



Family Discipleship Guide

Advent 2022



We encourage you to engage this Scripture from Isaiah. We will reference back to it in each section of the guide.

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this."

Isaiah 9:2-7

Check out the QR code!



This link contains music, activities,
and articles to accompany you on
your journey through this
Discipleship Guide.

Worship

Younger Kids

- Listen to this song on Isaiah 9:2-7: "Honey for the Heart: A Song for Advent in Four Parts" by The Lockwoods. Consider playing this song throughout Advent to reinforce our theme of Coming into the Light and waiting / preparing for Jesus. Could you play it once a day, once a week? It's a beautiful song and helps everyone memorize this scripture.
- Attend the Children's Advent Party at Wellspring for kids between 0-4th grade. If an older child is available to volunteer and help, we would LOVE it! Please register on the Wellspring website.
- Get a flashlight and turn off the lights in a room. Turn on the flashlight and read the Isaiah passage. Discuss what you can see with the flashlight? Why can we "see" in the light? Discuss as a family why God is light? What is in the darkness? What can be hidden in darkness? Why does God want the light to shine in the darkness?

Worship

Older Kids

- Dessert and Devo night - plan one night a week to have a special treat after dinner and have a devotional time. Click on the QR code for the "Come Into the Light Advent Prayer Devotion" based on Isaiah 9:2-7 or pick up a hard copy on Sunday morning.

Check out the worship song on Isaiah 9:2-7 (linked in the QR code) before you begin.

Formation

Younger Kids

- Talk as a family about what Advent means. Liturgically, Advent is a season of preparation. As a family, ask God how He would like you to prepare to celebrate Christ's coming? List out ways you prepare for events in your day to day life. How do you prepare for house guests? How do you prepare for a holiday feast? How do you prepare for a trip? Engage your children in this discussion and look for themes or roles in your family. Lift those to the Lord and listen to how He is calling you to prepare your hearts for the coming of Christ, the Savior of the world.
- Consider making an Advent Wreath and looking at the Isaiah passage for the weekly advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love. Click the QR code for ideas.
- Look at the end of the passage from Isaiah: "Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this." Pray for justice and peace in the world this Advent and for the worldwide church. Click the QR code for a guide to pray for a different nation every day. Consider getting a world map and putting a sticker or pin on the country as you pray for it.

Formation

Older Kids

- Look up examples of light in the Bible. How many times does God refer to light? (over 150). See how many each family member can find. Why is light significant? What is the first example? Where does God's light live now? (in us).
- What can happen in the darkness? Engage your family in a safe conversation around what we can hide in the darkness. Pray before you begin and then ask each other questions such as: What were you tempted by this week? What is a poor choice you are struggling through? Show compassion, mercy and unconditional love. Use intentional listening skills and do not interrupt. Try to hear each person out and do not respond to anything that is shared - just listen and encourage. Everyone in the family gets to be "in" on this. Strive to be an emotionally safe place for discussions around darkness, sin and poor choices. Jesus is a forgiving God, ready every moment to cleanse us from sin and darkness and show mercy and love. Nothing can separate us from His everlasting love. If it fits, move to a time of confession and forgiveness. As parents, exemplify unconditional love and communicate your love for your children no matter what.

Mission

Younger Kids

- Make a Christmas Light poster by dipping your child's thumb in fingerpaint to make the bulbs. After it dries, write people's names in the lights and pray for them throughout Advent.
- Make Christmas cards for our guests in The Well and hand them out one Sunday after church.
- Write a thank you card for your teacher or if you are ambitious, write an encouraging note to all the teachers at your school.
- There is a beautiful children's book called, *The Light Gift* by Voskamp. In this story a young girl is awaiting the birth of her little lamb. She is asked to go on several errands for her family. As she leaves, her mother says, "God go with you, little love and stay on the way and treat everyone as you would the coming King". 1.) Encourage your family to do everything as if unto the Lord - this can be chores, sharing with siblings, etc. Validate your children when you see these examples of Jesus' light! 2.) Establish a blessing to say over your children every time they get out of the car or leave your home.

Mission

Older Kids

- Teens can make an impact and often have a heart for justice. Have a discussion with your child about what breaks their heart in our world. They may have lots of ideas or may need help growing in awareness of injustices. Let them lead the way in learning and growing and then pray as a family about a way to serve or support those experiencing this injustice.
- Brainstorm as a family an act of service and then set aside a time in your calendar (shovel a neighbor's driveway, make a batch of hot chocolate and set up a little cocoa stand for the homeless, get creative!)
- Volunteer at the Englewood Christmas Store on December 10th or purchase gifts for the store. Involve your children in the purchasing of the gifts and have conversations about stewardship, generosity and thoughtfulness.

Connection

- Parents - write a letter of love to each child this Christmas and to your spouse! Set aside time and write out positive traits, what you love, what you see, areas of growth that have happened and funny memories from this year. This could be a great tradition or keepsake! (click the QR code if you want some examples and inspiration!)
- Put the name of each person in your house in a bowl and draw names. For the season of Advent do small favors for the person you "drew". S/he is now under your care for Advent.
- Purchase a set of Invisible Ink pens and write secret messages to one another throughout Advent. Kids LOVE these pens and shining the LIGHT on the invisible ink. Get creative with bible verses, jokes or messages of encouragement for your family to find and decode!
- Make a fun game of Advent/Christmas trivia or make an Advent Calendar (see QR code for ideas)!

Connection

- Set up a hot chocolate date with one of the adults in your child's 5:1 circle. Encourage your child to "interview" that meaningful adult. Some suggestions for the discussion: Favorite winter activity/sport? Most embarrassing moment? Favorite winter meal? What makes you tear up at Christmas? (Not sure what a 5:1 circle is? Call Sarah Siegler for more info.)
- Play "Eye Spy a Nativity" when you are driving around town and cheer loudly every time you see a nativity scene!
- Together as a family bake cookies, go sledding, ice skating or go on a car ride and look at lights and continue that great discussion of God as Light.
- Check out our Children's Christmas reading list on the QR code!

