that His mission to provide an opportunity for salvation for the world was complete.

He is also the one who will return for us one day and pronounce the final judgement on all of creation ushering in eternity in heaven with Him for all those who have believed. He is the first word and the last word. He is the first expression of God's power and the last. He is the one who inaugurated the Kingdom, and He is the one who will complete it. He is Jesus, the Alpha and Omega.

PRAY

Spend some time praising God for saving you, sustaining you, and perfecting you. Ask the Lord, to give you unwavering faith knowing that what He started in you He will complete. Ask the Lord, to give you boldness in pointing people to Jesus as the only and final authority in their lives.

Jesus, may You be my first thought and my last thought each day. Would You help me to live in such a way that I always point people to You as the first and last word for how we are to live in this world. Lord, give me faith and strength to trust You to the end without growing weary and losing heart. You are the One who created me, and You are the One who will perfect me. Amen.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 18
THE RESURRECTION

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Martha knew all the right answers, but even the best theology is hard to hold onto when grief comes calling. Future restoration felt like a distant perfume, no match for the overwhelming stench of death. Losing her brother was an inescapable reality; nothing could make it untrue. But then The Resurrection came back to town.

Charles Wesley, “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

Where do you need resurrection in your life? Ask Jesus to breathe new life into the places in your heart that have grown cold.

[illegible]

DECEMBER 19
THE GOOD SHEPHERD

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

REFLECT

When is the first time you remember feeling unsafe? As a child, you may have feared the dark, but a loved one's voice penetrating the darkness would bring a sense of safety because their presence was near. Jesus identified Himself as "the Good Shepherd" who knows His sheep, calls them by name, leads them, and lays down His life for them. In a pasture, sheep only lie down and rest when they feel safe. In Psalm 23, David wrote about his Good Shepherd that "He makes me lie down in green pastures." The sheep follow because they know they are safe with their shepherd; they know his voice, and it brings comfort. Not only do the sheep know the shepherd's voice, but he knows each of them by name.

Jesus referred to Himself as Yahweh Ro'i—the Lord my Shepherd. He was making a messianic and divine claim that He was God in the flesh. Advent reminds us that the Good Shepherd has come, not to watch from afar, but to walk among His sheep. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and He seeks you, calling for you. When you hear His voice, you can trust it and follow Him.

Spend some time praising Jesus for being your Good Shepherd. Ask Him to reveal any place in your heart that you are not trusting His goodness and care. Pray that He would help you relinquish control and lie down and rest with Him.

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DECEMBER 20
REFLECTION

Think about how God has spoken to you over this past week. Write any prayers, reflections, or confessions here.

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OTHER NAMES OF JESUS TO STUDY

JESUS THE SAVIOR – Matthew 1:18-25

DECEMBER 21
REFLECTION

As you look to a new week, what worries and cares do you need to lay at the feet of Jesus? Write any prayers, reflections, or confessions here.

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OTHER NAMES OF JESUS TO STUDY

BRIDEGROOM, HUSBAND – Revelation 19:6-9; Isaiah 54:5-7

DECEMBER 22
MAN OF SORROWS

READ

For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.
He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:2-5

REFLECT

We often reflect on the extraordinariness of the Incarnation, for what could be more awe-inspiring than God Himself taking on flesh to lead His people home. Yet what is often overlooked during Advent is the uneventfulness of the coming of Christ.

Isaiah 53:2 tells us that the coming Messiah, Jesus, “had no form or majesty that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him.” In simple terms, if you were looking for the Savior of the world, you probably would have missed Him. He came in a way no one expected.

Jesus did not arrive with pomp and circumstance but as a Man of Sorrows, well acquainted with grief. The Suffering Servant came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.

Because Jesus came as the Man of Sorrows, He can carry our sorrows. The Wounded One can heal our wounds.

During this Advent season, remember that the same humble Savior who entered the world quietly still meets us in the quiet places of our lives. He is not distant from our pain or indifferent to our struggles. He comes near, gentle, compassionate, and familiar with sorrow, to bring comfort, healing, and hope.

PRAY

Where do you need to invite the Man of Sorrows to meet you today?

[illegible]

DECEMBER 23
THE REDEEMER

READ

*I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud
and your sins like mist;
return to me, for I have redeemed you.*

Isaiah 44:22

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:13-14

Waiting for our 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 lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Titus 2:13-14

REFLECT

Throughout Advent, we consider the fact that the Son of God became man in the person of Jesus. The good news of the incarnation is that Jesus came to deliver us. Before we can really understand how Jesus has delivered us, we must understand what we have been delivered from. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden, all their descendants and creation were under the curse of death. Sin, which is disobeying God, leads to death (Gen 2:17, Rom 3:23). We have been alienated from God and bound in our sin, unable to live as we ought ever since sin came into the world. But God, in His grace, has always promised deliverance through a substitute.

The Son of God became man to act as our redeemer, our substitute, our ransom. He came to give His life in order that we might have eternal life. During Advent, let's remember that through His death, we have been brought back to God. That Jesus came to die to *deliver us*.

PRAY

Jesus, words could never express my gratitude for how You paid the price for my sin and received the penalty of death I deserved. Help me to never take for granted the redemption You have given me. Amen.

[illegible]

I AM

As we consider the Great I AM during this Advent season, we remember Jesus' eternal, unchangeable nature. That what He began, He will accomplish. As we look back at the precious gift of a child in a manger, we look forward to the glorious return of our King who will rescue His people.

Jesus, because You are eternal and unchanging You can be trusted. Help me to trust You even when my faith feels tested. Help me to believe that what You have begun in me, You will see through to the end. Amen.

CHRISTMAS DAY
CHILD

READ

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2:4-7

REFLECT

Joseph and Mary had journeyed to Bethlehem to register for the census. While being counted among the masses, something much more personal and miraculous was taking place. “The time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son” (Luke 2:6-7). The promise was fulfilled. The wait was over. The Savior had arrived. The hope of the world had come.

First-century Jews imagined the Messiah as a warrior who would save them from Roman oppression and establish an earthly kingdom. They definitely did not expect a baby, born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), to “save them from their sins” (Matthew 1:21) or “Immanuel, God with us” (Matthew 1:23). What relief had a child ever brought anyway?

But Jesus had come as a child who would grow up to be a man, who would hang on a cross and die for the sins of all mankind, who would be buried and raised again on the third day, and who will return to make all things new.

No wonder Mary treasured and pondered all of this in her heart (Luke 2:19). Today, we do the same. Rejoice! Jesus is “good news of great joy for all people. A Savior has been born – He is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11).

PRAY

On this Christmas Day, may the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to You, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer (Ps. 19:14). Jesus, thank You for coming as a child and embracing humanity so that I could be made right with our Father in Heaven. May I spend this day pondering, like Mary, the wonder of Your birth and anticipating Your soon return. Amen.

[illegible]

