



ADVENT

A 25 Day Christmas Devotional



DECEMBER

1

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

Jesus Is Our Wonderful Counselor



Read This: Isaiah 9:6-7

Say This:



Have you ever needed help knowing what to do? Have you ever gotten advice about something, but the advice wasn't good or helpful? Sometimes people counsel us — or give us advice — but their suggestions aren't very good.

In today's passage, the prophet Isaiah points forward to Jesus' first coming, and one of the titles Isaiah gives to Jesus is "Wonderful Counselor."

This title is about more than someone who gives good advice. The word *wonderful* in Isaiah 9 doesn't just mean "really good," like when you say, "Mom, these chicken nuggets are wonderful." No, *wonderful* in Isaiah 9 means "beyond belief" or "supernatural." And the word *counselor* means "wise ruler" (a person, not the wooden measuring stick from science class). Because Jesus is totally wise and completely good, we can trust His advice.

These words together give us a picture of who Jesus is. He is not only able to hear our struggles and difficulties; He is also completely competent and able to do something about our struggles. He counsels us through His Word, leaders and parents, and situations in our lives that bring us closer to Him.

During Advent, we celebrate the coming of Christ to us. We celebrate how He

came into a dark world filled with sin and brought perfect wisdom through His supernatural life. While living in our broken world, He showed us how His wise rule defeats what sin has done.

Because Jesus came to us, we can go to Him. We can approach Him with our sorrows, joys and disappointments. He not only hears us, but He also acts on our behalf. He is a supernaturally wise Ruler who always does what is best.

This Advent, we remember that Jesus did not come only to give advice. He came to give Himself, and to call us back to Himself.

Pray this:

Jesus, You are our Wonderful Counselor. Help us turn to You before we try to figure things out on our own. Thank You that You are like us and understand our sorrows and pain. But thank You that You are also not like us and can be our perfect sacrifice and present help. Thank You for not just giving us advice; thank You instead for giving us Yourself. Amen.

Sing This:

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

DECEMBER

2

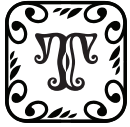
WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

We Need a Wonderful Counselor



Read This: Jeremiah 17:7-9

Say This:



here was a child whose parents had a rule about candy. Their children could eat candy but only so much. When one of the children was about 9 years old, he had a sports tournament. The coach brought candy, snacks and soda. They were allowed to eat as much as they wanted. He did. And he paid the price. He missed the game because he was so sick from all the sugar.

The candy-loving child thought his way was better than that of his parents. He quickly found out that his parents were right and that his heart, with its misplaced desires, led him astray. This is what our hearts do. Left to ourselves, we think we know best. Rather than asking God for wisdom, we trust our feelings. We follow our heart. And very quickly, we end up spiritually sick.

In Jeremiah 17, the prophet tells us that our hearts don't know what is best. When we follow our heart, we head toward things immediately in front of us that we think will make us happy. We eat too much, we scroll too much, we watch YouTube too much, we avoid work and we try our best to never get bored. Our hearts need to be made new. Sometimes we trust our feelings more than God's Word and think we know best. That is why we need a Wonderful Counselor.

We learn rather quickly that our desires for good things can become all consuming. Our bad choices have real consequences, like too much candy did for that child. The Wonderful Counselor came into the world at just the right time. He came to comfort our hearts, to guide our steps and to point us to Himself.

Our hearts will lead us astray. We need the wise counsel of God by the power of the Spirit in the work of Jesus for us. He takes our sinful hearts and gives us new ones (Ezekiel 36:26). We can trust Him because His wisdom and His ways are perfect.

Pray This:

Lord, I confess I want things that I think will make me happy apart from You. Help me to trust in Your plan. Help me to obey Your Word. Bring people into my life who will lead me to love You more. I pray that Your Spirit will help me see my need for You and Your desire to save me. Thank You for Jesus, my Wonderful Counselor. Amen.

Sing This:

What Child Is This

DECEMBER

3

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

God Promises to Guide His People



Read This: Isaiah 11:1-5

Say This:



One of the most difficult things for any child is waiting for Christmas to come. Leading to this special day, a house is often full of the smells of baked goods, pine and anticipation. Every day before Christmas feels like a year as we wait for December 25th.

For hundreds of years, God's people waited for His promised Messiah. Life was hard, and they lived in fear and uncertainty with enemies all around. It was a world charged with pain, anger and anticipation.

In the days of Isaiah, God promised that His Messiah would be full of wisdom, understanding, counsel and might (Isaiah 11:2). The people waited and waited. But they saw nothing, only darkness and silence.

But even when all feels dark and silent, God is working and moving. Darkness and silence never have the final word. God does. He had promised to send a wise Savior who would redeem, restore and guide us. And God always keeps His promises.

God fulfilled His promise by sending us a baby who would grow into a man who would die in our place. This is what we celebrate during Advent – the coming of Christ. The fulfillment of God's promise gives us peace as we now wait for our Savior to come again.

When you feel sad about today or worried about tomorrow, remember God and His wisdom. The same heavenly wisdom that sent Jesus to us is with you right now, guiding you by God's Word through His Spirit. God's Word and Jesus' sacrificial life lead us back to God.

