



The Hope of Christmas

*A South Hill Bible Church
Family Advent Devotional*

December 2019



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Before You Begin

Dear family of South Hill Bible Church,

This devotional is designed to be a support to the Sunday morning lesson taught in class and in corporate worship. Each of the first four Sundays of December will have a theme, such as Hope or Promise, that will be taught in Sunday school and will carry over into the Sunday morning worship service.

There are also two memory verses (printed on the back) that we will rehearse in Sunday school and in corporate worship. The songs that are sung during the worship service will also serve to highlight the theme of the morning.

We have kept the devotions brief intentionally. On the left side of the page is content meant to be shared with the whole family, perhaps as you gather together around the table after dinner. We encourage you to have the verses read aloud. Then, simply talk about them. We have included a couple of prompter questions to get started. On the right side of the page is a “going deeper” section. This could be for the adults and older children. It expands on the content introduced before.

In the back of the devotional are songs related to each week's theme. The words are printed for your reflection. If you'd like to sing along, sound files will be available for download from the church website.

It is our prayer that during the season of Advent, God will use these efforts in our hearts and lives. We pray that the themes of hope, promise, and prophecies fulfilled will encourage and strengthen you and your family.

In His service, and for His glory,
The Christmas Devotional Team



For the Family
Week #1

The Hope of Christmas

God promised to send a Savior.

Big Idea

From the beginning, God had a plan to save us from our sins. He promised a Savior who would be born of a virgin. The Savior would be descended from the line of Abraham and King David. Many years passed. Then an angel appeared to Mary and told her that her baby, conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, would be the long-awaited Savior. Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promise.

Passages to Read Aloud

If possible, share the reading of these verses among the family. 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-33

Questions to Discuss

- Where do we see God's promise of a Savior?
- How did Jesus' birth bring hope to the earth?

Song

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus," page 12



Going Deeper **Week #1**

God told prophets about the coming Savior. The prophets received and recorded his message, which included predictions about who the Messiah would be and where he would be born. God said that the Messiah would be a righteous and humble king, bringing salvation (Zechariah 9:9). He would be born of a virgin and called Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14). The child would inherit the throne of his father David (Isaiah 9:7). He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), live in Egypt (Hosea 11:1), and enter the temple in Jerusalem (Malachi 3:1).

After Malachi's prophecy, the Israelites waited expectantly for 400 years without another message from God. Then in the town of Nazareth in Galilee, an angel appeared to a young woman, Mary. His message from God was incredible! Mary was chosen to bear the Son of God!

Jesus fulfilled God's promises and also the prophecies about his life: being born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7), being brought into the temple in Jerusalem where he was recognized by Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:22-38), and living for a time in Egypt to be safe from King Herod (Matthew 2:13-15). These events are powerful evidence that Jesus is the Messiah. No baby could control the events surrounding his birth. Only God could.



For the Family
Week #2

The Preparation of Christmas

*God prepared for the messenger and
the place of Jesus' birth.*

Lesson Focus

God sent an angel to prepare the parents of John, who would be the prophesied messenger to come before Jesus. God told Joseph to take Mary as his wife because her baby was from the Holy Spirit, and he would be the Savior. Then God arranged for Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem. It was there, in the city of David, that Jesus was born.

Passages to Read Aloud

If possible, share the reading of these verses among the family. Luke 1:11-17; Matthew 1:18-21; Micah 5:2; Luke 2:1-7

Questions to Discuss

- How was John the prophesied messenger to prepare the way for Jesus?
- What is the significance of the nature of Christ?

Song

"O Little Town of Bethlehem," page 13



Going Deeper

Week #2

The virgin birth of Jesus is essential for him to be our Savior. Jesus was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). He had a human mother but not a human father. His unique conception made him fully God and fully man. As God, Jesus was sinless, and as a man, he could take our place. If he had both a human mother and father, he could not be the perfect and acceptable sacrifice for our sin when he died on the cross. His death would not have accomplished anything or defeated Satan, which God promised would happen in Genesis 3:15. The virgin birth also fulfilled the prophecy given in Isaiah 7:14 that Immanuel would be born of a virgin as a sign.

The prophecies fulfilled in Jesus' birth are essential to understanding God's sovereignty, faithfulness, and omnipotence. To defend the virgin birth, we don't need a scientific explanation; we simply need to trust in the character of God. As the all-powerful Creator, God has complete control over the laws he put in place, including human reproduction. Those who reject the virgin birth and redefine Jesus as just a man have no hope of salvation. Only the blood of the perfect Christ can cleanse us of sin (Hebrews 9:11-14).



