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CSF Advent



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DAY 1

WHAT IS ADVENT?

Many of us have heard of Advent, but we're not really sure what it has to do with Christmas. Advent means coming, so as a part of the anticipation of Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Celebrating the coming of Christ is a beautiful thing. As we anticipate celebrating the birth of Christ this Advent season, let's be excited and give of ourselves in worship and celebration to the Hope of the world. To kick off day 1 in this Advent devotional, we're going to take a look at the moment that Mary and Joseph were told they would raise King Jesus.

¹⁸This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

²⁰As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

²²All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

²³"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel,^[1] which means 'God is with us.'"

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What does advent mean to you? How do you normally anticipate celebrating the birth of Christ each year?

What do you hope to learn through the next 25 days as we celebrate Christmas together?

DAY 2

JOY IN THE SEASON

During the season of Advent, we can find joy. Because of the birth of Jesus and the life He lived, displaying His grace; we are saved from our sin. When the Wise Men made it to see baby Jesus after a long journey, they were filled with Joy.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ²“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

³King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. ⁴He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote:

⁶“And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah,
are not least among the ruling cities of Judah,
for a ruler will come from you
who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.””

⁷Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. ⁸Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

⁹After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to

Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! ¹¹They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

Matthew 2:1-12 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

As followers of Jesus, why should we find joy during the season of Advent?

Reread Matthew 2:9-10. What do you think caused the Wise Men to be joyful?

DAY 3

A LIGHT TO THE WORLD

After a long wait for the Messiah, Simeon was filled with joy to hold Jesus in his arms. As he did, he knew that Jesus would be the Light of the world.

- ³⁰ I have seen your salvation,
³¹ which you have prepared for all people.
³² He is a light to reveal God to the nations,
and he is the glory of your people Israel!”

Luke 2:30-32 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

How has Jesus been a “light” in your life? What does it look like for us to let that light overcome our darknesses?

What can you do to celebrate Jesus as the light of the world this Advent season?

DAY 4

GABRIEL PREDICTS JESUS' BIRTH - PART 1

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant with her son, who would later become known as John the Baptist, an angel named Gabriel showed up to Mary and told her to not be afraid. Gabriel told Mary that she would conceive and give birth to the Savior of the world!

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. ²⁸ Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

²⁹ Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. ³⁰ "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

Luke 1:26-33 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

If you were in Mary's shoes, what would your reaction to Gabriel be? What about the news that he told her about giving birth to Jesus?

During this Christmas season, what is God telling you to not be afraid of?

DAY 5

GABRIEL PREDICTS JESUS' BIRTH - PART 2

Mary gave herself in full surrender to the plan God had for her to give birth to Jesus. Gabriel explained how God's word never fails and how Elizabeth was an example of God's love and influence as she once was barren, but was now pregnant with her son.

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

³⁵ The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. ³⁷ For the word of God will never fail."

³⁸ Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

Luke 1:34-38 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What have been some things in your life that God has done that you thought would be impossible? How does that bring you closer to Him?

How can you draw nearer as a servant of Jesus like Mary? Why does that matter during this advent season?

DAY 6

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth and when she arrived, Elizabeth's son leaped within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she was overcome with joy. Elizabeth told Mary how she was blessed for believing what the Lord said He would do.

³⁹ A few days later Mary hurried to the hill country of Judea, to the town ⁴⁰ where Zechariah lived. She entered the house and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ At the sound of Mary's greeting, Elizabeth's child leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

⁴² Elizabeth gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, "God has blessed you above all women, and your child is blessed. ⁴³ Why am I so honored, that the mother of my Lord should visit me? ⁴⁴ When I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ You are blessed because you believed that the Lord would do what he said."

Luke 1:39-45 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

When have you seen the Spirit leading and moving in your life?
What has God done for you that has filled you with joy?

Who is someone in your life that displays faithfulness and belief the same way Mary does in Scripture?

DAY 7

MARY'S SONG

While many would complain about the task they have been given from God, Mary decided to give God all the praise. She worshipped God and sang how He was most important to her.

⁴⁶ Mary responded,

“Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.

⁴⁷ How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

⁴⁸ For he took notice of his lowly servant girl,
and from now on all generations will call me blessed.

⁴⁹ For the Mighty One is holy,
and he has done great things for me.

⁵⁰ He shows mercy from generation to generation
to all who fear him.

⁵¹ His mighty arm has done tremendous things!
He has scattered the proud and haughty ones.

⁵² He has brought down princes from their thrones
and exalted the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away with empty hands.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel
and remembered to be merciful.

⁵⁵ For he made this promise to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his children forever.”

Luke 1:46-55 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

In what ways can you surrender your life further to God? What kind of lyrics would your song to God sing?