Pray This:

Lord, thank You that even when I feel lost, I know I am never alone. You are with me, guiding me with Your supernatural wisdom and leading me to You through Your Spirit. Thank You that You guide me every day. Amen.

Sing This:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

DECEMBER

4

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

*Jesus Teaches with
Wisdom and Authority*



Read This: Luke 2:41-50

Say This:



What's the highest IQ ever recorded? Scientists say around 228. That's almost unimaginable.

But here's the thing – God doesn't have an IQ score. His wisdom isn't just higher on the same scale. It's a completely different category.

In Luke 2, we see Jesus at age 12 displaying great knowledge – but in a far greater way than ours. As He taught the Scriptures at the temple that day, men who had studied the Torah their whole lives were left speechless. Because Jesus is fully God and fully man, He was wiser than the wisest men even at age 12. This passage is a fulfillment of Isaiah 9. It reveals Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor.

In this brief passage, God is giving us a small glimpse into His wisdom. He's revealing that we can trust His wisdom because Jesus' teaching came straight from Him.

God made Himself small and came into our world, so we can have confidence in His care for us. But while on Earth, he also revealed His great wisdom that is available to us. In taking on flesh and becoming fully man, Jesus showed us how to wisely relate to each other and how to know God.

In this season of Advent, we rest in the confidence that the God who knows all

things also knows us. We can be assured that when we face a problem we can't figure out or a situation beyond our ability, we have a supernaturally wise Ruler who will give us wisdom if we ask (James 1:5). So ask Him today. Ask Him to teach you, lead you and help you walk in the wisdom that is so needed today.

Pray This:

Lord, thank You for being our wisdom. Thank You that in Jesus, You have revealed how perfectly wise You are. Help us to trust Your wisdom over our feelings and Your Word over our thoughts. Thank You for teaching us to walk in Your way. Thank You for sending Your wisdom to us in Christ. Amen.

Sing This:

O Holy Night

DECEMBER

5

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

*We Can Bring Questions,
Fears and Decisions to Jesus*



Read This: James 1:5-6

Say This:



Whom do you ask when you have a question? A teacher? A parent? A really smart friend? ChatGPT?

All of us, adults included, look to other sources when we don't have the answers we need.

James 1 tells us that when we lack wisdom, we can ask God. Our Wise Counselor will give generously to all who ask. Verse 6 says to ask in faith. God wants us to ask Him for wisdom not as a last resort, but as a first impulse. And He wants us to ask in faith, believing that the God of wisdom is who He says He is.

When things in life don't turn out how we plan and our lives are filled with questions and fear, we can turn to God. James says God is the source of the help we need through faith that He gives us.

In her poem "Faith," 19th century poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox wrote:

*I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home with broken masts
and sails;*

*I shall believe the Hand which never fails,
From seeming evil worketh good for me.¹*

Faith in a Wonderful Counselor means we can have peace and confidence in the darkest nights and hardest days. We can

rest in this assurance because we trust in the wisdom of a God who knows everything and works it all – even the bad things – for our good. In this Advent season of waiting, our confidence does not come from how much we know about God, but from knowing that our Wonderful Counselor knows us.

Jesus is not just a computer program like ChatGPT that spits out information when asked. He is the God who sees us (Genesis 16:13). He is the God who knows all things, including us.

Because Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor, we are never without help. We always have somewhere to turn.

Pray This:

Lord, thank You for knowing me and seeing me. Thank You that I can run to You and You will give me the wisdom I need. Help me to trust You in every situation. I love You. Thank You for loving me first. Amen.

Sing This:

Be Thou My Vision

¹Wilcox, Ella Wheeler. "Faith." Poetry Explorer. Accessed June 16, 2026. <https://www.poetryexplorer.net/poem26.php?pid=10032723>.

DECEMBER

6

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

Worship Jesus, the Wisdom of God



Read This: Colossians 1:15-20

Say This:



What do you think about when you think of Christmas? Maybe a Christmas tree or cookies? Maybe presents? What is the best Christmas present you ever received?

Our greatest gift is Jesus. Yet He is easy to miss. When He came into the world, everyone was expecting something different. Someone else. During Advent, we remember how God sent Jesus into the world as a baby and we anticipate Him coming again as our Righteous King.

When Jesus was here on Earth, everyone who heard Him teach, even His enemies, called Him a wise teacher. But Jesus is more than that. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:24-25, *Christ [is] the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

Christ is more than just really smart. Because He is God's wisdom, He deserves more than our admiration; He deserves our worship. How foolish is it that we try to accomplish things on our own without God's wisdom? Yet how gracious is God that gives us His wisdom when we ask? Because these things are true, we should be moved to worship Jesus, as Paul reminds us in Colossians 1:15-20. No passage in Scripture paints a picture of the deity

and beauty of Christ like the opening of Colossians.

This Advent season, let us approach Jesus filled with wonder and worship for who He is – our Wonderful Counselor who alone has the power to save us. Take time to marvel at who Jesus is. Thank Him for His wisdom. Thank Him for His love. Thank Him for coming to rescue us. The more we see Jesus clearly, the more our hearts are moved to worship Him.