For the Family
Week #3

The Joy of Christmas

The shepherds, Simeon, and the wise men all rejoiced to see Jesus.

Lesson Focus

The night Jesus was born, God sent angels to announce his arrival to shepherds in the fields outside of Bethlehem. The shepherds received the news with joy and ran to see the Savior. At the temple, Simeon thanked God for sending salvation to all people through Jesus. Following a star in the sky, wise men from the east traveled to worship Jesus and present gifts.

Passages to Read Aloud

If possible, share the reading of these verses among the family. Luke 2:8-16; Matthew 2:7-12

Questions to Discuss

- How did different people—rich and poor—come to worship Jesus?
- Why did people rejoice at Jesus' coming?

Song

"Joy to the World," page 14



Going Deeper

Week #3

Christmas is a time of busyness and excitement, which is why it is important to take time to focus on the real meaning of Christmas—that Christ came to earth to save us from our sins. This is the true hope of the season. In fact, Christians should be the most hopeful people in the world. Our hope is not vain wishing but confident expectation in God and his Word. We can be encouraged because God is faithful to keep his promises.

God's first promise to send a Savior, someone who would defeat Satan, was given in Genesis. After Adam and Eve's disobedience in the garden of Eden brought sin and death into the world, mankind, along with the rest of creation, was cursed. Our sin separated us from God.

But in Genesis 3:15, God said that the offspring (descendant) of Eve would "bruise the head" of Satan, referring to Christ's death on the cross delivering the final blow to Satan.

Jesus demonstrates God's great love to us (Romans 5:8). By dying on the cross and rising from the dead, Jesus provided salvation. When we place our faith in Jesus, we have the hope of forgiveness and eternal life with God (John 3:16). This is the message of Christmas that we must remember and share with others—not just at Christmas but throughout the year!



For the Family
Week #4

Jesus Before the Manger

*Jesus is eternal—he always was
and always will be.*

Lesson Focus

Jesus is eternal; he always was and always will be. He was present at creation and appeared to people throughout the Old Testament. But he left heaven and was born as a baby to fulfill God's promise to send a Savior. Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to save us from our sins. He conquered death and returned to heaven where he is preparing a place for God's children.

Passages to Read Aloud

If possible, share the reading of these verses among the family. Genesis 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16-17; Exodus 3:1-6; Matthew 1:20-21

Questions to Discuss

- Where did Jesus appear in the Old Testament?
- Why did Jesus leave heaven to be born on earth?

Song

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," page 15



Going Deeper

Week #4

Mary and Joseph weren't the first human beings to see Jesus Christ. In fact, that common perception reflects a deep misunderstanding of the Son of God's central role throughout history. When unbelievers think of Jesus, many think of a baby in a manger or a man who lived about 2,000 years ago. Sadly, many Christians adopt this same thinking. But when we do, we unwittingly devalue who Jesus really is.

So why did the Son of God "take on flesh" if he could easily appear to whomever he wanted? The Apostle Peter said it best: "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit" (1 Peter 3:18).

Christ became a man to take the punishment we deserve for sin against our Creator. He was the perfect sacrifice offered once for all sin (Hebrews 10:14-24). But he did not remain dead because he was no ordinary man! Jesus rose from the dead, conquering death, so salvation could come to mankind. Before he returned to heaven, he promised to prepare a place for those who believe in him, and he promised to come again for his followers (John 14:1-3). What great promises to give us faith and strength for each day here on earth. We have a wonderful Savior, and he is coming again!



Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou are;
Dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a Child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Jesus, I do now receive Him
More than all in Him I find
He hath granted me forgiveness
I am His and He is mine.
Hallelujah what a savior
Hallelujah what a friend
Saving, helping keeping, loving
He is with me to the end

*"He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives."
—Isaiah 61:1*



O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to night.

For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love,
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And peace to men on earth

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav'n
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive Him still
The dear Christ enters in

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born in us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel

"But you, O Bethlehem, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."—Micah 5:2



Joy to the World!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come
Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods
Rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

*“Oh sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.
The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness
in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love
and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.”
—Psalm 98:1-3*



Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th’ angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
*Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King.”*

Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of the Virgin’s womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail th’incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
*Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King.”*

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
*Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King.”*

*“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace among those with whom he is pleased!”
—Luke 2:14*



Memory Verses

Luke 2:10–11 And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Colossians 1:16–17 All things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.