How does Mary's song point to Jesus' birth? Why should we remember this song during Christmas?

DAY 8

THE PROPHECY FROM ZECHARIAH

After the birth of his son, John, Zechariah prophesied how his son would lead the way for Jesus. Zechariah prophesied how John would tell the Good News about Jesus in how He would forgive, help people find salvation, and give light to those who chose to sit in their darkensses. John would teach many about the path that leads to life.

⁷⁶ “And you, my little son,
will be called the prophet of the Most High,
because you will prepare the way for the Lord.
⁷⁷ You will tell his people how to find salvation
through forgiveness of their sins.
⁷⁸ Because of God’s tender mercy,
the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us,
⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow
of death,
and to guide us to the path of peace.”

Luke 1:76-79 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

Why is Zechariah’s prophecy so important to the Christmas story? In this season of Advent, what sins do you need to confess before the Lord?

How have you seen God’s tender mercy displayed in your life? What steps can you take toward the path of peace this week?

DAY 9

HOPE IN THE MESSIAH PART 1

Isaiah was an Old Testament prophet that prophesied about the hope that is found in the Messiah. He prophesied of a time when despair would not go on forever. Through Jesus, people would see a great light and rejoice because of His saving power.

Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory.

²The people who walk in darkness
will see a great light.

For those who live in a land of deep darkness,
a light will shine.

³You will enlarge the nation of Israel,
and its people will rejoice.

They will rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest
and like warriors dividing the plunder.

⁴For you will break the yoke of their slavery
and lift the heavy burden from their shoulders.

You will break the oppressor's rod,
just as you did when you destroyed the army of Midian.

⁵The boots of the warrior
and the uniforms bloodstained by war
will all be burned.

They will be fuel for the fire.

Isaiah 9:1-5 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What darkneses does Jesus want to turn into light in your life?

What things challenge you in this prophecy from Isaiah? Why does this prophecy matter to the Advent season?

DAY 10

HOPE IN THE MESSIAH PART 2

Isaiah gave us a glimpse of what it would be like when Christ was born. Jesus would take up the throne of His ancestor David and many would call Him Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. There are many more names we have for Jesus, but the Truth remains that because of His birth and life He lived, we have these beautiful names to associate with Jesus. His life impacted us all when He chose to come to earth as a baby, live a full and sinless life, and take on the death that we deserve.

⁶For a child is born to us,
a son is given to us.

The government will rest on his shoulders.

And he will be called:
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His government and its peace
will never end.

He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of
his ancestor David
for all eternity.

The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's
Armies
will make this happen!

Isaiah 9:6-7 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

Which of the four names Isaiah called Jesus do you feel like impacts you the most? How do these four names relate to us in our lives of following Jesus?

In this season of waiting to celebrate Jesus, what names do you tend to associate with our Savior?

DAY 11

THE SUFFERING SAVIOR PART 1

Isaiah gave us a prophecy of Jesus about His suffering. In His life, Jesus was despised, rejected, humiliated, abused, and more. The beautiful thing is through all of that, Jesus carried our weaknesses and died for all of our sins. He saved us all from our shame, sin, and darkneses all because He simply loves us. None of this could have happened without the birth of Jesus. Here, Isaiah was prophesying about that beautiful message of hope we've been given. He died so that we could live.

Who has believed our message?

To whom has the Lord revealed his powerful arm?

² My servant grew up in the Lord's presence like a tender green shoot,
like a root in dry ground.

There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance,
nothing to attract us to him.

³ He was despised and rejected—

a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.
We turned our backs on him and looked the other way.
He was despised, and we did not care.

⁴ Yet it was our weaknesses he carried;
it was our sorrows^[a] that weighed him down.

And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God,
a punishment for his own sins!

⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion,
crushed for our sins.

He was beaten so we could be whole.

He was whipped so we could be healed.

⁶ All of us, like sheep, have strayed away.

We have left God's paths to follow our own.
Yet the Lord laid on him
the sins of us all.

Isaiah 53:1-6 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus died for you and your sins?

How does the birth of Christ lead us to this message of hope?

What things do you need to give to Jesus this Christmas season to forgive and let Him breath His hope in?

DAY 12

THE SUFFERING SAVIOR PART 2

It's crazy to think about the life of Jesus. Throughout His whole life, He never did any wrong and never deceived anybody. He was vulnerable around everybody. If you were around Jesus, you knew there was something different about Him. He loved people and spread His message of hope. His last message of hope was His death and resurrection. He willingly took on the darkneses of the cross. All of the humiliation, abuse, and condemnation. But He did it so that we could live.

⁷ He was oppressed and treated harshly,
yet he never said a word.