Pray This:

Father God, thank You for giving us Your own wisdom in Christ. Thank You that in Your wisdom, You sent Him to rescue us from sin and death. Thank You for guiding and leading us, not by our desires but by Your good purposes. We love You. Help us to trust You more. Amen.

Sing This:

Joy to the World

DECEMBER

7

W O N D E R F U L
C O U N S E L O R

*Jesus Will Rule Eternity
with Perfect Wisdom*



Read This: Isaiah 11:6-9

Say This:



Have you ever wondered why something happened? Have you ever been scared or sad because of a war you read about or a tragedy you watched in a video? We live in a world that is broken because people are living by their own wisdom instead of God's wisdom.

In Isaiah 11:6-9, we read something that seems unbelievable. Verse 6 tells us that one day a lion will lie next to a calf and a wolf and a lamb will live next to each other in peace and harmony. This is not possible in the world as we know it now. Putting a lion or a wolf near a defenseless animal like a calf or a lamb does not seem wise. Yet Isaiah says that is what will happen when Jesus comes again.

That kind of a world – one filled with peace and lacking all pain, sorrow and strife – feels impossible. But Isaiah shares how this kind of world is possible in verse 9. When Christ comes again, He will restore our broken world and make all things new. Isaiah says something profound: The knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth like the water covers the sea. That is so beautiful and so otherworldly. God's justice, love and power will renew the Earth, and His knowledge and wisdom will maintain its beauty forever.

This is one of the most amazing and comforting things about the wisdom of God. This Wonderful Counselor is going

to rule our world with perfect wisdom in such a way that strife and pain and sorrow will be no more.

During Advent each December, we celebrate Christ's first coming, the beginning of our Wonderful Counselor's rule. But we are also in a longer Advent season, one in which we wait for our Savior's return. While we wait, we ask for the perfect wisdom of God to fill our hearts to love and lead like Jesus would. Advent is ultimately about waiting and longing for the second coming of our wise King who will fill the earth with His wisdom and grace in such a way that our world is made new.

As this week ends, remember that Jesus is not only the Wonderful Counselor we need today; He is also the Wonderful Counselor who will reign forever.

Pray This:

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your perfect wisdom and faithful promises. Help us trust You as we wait for the day You return and make all things new. Fill our hearts with hope and help our family follow You until that glorious day. Amen.

Sing This:

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

DECEMBER

8

MIGHTY
GOD

Jesus Is Our Mighty God



Read This: Isaiah 9:6

Say This:



ast week we learned how Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor. He guides us in truth and wisdom.

This week we will learn how Jesus is our Mighty God. The fact that Isaiah placed this name next to *Wonderful Counselor* is no accident. As Isaiah looked ahead to the coming of the Messiah, Isaiah knew He not only would be a wise teacher of truth but also a Mighty God. Jesus is fully God and fully man.

This is one of the reasons so many people didn't recognize Jesus when He came to Earth. They expected a mighty human leader who would lead them to victory over Rome. But they didn't expect Mighty God in the flesh, and they certainly didn't expect His earthly life to begin as a helpless baby! What they didn't realize was that Jesus is both God and man. Jesus shares all of God's divine characteristics. The biblical writers gave Jesus titles reserved only for God, and Jesus claimed these for Himself as well. And when He was on Earth, Jesus performed miracles that only God can do.¹

The fact that Jesus is Mighty God is so comforting, especially when we are going through hard times. Have you ever been sad or afraid? We all have. But we can take comfort in those moments by remembering that Jesus knows all things and is also powerful to save us.

During Christmas, when we are singing songs and telling stories of the baby promised to Mary, the baby is wrapped in swaddling cloths. It is very easy to forget that this baby is the God of the whole universe. He chose to make Himself small for our sake. It's a great comfort to remember that "God's answer to everything that has ever terrorized us is a child. The power of God is so far superior to ... all the big shots of this world that he can defeat them by coming as a mere child. His answer to the bullies swaggering through history is not to become an even bigger bully. His answer is Jesus."²

Jesus is God with us!

Pray This:

Mighty God, thank You that You are kind enough to listen to my prayers but also powerful enough to save me from my enemies. You are perfectly good and all-powerful. Help me trust You more.

Sing This:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

¹Max Anders, Galatians-Colossians, vol. 8, *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 316.

²Raymond C. Ortlund Jr. and R. Kent Hughes, *Isaiah: God Saves Sinners, Preaching the Word* (Crossway, 2005), 99.

DECEMBER

9

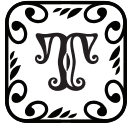
MIGHTY
GOD

*We Need a Mighty God
Because We Cannot Save Ourselves*



Read This: Psalm 46:1-3

Say This:



Think about the time you were most scared in life. Have you ever had to walk in the dark or ride a tall roller coaster? Has a friend or sibling ever hidden somewhere and jumped out to scare you?

What about times when you felt stuck or unsafe? Have you ever been puzzled by a math problem? Or maybe you climbed a tree but couldn't get down. In each of those situations, you probably realized that you needed help – that you couldn't take care of the problem on your own or save yourself. You needed someone smarter, stronger or bigger than you are.

The Advent season reminds us that we have a God who is strong enough to save us in any situation. In the psalm we just read, we see how God is our refuge and strength. No matter what happens on Earth, we have a Savior who can save.

