

HOLIDAYS SERIES

EPISODE 2: ADVENT: WAITING FOR CHRISTMAS



look back

First, **LOOK BACK** at the past week by asking, "How did we do?" Begin with prayer, then check in with one another—sharing honestly, celebrating victories, acknowledging struggles, and graciously offering practical help.

PRAYER - Begin with prayer, thanking God for the gift of His Son and asking Him to help you slow down and rediscover the wonder and joy of Christ's coming.

Follow Up on Last Episode's Assignment

- What did you do to make your Thanksgiving more intentional?
- Where did you see gratitude, grace, or joy in your gathering?
- What is one Thanksgiving moment you especially want to remember?

look up

Next, **LOOK UP** to God's Word by asking, "What does Jesus want us to know?" If you haven't already, watch this week's video: *"Advent: Waiting for Christmas."* Then use the summary, questions, and Scriptures below to draw out the main truths together.

WATCH: Episode 2: Advent: Waiting for Christmas

Episode Summary

Advent invites us to step out of the Christmas rush and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. For generations, God's people waited with hope for the promised Savior, and His arrival in Bethlehem was the fulfillment of promises made centuries before.

Advent traditions can help us recover that sense of anticipation and wonder—slowing down, reflecting on Scripture, serving others, and finding meaningful ways to keep Christ at the center of our celebrations.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Whether you're studying on your own or with a group, each guide follows a simple yet powerful rhythm: **Look Back / Look Up / Look Forward.** For group leaders, additional instructions for leading a small group are included at the end of the first workbook in each series.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The holidays give us wonderful opportunities to celebrate God's goodness and strengthen the relationships that matter most. But the holidays can wear us out and family gatherings can be potentially explosive. This four-part series offers biblical wisdom and practical ideas for making Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas gatherings more meaningful. Along the way, we'll explore how to slow down, enjoy one another, navigate family tensions with grace, and keep Christ at the heart of the season.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What parts of the Christmas season bring you the most joy, and what tends to make the season feel rushed?
2. How does knowing that God's people waited generations for the promised Savior deepen your appreciation for the anticipation of Christmas?
3. What does preparing your heart for Christmas look like in the midst of everything else that needs to be done?
4. Which Christmas traditions help you and your family remember Christ's coming most naturally?
5. How could generosity or serving someone in need add meaning and joy to your Advent season?

Advent invites us to step out of the frenzy, take a breath, and recover the wonder.

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:2 - "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." Centuries before Jesus was born, Isaiah pointed forward to the light God would send into the darkness. Advent reminds us that God keeps His promises and invites us to share in the joyful anticipation of Christ's coming.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Psalm 130:5 - "I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope."
Biblical waiting is filled with hope. Advent gives us an opportunity to slow down, trust God's Word, and remember the generations who waited expectantly for the promised Savior.

look forward

Finally, **LOOK FORWARD** by asking, "What does Jesus want us to do?" Commit to practical steps for living out this week's lesson. Review the assignment, share commitments with the group, pray for one another, and move forward together in faith and hope.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Isaiah 40:31
Psalm 145:13
Luke 1:46–55

THIS EPISODE'S ASSIGNMENT

Choose **one simple Advent practice** that will help you slow down and focus on Christ this season. You might light an Advent candle, read a Christmas Scripture together, use an Advent calendar, or serve someone in need.

Make space to enjoy the practice rather than turning it into one more holiday obligation.

PERSONAL GROWTH COMMITMENTS

- What has God laid on my heart?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading me to change?
- What will I do in my own life, in my relationships, and to strengthen my family?

SHARE WITH THE GROUP

Encourage sharing commitments, prayer needs, and Advent traditions or ideas that might encourage others. Close in prayer, asking God to help you slow down, prepare your heart, and experience the wonder and joy of Christ's coming.