He was led like a lamb to the slaughter.

And as a sheep is silent before the shearers,
he did not open his mouth.

⁸ Unjustly condemned,
he was led away.

No one cared that he died without descendants,
that his life was cut short in midstream.

But he was struck down
for the rebellion of my people.

⁹ He had done no wrong
and had never deceived anyone.

But he was buried like a criminal;
he was put in a rich man's grave.

Isaiah 53:7-9 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

During this Christmas season, how should we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus? How do Christmas and Easter go hand-in-hand? In what ways can you spread the message of Hope this Christmas season?

DAY 13

THE SUFFERING SAVIOR PART 3

It was in God's good plan for Jesus to endure the cross. God knew we could never take on this life and make it through successfully unless His love was in us. Through Jesus, we have been counted right by God because He bore all of our sins. You are not too far from God. When you draw near to Him, He will always draw near to you.

¹⁰ But it was the Lord's good plan to crush him
and cause him grief.

Yet when his life is made an offering for sin,
he will have many descendants.

He will enjoy a long life,
and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands.

¹¹ When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish,
he will be satisfied.

And because of his experience,
my righteous servant will make it possible
for many to be counted righteous,
for he will bear all their sins.

¹² I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier,
because he exposed himself to death.

He was counted among the rebels.

He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.

Isaiah 53:10-12 NLT

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What sins in your life have you been holding onto? How do you feel knowing Jesus forgives those sins and wants to help you release them?

What are some next steps in your faith that you feel Christ calling you take during Advent?

DAY 14

MADE NEW – PART 1

For the next three days, we will be pondering some questions about what it means to be made new through Jesus. Because of the sacrifice that Christ made on our behalf, He has redeemed us. We are now called to be ambassadors for Christ. An ambassador is someone who represents someone or something else. So, as an ambassador of Christ, we are called to represent Christ through every aspect of our lives whether we are in class or at Christmas dinner with our families.

20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

How is God calling you right now to be an ambassador for Him?

Where are you feeling led and challenged to be a representative for Him?

DAY 15

MADE NEW – PART 2

Does it seem a little strange to you why we are reading through non-Christmas scriptures during an Advent devotional study? Okay, it might seem a little strange, but it has a purpose. The birth of Jesus had to happen in order for the Gospel to happen. It seriously all fits together as God’s plan for redemption and making His children new in Christ! Because of the hope we have knowing that as followers of Jesus we will have eternal life, we can live with the truth of knowing that He will wipe away every tear and one day there will be no more death, crying or pain. But, until then, we must be faithful to do what He has called us to do.

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

Revelation 21:1-4 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

How are you currently living and loving like Jesus did?

Are you living a life that is reflecting the hope we have in Jesus?

Are those around you able to see and know that you have been made new in Jesus?

DAY 16

MADE NEW – PART 3

God Himself came down in the form of a baby in order to bring salvation to His children. Jesus, the Son of God, was born into a sinful world. He came to make us new and He desires for all His children to be made new through Him!

Jesus is the Alpha and He is the Omega! He is the beginning and He is the end! Personally, this concept can be hard to wrap my mind around. Like, WOAH! This is the Truth! Jesus was there in the beginning, and He will be there in the end. Yet, God still chose to come down to this earth in the form of a baby. How humbling it is to know that our God makes us new through Him because He loves us that much!

5 He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

6 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 water without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

Revelation 21:5-7 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What does it personally mean to you when God calls you His child?

Who will you share this truth with? We should not keep this truth to ourselves! We should desire for our family and for our friends to be Made New!

DAY 17

FROM THE LINE OF DAVID – PART 1

As we have previously seen in different passages of Isaiah, there are many prophecies of the coming Jesus long before Jesus was even born into this world. So, here is a very brief history lesson for you. Jesse is the father of David (like King David in Psalms). And Jesus is a descendant of David, making Him from the line of Jesse. Crazy! So, in Isaiah, He was prophesying that Jesus (a shoot) will come from the line (from the stump) of Jesse. Much fruit and growth will come to life because of Jesus!

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—
3 and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
5 Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Isaiah 11:1-5 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

If you have read Isaiah before, did you know that this passage was a direct prophecy to the coming Messiah?

What fruit have you seen Jesus bear because of the work that He has done through you or someone close to you?

DAY 18

FROM THE LINE OF DAVID – PART 2

This next passage we are going to read together is super cool! Jesus brings the nations to Himself! It was prophesied long before Jesus was born that one day all the nations will rally to the Root of Jesse, who is Jesus! People of every tribe, tongue, and nation will come to Him!

10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious. 11 In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the Mediterranean.