But the most important thing He saves us from isn't math problems, roller coasters or dark walks. He saves us from our greatest enemies: sin and death. This is why God sent Jesus to us as a baby who grew into a man. Jesus came to defeat the two enemies we can't defeat on our own.

Because God did this to save us, we trust in Him. We can rest in Him. We don't have to fear anything. When you belong to God,

you can have courage no matter what you face, not because you are strong but because Jesus loves you and because He is an all-wise, all-powerful Savior. It's like the well-known song "Jesus Loves Me" tells us: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so; little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong."

We need a Savior stronger than we are. That Savior is Jesus.

Pray This:

Father, thank You for sending Jesus. I confess that I am weak, but I also confess that You are strong. I ask You to remind me this Advent season that I have good reason to rejoice in Your love for me. Help me to love You more.

Sing This:

Jesus Strong and Kind

DECEMBER

10

MIGHTY

GOD

*God Promised to Come
and Save His People*



Read This: Isaiah 40:28-31

Say This:



as anyone ever made a promise to you they didn't keep? How did you feel? Were you upset? Did you give up believing they would eventually come through?

God promised to redeem and rescue His people. They were in a bad place, living generation after generation in exile and oppression, away from their homes. God made a promise to them that He would ultimately fulfill in Jesus. But many generations died waiting for rescue.

In Isaiah 40, we see a beautiful message from God to His people. It's a message that reminds us that God is different than we are. We get tired in our waiting. God *does not faint or grow weary* (v. 28).

This is good news for us! Our Mighty God gives power to the weak. He preserved a remnant of His people who went into exile thousands of years ago, and He helps you and me today. He gives us power that we don't have on our own.

The Christmas story reminds us of our Mighty God, who is full of power and strength. He gives His people strength to wait until just the right time. He came into the darkness and silence of a world waiting for their Deliverer.

God promised to send Jesus, and He did at just the right time. He also promised us

that Jesus will come back again one day. So like the people of Israel, we wait, receiving strength from our Mighty God when we grow faint and weary. We know Jesus will come again and that He will fully rescue us. He will bring an end to all sadness, pain and death.

Christmas is the story of God keeping His promise to rescue His people.

Pray This:

God, thank You for rescuing Your people. Our prayer is the same as Your people's prayer long ago when they were waiting for the Messiah to come. As we wait for Jesus to come again, we say, "Come quickly, Jesus! Restore, repair, and remake this world that is broken by sin. Help us to wait, even when we get weary. We love You, long-expected Jesus."

Sing This:

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

DECEMBER

11
MIGHTY
GOD

Jesus Shows His Mighty Power



Read This: Mark 4:35-41

Say This:



Whenever I read this story about Jesus calming the storm, I'm struck by how afraid the disciples were. We may feel nervous during lightning or hail, but many of Jesus' disciples were experienced fishermen. If they were terrified, the storm must have been severe.

What was Jesus doing during the storm? He was sleeping! The boat was filling with water, and Jesus was asleep. Didn't He care? Yes, He did! But He also trusted. He knew that His Father was with them. He knew they were safe. The danger was real, but so was Jesus. He was with them the whole time.

Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing? the disciples cried (v. 38). The disciples knew Jesus as a Wonderful Counselor and a wise teacher, but they were about to see Him as Mighty God.

Jesus did something profound. He talked to the weather. Jesus told the storm to stop, to be still ... and it did! The disciples were blown away. At that moment, their fear of the storm gave way to a greater fear. They were amazed at the power of Jesus. By controlling the wind and the waves, He showed that He is Mighty God.

This Advent, we must remember that Jesus is supernaturally wise, but He is also supernaturally powerful. No matter what

we are facing, we can rest because we have a wise, good, kind, powerful God who can calm the storms we face. Everything in the world must obey His perfect wisdom and strength. We can trust Him in both the small and big things we face because He is so mighty, the waves hear Him and obey.

Pray This:

Mighty God, help us to hear Your voice and obey like the wind and waves obeyed Your Son, Jesus. Help us to not be overcome by our fears but instead look to Jesus, who came near to us to rescue and restore us to Himself. Jesus, thank You for Your power to save. Amen.

Sing This:

O Come All Ye Faithful

DECEMBER
12
MIGHTY
GOD

*Because Jesus is Mighty God,
We Do Not Have to Live in Fear*



Read This: Isaiah 41:8-10

Say This:



Everyone in this room has something in common. We all have two eyes and two ears. We all have noses too. Guess what? Everyone in this room also has fear. We're all afraid of something. For kids, it might be fear of the dark or being alone. For parents, it might be fear of growing old, a lack of money, or relationship worries. No one is free from worry.

Ask your kids: What's one thing that makes you feel scared?

Follow-up for older kids: Why do you think being scared is so hard to admit?

The passage we just read in Isaiah 41 says it plainly. God tells us He is with us and that He will strengthen, uphold and protect us. How is this helpful? Because the most powerful person in the universe is also the most present. He is Immanuel, God with us. His powerful presence brings us peace that calms every fear.

When we feel afraid, we must remind ourselves that our God is so big, so strong and so mighty, there is nothing He cannot do. He showed us this by coming to us before we came to Him. In Advent, we celebrate God coming into our world – His nearness. We also expect the return of Jesus. He will restore the broken parts of the world He made for us.

