

# BEGIN HERE...

*Advent* // from the Latin word *adventus* - arrival

The season of Advent is an invitation to hopeful waiting. It is a time to repent from darkness and embrace the light of Christ. Advent shakes us from our spiritual drowsiness and reawakens faith in God's promises. It reminds us that our waiting will one day end. Advent is about remembering the arrival of a promised Savior. And it is about the anticipation of His return.

## *How to Use This Guide*

Each week starts with a short story that will help awaken our imagination to the wonder of the Incarnation. If you have children, these stories are designed to be read aloud with your family as a way to include them in Advent. It will conclude with a Scripture as well as a few questions. Make these moments special. One way the early church did this was by lighting a candle at the beginning of each week during their Advent reading. For example, read the story at night and light a candle in a dark room. Let it be a reminder to your children that God has brought light to the darkness. Each week, light an additional candle and watch the room grow brighter and brighter until Christmas morning.

The rest of the week will consist of a short Scripture reading followed by a time of reflection and prayer. Do not rush through these prompts. They are meant to direct your heart to an aspect of Christ that will draw you closer to Him. Consider taking fifteen minutes in the morning to do this and meditate on your experience throughout the day. Use the following as a suggested weekly rhythm during this Christmas season:

Sunday ———— *Worship Gathering*  
Monday ———— *Read the story, Scripture, and discussion questions together as a family*  
Tuesday ———— *Personal Devotion Reading and Reflection*  
Wednesday ———— *Personal Devotion Reading and Reflection*  
Thursday ———— *Personal Devotion Reading and Reflection*  
Friday ———— *Personal Devotion Reading and Reflection*



*Advent has a dual meaning. It is the celebration of the arrival of Jesus and the anticipation of His return. Each week will have moments to focus on both. May our Heavenly Father bring peace to you this Christmas season. As you remember the promises He has already brought to pass, may your heart be filled with hope for the day when every tear is wiped away and all things are made new.*