12 He will raise a banner for the nations
and gather the exiles of Israel;
he will assemble the scattered people of Judah
from the four quarters of the earth.

Isaiah 11:10-12 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

How have you seen the nations come to Jesus?

How are you a part of bringing the nations to Jesus?

How can you help to bring the nations to Jesus right where you are right now?

DAY 19

HE IS COMING – PART 1

God also told of the coming Jesus to Jeremiah. Jesus was described as the Branch sprout from David's line. Our Savior would come to save and bring His people to safety in and through Him. Jeremiah also said that He would be our Lord, our Righteous Savior!

14 “‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

15 “‘In those days and at that time

I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line;

he will do what is just and right in the land.

16 In those days Judah will be saved

and Jerusalem will live in safety.

This is the name by which it will be called:

The Lord Our Righteous Savior.’

Jeremiah 33:14-16 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What is something that was promised to you and then fulfilled later on? How did that fulfillment impact you?

What does this promise from God mean for us today?

DAY 20

HE IS COMING – PART 2

Today's scripture is only one verse, but it's a powerful one. Years before Jesus was even born, Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be born of a virgin (Mary) and would be called Immanuel, which means God with us!

14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What is the significance of God choosing a virgin to give birth to the son of God?

How does this prophecy in the Old Testament display to us God's provision and plan not only for the New Testament, but also for our lives today?

DAY 21

HE IS COMING – PART 3

One of the cool opportunities we have is to give God praise knowing about the coming of Jesus. Not just His Christmas coming, but also the second coming when He makes all things new. We need not be afraid because of who Jesus is and what He's done for us.

9 You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.

You who bring good news to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

10 See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.

11 He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

Isaiah 40:9-11 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What does it look like to lift up a shout to Jesus? How can you do that this Christmas season?

What stories of Jesus does this Scripture in Isaiah remind you of?

DAY 22

HE IS COMING – PART 4

This Scripture found in Micah is a direct prophecy about Jesus. Jesus would be the one who would bring Israel back together. Jesus is the One who shepherds the flock in the name of the Lord. Jesus is the One who brings peace over all the world. When we say He is coming, this is something the Israelites would have looked forward to and today it is something we celebrate knowing the celebration of the birth of Jesus is coming!

2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans[a] 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.”

3 Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

4 He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

5 And he will be our peace
when the Assyrians invade our land
and march through our fortresses.
We will raise against them seven shepherds,
even eight commanders,

Micah 5:2-5 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

If you were an Israelite, what would have been your response to hearing these words from Micah? How do they still ring true today as we celebrate Christmas?

What truths about Jesus stick out to you from this Scripture?

DAY 23

HE IS COMING – PART 5

This Scripture is good for us to look at as we celebrate Advent because Jesus is the Word that was in the very beginning. The Word was and is God. Everything was created through the Word. So, as we celebrate Christmas, we celebrate the Creator of the world that came to Earth to seek and save the lost. That Creator has saved us all from the many darkneses we deserve.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1:1-5 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

Why does this Scripture matter when it comes to Advent? How has God uniquely created you?

What God-created things do you enjoy? How can you draw closer to the Creator this Christmas?

DAY 24

HE IS COMING – PART 6

It's Christmas Eve! Tomorrow is the day so many of us have looked forward to because we get to celebrate the birth of Jesus! I have always loved Christmas Eve for many reasons; Christmas dinner with my family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, the whole big family together, candlelight services at church, and new cozy pajamas (family tradition).

Jesus is our true Light! He calls us children of God when we believe in Him and accept Him as the Savior of our lives. In the book of John, we learn that Jesus is the Word. He was then born into this world as a baby in the flesh and dwelled among us. He is filled with Glory and so full of grace and truth! Let us rest in that knowledge today!

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:9-14 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What is your favorite Christmas tradition?

Who can you share this truth with today that Jesus is the light of the world?

DAY 25

THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOR!

Merry Christmas friends! I pray that you are enjoying the day celebrating the birth of Jesus today! May we not get wrapped up in the busyness that this day may bring. Yes, of course opening presents and seeing the joy on everyone's faces is fun; and yes, Christmas dinner is super delicious. But, the joy in today ultimately should come from the truth of knowing that our Savior came down in the form of a baby to bring us to Him.

As my family eats breakfast on Christmas morning, we also read the story of the birth of Jesus together. This is something that my family has done for as long as I can even remember. My parents don't want my siblings and I to lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas. I would love for you to join me in reading the Christmas story together!

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone

around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Luke 2:1-21 NIV

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

What is the best thing that has happened to you since last Christmas?

What do you (or your family) do to keep Jesus the center of Christmas day?

How are you going to live out the hope we have in Jesus today?