No matter how big your fear is, Jesus is bigger still.

Pray This:

Lord, we come before You afraid and small. But You are Mighty God, and You are right here with us. We bring You our fears today (*pause – let each person name one aloud*). Give us courage that is not our own, because You are powerful and You are near. Amen.

Sing This:

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

DECEMBER

13

MIGHTY
GOD

*We Worship Jesus as Mighty God
Who Is Worthy of All Praise*



Read This: Revelation 5:11-13

Say This:



So often, we miss the most important part of Advent: the second coming of Christ. We focus on baby Jesus surrounded by the barn animals, shepherds and wise men. Christmas is a time to remember, but it's also a time to anticipate the second coming of Jesus like the wise men anticipated His first coming.

In Revelation 5, we see millions of people gathered around the throne in worship of Jesus, the Lamb of God. This is the culmination of Christmas, with all the angels and saints gathered around in worship of the One who came and lived for us – the One who gave Himself for us so we could be redeemed and restored to right relationship with God.

Jesus lived, died, rose and ascended to the Father, and He is worthy of our praise. This Advent season, we should not only be thankful for the birth of Jesus, but we should also praise Him as the risen Lamb of God, just like we will one day before His throne.

This Christmas, let's make sure Jesus isn't just one of the many parts of Christmas we celebrate. Let's be sure to stop in thankfulness and gratitude for the Lamb who died in our place. He is our Mighty God, and He is worthy of all our praise.

Pray This:

Father God, thank You for Jesus. Thank You that He came to Earth and lived, died, rose again and ascended to You in heaven, where He is now seated. We're excited to one day worship Him as the God who is mighty to save in His presence. We praise You now as we will do one day with all the saints. Amen.

Sing This:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

DECEMBER

14
MIGHTY
GOD

*One Day, Every Knee Will Bow
Before Mighty God*



Read This: Philippians 2:9-11

Say This:



Have you ever seen a king or queen, maybe on TV or in a video or a book? Everyone knows who they are by their title and often by the clothes they wear. People who see them in person often greet them by bowing their head or kneeling to give them honor.

Sadly, though, most people today don't honor the name of God. We see and hear people often using God's name in a way that's disrespectful. If you watch the news, scroll through any screens or simply go through everyday life, the world is doing very little to bow before the Mighty God.

Philippians 2 tells us that when Jesus returns, every knee will bow before Him and confess Him as the Mighty God. This is where history is moving, even when our world says otherwise. This promise in Philippians is the hope of every Christian. The Bible promises that Jesus, who came to us the first time as a baby, will return as a conquering king. He has always been Mighty God.

Advent calls us to live based on the knowledge of what is coming. Because we know how the story ends, with every knee bent and every voice declaring Jesus' lordship, we can live now without fear, without grasping for power and without despair when the world seems indifferent to Him.

Mighty God came in weakness so He could return in glory. He is King, crowned in glory, and He is coming again.

Pray This:

Mighty God, we come before You and proclaim that You are King of kings and Lord of lords. Thank You that You came to Earth many years ago and are coming again. Help us to tell others of Your goodness and power. We love You and worship You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Sing This:

Crown Him with Many Crowns

DECEMBER

15

EVERLASTING
FATHER

The Surprising Name of Jesus



Read This: Isaiah 9:6-7

Say This:



ere's something weird: Isaiah calls Jesus the Everlasting Father. This is the third name Isaiah gives Jesus in Isaiah 9:6. The first is Wonderful Counselor, which means wise ruler. The second is Mighty God. This name points to His power and control over everything. That brings us to Everlasting Father. You might be thinking, *I thought Jesus is the Son. So which is it?* Jesus isn't confused about who He is, and neither was Isaiah as he looked ahead to Jesus' arrival. Jesus shows us exactly what the Father is like. If you want to know what God the Father is like, look at Jesus.

Early Christians wanted to help clarify any confusion we might have about this. So several hundred years after Jesus returned to heaven, they wrote this in an important statement called a creed: We worship one God, but that one God is made up of three individual persons – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. They are three in one, all equal in glory and power. This is very hard for us to understand. But that's okay because it just shows us that God is much bigger than our brains.

When Isaiah calls Jesus the Everlasting Father, he is saying Jesus shows us what God the Father is like. Isaiah was looking ahead to when Jesus the Messiah would come into our world – God with skin on

– and show us how God the Father loves us, provides for us and protects us.

Jesus is not the Father in the Trinity, but He reveals the Father's heart and cares for His people forever.

Pray This:

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus to show us what You are like. Thank You that Jesus reveals Your love for us. Help us to trust You more by giving us faith in the perfect work of Your Son, who redeemed and reconciled us to You. In the name of Jesus Christ alone we pray, amen.

Sing This:

O Come O Come Emmanuel

DECEMBER

16

EVERLASTING
FATHER

Jesus Is Everlasting



Read This: John 8:54-58

Say This:



In our passage today, Jesus tells the religious leaders that before Abraham existed, He existed.

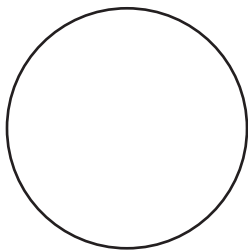
This made the religious leaders angry because they knew what He was saying. Jesus was claiming, *I'm the Savior whom Isaiah said was coming. I'm the Everlasting One you've been waiting for.*

What does it mean that Jesus is everlasting? It means He has no beginning and has no end. He always was and always will be, just like God the Father.

Let me ask you a question. Who made you? God did. We are not like God. We have a beginning (our birth) and one day will have an end (our death). But God doesn't.

Look at this line. Point to where it starts.

Great, now point to where it ends. This line is like us. You can see it has a beginning and an end.



Now look at this circle. Point to the beginning of the circle and the end. You

can't do it, can you? I can't do it and I'm an adult. The circle represents Jesus' eternal nature – no beginning and no end. Jesus created everything that is, and He has always existed. He was not created, and He will always be. When we say that Jesus is the Everlasting Father, we are saying Jesus is the God who always was and always will be. Jesus is forever showing us what His Father is like – that He saves us and created the world just for us.

No one else is eternal like our three-in-one God – Father, Son and Spirit. This is one way God is different than us. The fact that God is eternal – always has been, always will be – helps us rest, knowing that God is forever watching over us and caring for us.

Pray This:

Lord, thank You for Jesus. Thank You that He has always existed and will always exist. Thank You for creating me and watching over me with the care that only You can provide. Help me trust You more than I trust myself. I pray this in the name of Jesus, amen.

Sing This:

Before the Throne of God Above

DECEMBER

17

EVERLASTING
FATHER

Jesus Is Our Father



Read This: John 10:22-30

Say This:



Have you ever had a friend who looks exactly like their dad or mom? That is what we see in this passage from the Gospel of John. Jesus is saying to everyone, *You want to know what the God the Father looks like?* Look at Me.

The Bible says everyone who trusts in Jesus alone to save them is born twice (John 3)! Did you know that? Have you been born two times? When you trust in Jesus alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, God becomes your Father too.

The first time you were born, you were born to a mother and a father. This was a physical birth. You look and act like your parents. You might have your mom's eyes but tell jokes like your dad. Every person who has ever lived has been born with a sinful nature – a desire to disobey God. This goes all the way back to Adam and Eve, the first humans in history. They choose to disobey God. This sin broke the perfect world God made. Everyone who has come into the world since then comes into a world broken by sin and they pass that brokenness on.

The second time you are born is different. It doesn't take place in a hospital but in our hearts. This is a spiritual birth. God changes you, forgives you and makes you His forever child because of His gracious love toward us that we see in the sacrifice

of Jesus, who died on the cross for our sins. The Bible says when you trust in Jesus as your Savior, you become a child of God. You are “born again.”

Adam, the first man, the one that everyone's family tree ultimately goes back to, gave us a broken world. Jesus came as a better Man, a perfect Man – one who forgives us and fixes what Adam broke. The second birth connects you to someone who *never* failed and never will. Jesus shows us by His gracious love what a true father – our heavenly Father – is like.

Pray This:

Heavenly Father, I come to You and confess my sin, my need for forgiveness. Thank You for sending Jesus to show me what Your gracious love looks like. Give me the ability to trust You even when it is difficult. Help me to love You more than anything else. I ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

Sing This:

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

DECEMBER

18

EVERLASTING
FATHER

Jesus Provides for Us



Read This: John 6:1-14

Say This:



Have you ever asked your mom or dad for something you needed? How did they respond? Here's another question: Have you ever needed something but didn't ask for it, yet your mom or dad saw the need and graciously gave you what you needed anyway?

Like a good father, Jesus provides for His children. Like a perfect father, He knows what we need before we even ask (Matthew 6:8). One day, Jesus was doing miracles and teaching as a large crowd followed Him. Then Jesus did two amazing things. First, He knew what the people needed before they knew. No one was asking for food, but Jesus knew what they needed anyway. Secondly, He met their need in the most amazing way they could ever have imagined.

Jesus provided for his people like a good father should, and He shows us with His life how God provided love, forgiveness and salvation for us. This is why Advent is so special. Through Jesus, we receive what our hearts needed most. And before we could ever ask, God provided.

This is how Jesus shows us what the Father is like. He sees our need. He doesn't wait around for us to ask perfectly. He sees and acts. During Advent, we celebrate these two realities about our God. He saw our

greatest need: forgiveness for our sins. He supplied the answer to our greatest need before we even asked. He sent Jesus to die for our sins to give us the forgiveness we could never achieve on our own.

How gracious is our God!

Pray This:

God our Provider, thank You for giving us everything we need. Thank You for seeing our needs and helping before we can say, "Help!" Thank You for giving us what we need most: forgiveness through Your Son, Jesus, who came to provide for us and show us what You are like. Help us to trust You more. In Your Son's name we pray, amen.

Sing This:

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

DECEMBER

19

EVERLASTING
FATHER

Jesus Our Savior Keeps Us



Read This: John 6:37-40

Say This:



Have you ever heard a kid at school say, “I’m going to tell my brother,” or “I’m going to get my dad”?

There is something inside us that naturally looks to someone bigger and better than us to protect us.

We expect these people to keep us safe. In today’s passage, we see that Jesus never loses anyone the Father gives Him. He keeps them safe. This is exactly what God the Father wants Jesus to do. John 6:40 says *that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*

Jesus watches over us like His Father desires, but we still experience sadness and death because of our broken world. However, the promise of God in Jesus is stronger than death. Jesus says in John 10:28 that no one can take us from His hand. How comforting is that?! When Isaiah calls Jesus our Everlasting Father in Isaiah 9, he is describing a Savior whose care never ends and whose children never get taken from Him. That provides for us true and lasting comfort.

Jesus came to overcome sin and death for us so that we can have everlasting life with Him. He also came to reveal to us a Father in heaven who shields us from harm, both now and for eternity. Jesus reveals to us an

everlasting love we could never earn. It’s all grace. We have every reason to rejoice and worship.

Pray This:

Father God, thank You for showing us in Jesus all the ways You take care of us and protect us. Help us to trust in Your plan and rest in Your care. Thank You for sending Jesus so we can more fully understand who You are and what You are like. As we pray, we are filled with joy and gratitude. In Your Son’s name, amen.

Sing This:

He Will Hold Me Fast

DECEMBER

20

EVERLASTING
FATHER

Worship Jesus for His Faithful Love



Read This: Psalm 118:5-9,14-19

Say This:



hen someone gives you a gift, what are you supposed to say? That's right — you're supposed to say thank you. Does your thank you get bigger and louder based on how amazing the gift is? Let's try something: Think of a gift you received that you really didn't like much. Try to remember how you reacted. Now think of the best gift you have ever been given. How did you react to that? There was probably a big difference, right?

Psalm 118 is a huge thank you to God, and it points us straight to Jesus, reminding us of His everlasting love. It tells us how much God loves us, how we need His help and how we are to give thanksgiving to God for His faithful love. This chapter looks forward to Jesus. It points to the saving work He has done for us in His perfect life, death and resurrection.

During Advent, we celebrate the greatest gift we have ever been given: Jesus Himself! As we learned yesterday, His protection for us is everlasting. Today we discover that the love of our Everlasting Father never ends either. As Psalm 118:1 says, *His steadfast love endures forever!* The only response to a gift that is too wonderful for words is worship. We turn to Jesus and worship Him for his unending, never-failing, forever love for you and me.

Worship isn't only singing songs. It's praising Jesus for who He is and what He is worth. It's realizing how much we are loved and saying thank you like the author of this psalm does.

Look at Psalm 118:28-29: *You are my God, and I will give thanks to You; You are my God; I will extol You. Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever!*

Before we close in prayer, let's take turns worshiping Jesus by saying something He has done that we are eternally thankful for.

Pray This:

Lord, You are my God. I give thanks to You. Thank You for the way You have generously loved us. Help me to live a life of thankful worship to You for the gift of Jesus we celebrate this Advent season.

Sing This:

O Come, All Ye Faithful

DECEMBER

21

EVERLASTING
FATHER

Jesus Is Our Forever Shepherd



Read This: Revelation 7:13-17

Say This:



How do you know you can trust the chair you are sitting in? It could break, couldn't it? Let's all do this as a family: Let's stand and only sit down if you think you can trust your chair (*Pause to allow your kids to sit down in their chair.*) There you did it! Why did you trust your chair?

Because it held you before. It was trustworthy in the past. This is why we can trust in Jesus. Because He has always been trustworthy to us.

There are people in our lives like a mom or dad who take care of our needs each day. They get us a glass of water or hand us a tissue when we're sick. But one day, Jesus, our Good Shepherd, will forever provide for us in ways that no one else can. In the book of Revelation, Jesus promises to guide us and provide for us in a way that all our physical, emotional and spiritual needs will be met forever. He also promises that we will never be sad or experience suffering again. What incredible promises! How do we know all this will happen?

It's kind of like the chairs we are sitting in. We trust the chairs to hold us up because of what they have done for us in the past. In a far greater way, Jesus has been keeping His promises to us and caring for us from the beginning of the world. He showed us in

creation that He loves us. He also showed us on the cross He loves us. Because He created this world and died willingly for you and me, we can trust Him, right now and for all time.

We can trust God because of who He is and what He has done for us. Think of what God has done for you in the past, especially the gift of Jesus, and take a second to say thank you.

Pray This:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us Jesus. We thank You for the way He has taken care of us and will take care of us for all time. Thank You that when we have Jesus, we have everything we need. Help us to trust in Your provision and protection. We ask this in the name of Your only Son, Jesus, amen.

Sing This:

Angels We Have Heard on High

DECEMBER

22

PRINCE
OF PEACE

Peace with God



Read This: Colossians 1:15-20

Say This:



Have you ever made a bad choice you thought was too big for your mom or dad to forgive? Have you broken something valuable you couldn't repay or said something unkind you couldn't take back?

This is the condition we find ourselves in. We have all sinned. We have all said and done things that we can't fix. We live in a world that has been broken by sin. People get angry and start wars. Family members hurt each other and stop talking. While all these things feel big and difficult to us, they are not bigger than God.

In our passage today, we read one of the most powerful proclamations of who God is. Paul tells us that Jesus created everything that is, and He holds everything together that we think is falling apart.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:15-17)

This is what the Prince of Peace does. He comes to us to make peace in situations that are too big for us — bigger than broken

valuables or harsh words. Our sin separates us from a holy God. But Jesus came and died for us so we could know God and His forgiveness. The Bible says we were rebels living our own way and Jesus came for us. Colossians 1:20 gives us the profound comfort our restless hearts need. Jesus has become our peace through His sacrificial death on the cross.

Jesus is the One who restores our relationship with God — the One who does the costly work of bringing rebels home.

Pray This:

Father, thank You for the gift of Jesus, who holds all things together. Jesus came to do what we could not do for ourselves — to restore us to You through His sacrificial love on the cross. We pray this is in Jesus' name, amen.

Sing This:

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

DECEMBER

23

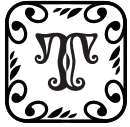
PRINCE
OF PEACE

*Peace That Rules
Our Hearts and the World*



Read This: Isaiah 9:6-7

Say This:



here is a famous story from World War I when some German and British soldiers stopped fighting on Christmas Day in 1914. They put down their guns, played soccer together and exchanged gifts. Men who had been enemies became – at least for one day – friends. But it didn't last. The following day, they resumed fighting.

This story always amazes people because it sounds too good to be true. How could they go from fighting each other to experiencing peace with each other – in one day? We love this story because we all want to live in a world of peace. Not just a feeling of peace but true, lasting peace that goes beyond one day. This is exactly the peace that Isaiah talks about in Isaiah 9:7: *Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end.* His kingdom has come and is continuing to grow.

This promised peace, of which we have only seen small portions, will be fully realized when Jesus, our Prince of Peace, returns to Earth just like He promised. This is why we wait during Advent. We wait for the day we will soon celebrate, Christmas Day. But we also wait for the second coming of Christ when peace will be more than a temporary stoppage of fighting – the day when our Redeemer comes to make all things new.

We celebrate this week and proclaim that the Prince of Peace has come, but we also wait for the second Advent – the second coming of Christ. In a world that is broken and hurting, we need peace now like never before, not just a temporary peace made by human hands. We need a forever peace only God can make. When we feel the sorrow of a world broken by sin, we say, “Come quickly, Jesus.”

Pray This:

Father God, because You sent Jesus into our world to live and die, we now have peace with You through faith in Your Son. Please send Jesus back quickly so our world can experience the peaceful rule of our Prince of Peace. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

Sing This:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

DECEMBER
24
CHRISTMAS
EVE

The Night Peace Arrives





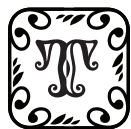
In Genesis 3:15, God made a promise in the garden, one He kept whispering through every prophet, every exile, every silence. For centuries God's people waited and now it was finally happening. And you'd expect the universe to notice. You'd expect mountains to shake and the sky to tear open. That's how ancient people pictured a god showing up. Thunder. Fire. Ground that trembles.

But that isn't how the true God works. He didn't come with an army or an earthquake. He came as a baby, born in the dark, in a forgotten province, to a family nobody would have chosen. No trumpets. No procession. Just a quiet birth in the middle of the night, and the God who spoke galaxies into being lay there unable to lift His own head.

That's the gospel in miniature. Power that doesn't need to announce itself. A King who made Himself small, came into the darkness and lived with His people.

Read This: Luke 2:8-14

Say This:



Tonight we wait. Tomorrow the Prince of Peace is here! Can you say that with me? *(Parents, repeat this with your child.)*

What do you think the shepherds felt when the sky filled with angels? *(Let your child answer. This isn't a lesson to teach but an opportunity to pause, reflect and wait together.)*

Pray This:

Jesus, our Prince of Peace, we've been waiting a long time for You. Tonight

we're almost there. Speak peace to our busy hearts so we're ready to celebrate You tomorrow.

Sing This:

Silent Night

(Sing all the verses if you can, but especially the third verse. Don't add anything after the song. The silence is the point!)

DECEMBER
25
CHRISTMAS
DAY

The Prince of Peace Has Come



Parents:

Today is loud and fast. This is a celebration, not a lesson, so do it before exchanging gifts if possible. After gifts, you've lost them!

Read This: Luke 2:15-20

Say This:



Notice what the shepherds did: They didn't sit quietly. They went, they saw, they told everyone and they praised God out loud the whole way home. This is what we get to do today too!

"[Name of the child being addressed], the Prince of Peace was born for you. He has made peace between you and God, and He is your King today, tomorrow and forevermore, amen. Merry Christmas!"

Proclaim This:

Go around the room and have each family member say one thing out loud: "Jesus is my Prince of Peace because _____." Remind them that nothing they say has to be perfect; we see that in this story. God used the lowest of the low (stinky shepherds!) to tell His glorious news. None of us are too small or insignificant to tell His good news today.

Sing This:

Joy to the World

(Sing it loudly, proclaiming the Prince of Peace is now the King of heaven who rules with wisdom, might and peace forever.)

A Blessing:

Don't hurry through this. Take your time to bless each of your children with the blessing below or speak one of your own. As you do, have each child put out their hands in a posture of receiving a gift. Place your hand on the forehead of each child and say, by name: