



GEORGETOWN
BAPTIST

*Advent
Devotional*

2024



DECEMBER 1

*"He protects his flock
like a shepherd; he
gathers the lambs in his
arms and carries them in
the fold of his garment.
He gently leads those
that are nursing."*

ISAIAH 40:11



HOPE DAY 1

Merry Christmas! In this season of hope, all mankind looks toward the first Advent of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who came to the earth born of a virgin. Why can Christians have hope in 2024? As the world lives in a constant struggle from disunity, misery, and sin, we can celebrate the holidays knowing that God sent hope to be born in Bethlehem. God is not hidden from humanity. He has offered love and protection for his people throughout history, and today, he stands in authority over his people. The Church.

As this month of celebration begins, live in the reality that God is in control, and nothing will take him away from us. May we celebrate this month full of hope! Today is an opportunity for you to start the month in the perfect posture of worship. Christmas is a beautiful opportunity to focus on Jesus's first Advent with the knowledge that he promised to return.

READ ISAIAH 40:9-11



DECEMBER 2

"The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world."

JOHN 1:9



HOPE DAY 2

This time of year, families will pile into vehicles and gaze upon the beauty of Christmas lights. Memories of sipping hot chocolate, singing Christmas songs, and viewing displays over the holidays fill our hearts with joy. Christmas lights encourage people to live in community with one another. When John the Apostle wrote his gospel, he wanted the entire world to know Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus came as the "true light," and all who believe in him can be saved from the darkness of sin.

We can find hope that God did not leave humanity in the dark but sent his "one and only son" (John 3:16). Instead of condemning the world, he offered Salvation. While Christmas lights bring joy to the hearts of children and families, Jesus came to bring hope to the world by shining the love of God in human form. His light shines as bright today as he did whenever he was born. Every time you see the lights of Christmas, be reminded that Jesus is the light of the world!

READ JOHN 1:9



DECEMBER 3

"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: See, the virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel."

ISAIAH 7:14



HOPE DAY 3

A difficult reality at this time of year is the empty chairs at the table that were once filled with loved ones. While many have memories to look forward to this time of year, some can bring pain and isolation. As a church family, we are supposed to encourage one another during the difficult times in the holiday season. When Isaiah wrote of the child who would be conceived, he wrote the name "Immanuel."

"Immanuel" – God with us. The Messiah would not only come to redeem the world from sin but also dwell among the people of God for all eternity. There is not a day in the life of a believer when God's presence is unavailable. When we seek God, he promises we will find him (Jer. 29:13). While Jesus has the name above every name, he is also personal and intimate with all his people. The presence of Jesus can give you hope amid uncertainty. As you remember past Christmas memories, do not forget that our future is still bright because the promises of Jesus ring true.

READ ISAIAH 7:14



DECEMBER 4

*"I see him, but not now;
I perceive him, but not
near. A star will come
from Jacob, and a scepter
will arise from Israel. He
will smash the forehead
of Moab and strike down
all the Shethites."*

NUMBERS 24:17



HOPE DAY 4

Christmas is not only a reminder that Jesus Christ came into the world as the Savior. Just as the book of Numbers depicted Jesus as being seen but not yet, so does the Christian message of the kingdom of God. All disciples live for the kingdom that is heard today but not fully visible to the human eye. Every time the gospel of Jesus is spoken across the world, the kingdom of God becomes visible to the heart and soul of mankind.

While the Old Testament prophets were unaware of Jesus in their age, they knew him by faith through revelations of the Holy Spirit. There are hundreds of references to Jesus in the Old Testament. Faith is essential for New Testament believers, and the people of old were no different. Jesus is revealed on every page of the Scripture. He could not and cannot be denied. He is the "star" from Jacob and the "scepter" of Israel. Many know Jesus through the word of God, but do you know him in your heart, soul, and mind?

READ NUMBERS 24:17

DECEMBER 5

"...but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was revealed in these last times for you."

1 PETER 1:19-20



HOPE DAY 5

On this day, we begin the first of two weekends, during which church members will gather with people to share the Nativity story. Nativity Live has had an impact on people for many years. When people gather at the manger to the tune of "Oh Holy Night" and see Christ's birth, the moment's power is always evident. The birth of Jesus Christ marks the time that God "so loved the world." (John 3:16)

The paradoxical nature of Christ's birth is that Jesus was born to die. Several years later, this baby would ascend to a hill called Calvary and become the atoning sacrifice for mankind's sins. Jesus was born as a "spotless and unblemished lamb" who lived a perfect life without sin. His blood can wash over the greatest sinners and make them clean.

The world was unprepared for his arrival, but Jesus changed everything and provided the opportunity all men and women need to be saved from sin. What a beautiful night. As you navigate this weekend, please remember to pray for Nativity Live!

READ 1 PETER 1:19-20



DECEMBER 6

"When the time came to completion, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

GALATIANS 4:4-5



HOPE DAY 6

When you think of God, what is the first word that comes to mind? Lord? Savior? What about Father? Everyone who meets God for the first time must accept that they are sinners. Therefore, God rescued the world through Jesus Christ and saved humanity.

As we pour through our hearts, we must be reminded that Salvation is so much more than being saved from punishment. According to Scripture, all who place their faith and trust in Jesus are called "sons and daughters" (1 John 3:1). God, the Father, sent the Son into the world so that all people could be redeemed and brought into the family.

Be honest. When you think of yourself, do you imagine you are a beloved child of the Lord? Through the gospel, you are more than someone saved from punishment. You are in God's family, and he delights in you. We were adopted into God's family. God chose you, adopted you, and gave you his name. We are no longer under the confines of law but are known by God as family.

READ GALATIANS 4:4-5



DECEMBER 7

*"Bethlehem Ephrathah,
you are small among the
clans of Judah; one will
come from you to be ruler
over Israel for me. His
origin is from antiquity,
from ancient times."*

MICAH 5:2



HOPE DAY 7

Everything about the birth of Christ is magnificent. Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, wise men traveling from the east, and the manger itself. What about Bethlehem? At the time of his birth, Bethlehem was a small town about 6 miles from Jerusalem. In the Old Testament, the town was known as the "City of David" (1 Samuel 16:4-13). The prophets foretold that another King would rule and reign forever from David's line.

By the time Jesus was set to be born, Bethlehem was insignificant to the Jewish people. John Piper explains, "God chose something so small, quiet, and out of the way, and did something there that changes the course of history and eternity." On the night of Jesus' birth, an insignificant town would produce the most significant birth in human history.

Jesus can transform the least into the greatest. Many are tempted to believe the lies from our enemy that claim our weaknesses are incapable of producing anything of substance. Do not lose heart this Christmas. God knows and sees you. When you let Christ work in your life, he can transform you mightily.

READ MICAH 5:2



DECEMBER 8

"Doesn't the Scripture say that the Messiah comes from David's offspring and the town of Bethlehem, where David lived?"

JOHN 7:42



PEACE DAY 1

When Jesus was born, David's tribe, Judah, was not a place of grandeur. God's people had experienced four hundred years of silence from God. They were overshadowed by a much stronger nation in Rome. What once seemed like a believable setting for the birth of the Messiah had become a sheer laughingstock. What appeared to be lunacy to the culture of the time turned out to be exactly what God predicted. Jesus was the Messiah, as predicted in Scripture, no matter what people chose to believe about him.

There are moments when God's promises seem to be a distant memory. Time can tempt one to think there is no possible avenue for God's goodness to wash over a situation. Take heart! God's plan must come to fruition. The story of Christmas is God's reminder that he always keeps his promises. Some people struggled to comprehend the teachings of Jesus and questioned his validity as a Messiah. Do not be ashamed to trust God's word even when the message does not make sense to modern culture. God's plans are always perfect!

READ JOHN 7:42



DECEMBER 9

"I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

GENESIS 3:15



PEACE DAY 2

Sin is the reason Jesus was sent to the world. Once God confronted man and woman for their sin, he turned his attention to the serpent, who manipulated humanity and cursed him. Satan would be in hostility with mankind. In this passage, we see the first instance of Jesus Christ.

Jesus entered the plight of mankind and defended all people against the schemes of Satan. Man was not left to fight against sin alone, but God provided a Savior to bring his people back unto him. According to Scripture, God "made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Cor. 5:21).

God's plan to save humanity has been in place since the beginning. His foresight in providing for people is another amazing proof of his love. While our enemy seeks to destroy lives, God has been ready to bring restoration to all people. As you look through the word of God, always keep your eyes open for Jesus. He is on every page!

READ GENESIS 3:15



DECEMBER 10

"A voice of one crying out: Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness; make a straight highway for our God in the desert."

ISAIAH 40:3



PEACE DAY 3

The first time John the Baptist met Jesus was when they were both in their mother's wombs. As Mary approached her aunt Elizabeth, Luke 1:41 records that John "leaped" within, and Elizabeth immediately knew she was in the presence of God. John the Baptist would eventually preach the kingdom of God to Jews to help prepare the way for Jesus' ministry. Before Mary could tell anyone of the angel Gabriel's message to her, she was encouraged and uplifted by her visit to see family.

As Christmas day approaches, be reminded of its tenderness. John the Baptist was born to preach God's message in preparation for the Messiah. As you spend time with friends and family, remember that the Christmas story is not a random happenstance but a moment in time when God's holy word was fulfilled through every character. May we all leap like John the Baptist as we experience the presence of Christ!

READ ISAIAH 40:3-5



DECEMBER 11

*"The Spirit of the Lord
will rest on him—a
Spirit of wisdom and
understanding, a Spirit of
counsel and strength, a
Spirit of knowledge and
of the fear of the Lord."*

ISAIAH 11:2



PEACE DAY 4

Jesse was the Father of King David. God used the words of Isaiah to proclaim that he would never abandon the Davidic dynasty. Jesus is the promised Messiah who would come and provide peace worldwide. The verses above echo the righteous characteristics of the eternal King.

For society to operate smoothly, leaders can bless organizations and communities by providing foresight and guidance to help people develop. When you imagine a good leader, what are the first thoughts that come to mind? We can think of strong leaders who stand up in adversity or wise people who can synthesize situations and make the best decisions.

The Messiah, King Jesus, is a leader full of God's character. He is not mean or condescending but full of wisdom, love, and kindness. Jesus embodies the nature of a leader who can handle God's expectations for a King. In fact, he is the only person qualified to hold the job. This Christmas, we can be reminded that Jesus Christ is a king who cannot be wicked but lead with righteousness and faithfulness for all eternity. Praise God!

READ ISAIAH 11:1-5



DECEMBER 12

"You are to tell him: This is what the Lord of Armies says: Here is a man whose name is Branch; he will branch out from his place and build the Lord's temple. Yes, he will build the Lord's temple; he will be clothed in splendor and will sit on his throne and rule. There will also be a priest on his throne, and there will be peaceful counsel between them."

ZECHARIAH 6:12-13



PEACE DAY 5

Jesus carries many different names in Scripture. While he is the world's Savior, Jesus also has many other powerful descriptions. Jesus Christ is the Great High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16) and King of Kings (Rev. 17:14). The making of the crown symbolizes the unification of the office of priest and King. The "branch" in the passage refers to Joshua, but ultimately, the fulfillment of the Messiah.

Jesus Christ, the future Messiah, would fulfill God's obligations to provide strength and unity to the kingdom. The baby born in Bethlehem was more than a child born in a barn. Jesus is the eternal King of the ages who is our Great High Priest. He atoned for mankind's sins and fulfilled the temple's obligation before God.

Christmas is all about good news. Jesus brought good news to humanity to fulfill mankind's need for a Savior. As you walk throughout your day, imagine the names in Scripture that describe Jesus. There are many. The Savior born unto us is everything we need for a new life.

READ ZECHARIAH 6:12-13



DECEMBER 13

*"He was in the world,
and the world was
created through him, yet
the world did not
recognize him. Immanuel
means "God with us."*

JOHN 1:10



PEACE DAY 6

Jesus is God incarnate, who dwelt among humanity in the flesh. The night Jesus was born is the most extraordinary phenomenon this world has ever experienced. As he grew up and eventually began his earthly ministry, many rejected Jesus. But the people who believed knew Jesus was the answer for the world! 1 Corinthians 1:18 says, "The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." While Jesus was not of human descent, he became human to allow people to become the children of God.

To people who know Jesus as Savior, the good news is the promise of Salvation. Salvation through Jesus Christ means that all who believe belong to God's family are God's holy children. While our society is concerned with daily problems, believers are promised eternal deliverance and a sacred family forever. While many still reject Jesus, the beauty of Christmas for believers is full. Never take for granted the blessing of the gospel. Salvation is available to all!

READ JOHN 1:10-13



DECEMBER 14

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory of the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

JOHN 1:14



PEACE DAY 6

When God created Adam and Eve, Jesus was there. Jesus is described as "the Word." The word comes from the Greek word logos, which means "message." Conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, the divine Son of God became a man—perfectly divine and perfectly human.

Jesus fully experienced every human emotion. He knew what it was to be human. He never sinned. Imagine seeing Jesus, experiencing his teachings, observing him heal someone, etc. Jesus Christ brought glory into every conversation he ever had. There is no other like him.

Christmas is a reminder that Jesus Christ, perfect in every way, entered the world. Nothing has ever been the same since. While we can see sin on display in this world, Christians also know that Jesus Christ brought eternal change to the world. His glory and truth are still transforming society through the work of his bride, the Church (Rev 19:7). As we prepare to celebrate his birth, we are reminded that truth and grace are possible through his incarnation into the world.

READ JOHN 1:14



DECEMBER 15

"For nothing will be impossible with God." "I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel left her."

LUKE 1:37-38



LOVE DAY 1

The Christmas story is wondrous! A young Jewish girl from a poor family was met by the angel Gabrielle, who described the Messiah in explicit language. Jesus was being sent to the world, and he would be born in Mary's womb. Mary's question is legitimate. How could this happen to a young virgin girl? Once Gabriel answered all of her questions, Mary responded in obedience. She called herself God's "servant."

Calling herself a servant of God was not meant to sound derogatory but the opposite. Mary referred to the word *doule*, meaning "female bond slave." A bondservant would serve a master for an agreed amount of time and be eventually granted freedom. Instead of leaving, the servant would choose to remain with the master out of love and allegiance.

Christmas is a particular time to recognize God as our master/leader. Living in obedience is a joy and privilege because God is a loving Father. We don't have to obey God; we WANT to obey him. As you celebrate today, rejoice in Mary's obedience. Her example can stir every heart to servanthood!

READ LUKE 1:26-38



DECEMBER 16

"Then she exclaimed with a loud cry: "Blessed are you among women, and your child will be blessed! How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

LUKE 1:42-43



LOVE DAY 2

While Mary must have been amazed to hear from the angel, Gabriel, that she had been chosen to give birth to Jesus, her cultural plight was noteworthy. To a modern-day Jew, a woman with a child before marriage was worthy of the penalty of death. Mary's father, mother, and fiancé' Joseph, could have easily had Mary thrown out of the family.

God often calls his servants to participate in what many would call impossible. Mary responded obediently to the angel but could not hide her concern. And yet, the moment she entered her aunt Elizabeth's presence, Mary's concern was replaced with a time of rejoicing. Elizabeth instantly knew that she was in the presence of God.

The birth of a new baby is always worth celebrating. But the Messiah's birth called for Elizabeth to refer to her niece as "blessed among women." The beauty of Christmas can be seen in Elizabeth's encouragement of Mary, who must have been struggling to explain her situation to others. Before Jesus was even born, he was changing lives from the womb! Jesus changes everything.

READ LUKE 1:39-45

DECEMBER 17

"And Mary said: My soul praises the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, because he has favored the humble condition of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed,"

LUKE 1:46 - 48



LOVE DAY 3

Upon hearing Elizabeth's great news, Mary erupted into a song of praise! Historically, Mary's Song is known as the Magnificat—a song of rejoicing in God's provision and the truth of his word. When reading through the passage, one can instantly find great wonder in the language and beauty of Mary's words.

Mary's Song is crucial for several reasons. Still, Mary's knowledge of Old Testament scriptures is one of the most important aspects to notice. At least 35 different Old Testament passages are alluded to in Mary's Song. The greatest worship songs are written explicitly using the Bible. While Mary was a young Jewish girl, one can clearly see her desire for God in her understanding of Scripture.

Mary had strong faith because she knew and understood the word of God. As a young Jewish woman, God prepared Mary through the teachings of Scripture to exhibit an obedient heart before God. Mary was ready to respond faithfully through her understanding of Scripture. Are we ready?

READ LUKE 1:46 - 56



DECEMBER 18

"He asked for a writing tablet and wrote: "His name is John." And they were all amazed.

Immediately, his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God."

LUKE 1:63-64



LOVE DAY 4

Unlike Mary, Zechariah did not immediately respond in obedience when God's messenger visited him. The pharisee struggled to believe that his wife would be able to give birth due to her older age, and God struck him with no ability to speak throughout his wife's pregnancy. Zechariah had much to say but could not speak!

John the Baptist was critical to the ministry of Jesus. Isaiah referred to John as the "voice crying out in the wilderness" (Isa. 40:3) to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry. John was the earthly Father who Jesus described as one of the most remarkable men to ever live! (Matt. 11:11) Once Zechariah responded in obedience, no one could stop him from speaking of God's glory in the name of his son.

Has the story of Christmas loosened your ability to praise God like Zechariah? Through every passage, Song, and experience, Christmas is designed to open mankind's eyes to God's glory. Families are encouraged to participate in God's perfect story. One of the most potent ways to join is to participate in our speech and songs of worship!

READ LUKE 1:57-66

DECEMBER 19

"But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."

MATTHEW 1:20



LOVE DAY 5

One of the most selfless characters in the Christmas story is Joseph, the man betrothed in marriage to Mary. If Joseph had wanted to, he could have had Mary dishonored in the presence of the people to achieve acceptance in society. Doing so would have eliminated Joseph's involvement in Mary's family while sparing him from disgrace. God proved his sovereignty by visiting with Joseph in a dream.

God used Joseph mightily in his life. As a God-fearing man, Joseph displayed characteristics of love and humility by handling the challenging situation. Manhood, described in human terms, only travels an inch deep. Joseph's response to God would later be described in Jesus's sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5).

Humility can be defined as "controlled strength." Joseph could have chosen the easy route in the quiet divorce of Mary. Instead, Joseph humbly walked in unity with God. The family is essential to God. Men can hold families together by walking humility before God. May God bless humble men this Christmas!

READ MATTHEW 1:18-21



DECEMBER 20

"Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel, which is translated as 'God is with us.'"

MATTHEW 1:22-23



LOVE DAY 6

God has written love letters to humanity for centuries. Ever since man fell in the Garden of Eden, he developed a perfect plan to bring people back into peace and joy. While many view God as far away from people, he proved his love by sending Immanuel. Immanuel is proof that God desires to be close to all people. Jesus Christ reminds us that God entered history to save humanity who was powerless against sin (Rom. 5:8).

God is not far from people. In fact, he sent the Holy Spirit as a down payment to the church (Eph 1:14). Christmas tells the good news that man is not alone but protected and redeemed. God entered our mess and gave us a message of hope! On a night in Bethlehem, Christ was born into the world. Nothing can change the fact that God loves his people. Jesus is all the proof that we need!

READ MATTHEW 1:22-23



DECEMBER 21

"While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them."

LUKE 2:6-7



LOVE DAY 6

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but Nazareth would eventually be his hometown. The city was filled to the brim on the night of Jesus' birth. In fact, Mary and Joseph were unable to find a place to stay due to the busyness of Bethlehem. Therefore, the son of God, born of a virgin, was delivered in a barn. The irony of this story is unbelievable.

The night that changed the world happened in a city that no one expected. People were busy with their families and had no idea that the King of kings was now in the world. Find joy in knowing the story and pray for every opportunity to share the most incredible story ever told with others. Christmas is a beautiful opportunity to guide others toward the season's true meaning!

READ LUKE 2:4-7



DECEMBER 22

"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw his Star at its rising and have come to worship him.'"

MATTHEW 2:1-2



LOVE DAY 7

While we love to tell the story of the wise men at Nativity Live, the scriptures record the story of the magi being separated from Mary and Joseph until several months later. The astrological position of the Star in Bethlehem drew the wise men to come and find Jesus, the Messiah. We do not know how many kings came to see Jesus, but we know their travels would eventually place the wise men before the Messiah.

There are all sorts of people in The Christmas Story. The wise men prove that economic brackets have no bearing on the people experiencing the wonder of Jesus Christ. Just as the lowly shepherds saw the Star, so did the magi. All people are invited to God's kingdom and can do so by believing in Jesus Christ, the son of God!

READ MATTHEW 2:1-2



DECEMBER 23

"You have prepared it in the presence of all peoples—a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel. His Father and mother were amazed at what was said about him."

LUKE 2:31-33



JOY DAY 1

The story of Simeon is one of the most tender moments found in Scripture. Like many God-fearing Jews, Simeon was waiting on the promised Messiah. Towards the end of his life, he was allowed to hold Jesus Christ in his arms. Simeon was able to look at Salvation wrapped in human flesh. The beauty of this moment for the world cannot be overstated.

Christmas is a time to notice and pay attention to God's story. He opens doors and points people toward the truth. What God promises will always be fulfilled. Maybe you are waiting on God's promises in your life. You are encouraged to remember the joy of Simeon and experience full joy in Christ. Believe in the good news!

READ LUKE 2:25-35



DECEMBER 24

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness."

ISAIAH 9:2



JOY DAY 2

Christmas Eve is a time of enchantment and anticipation for families worldwide. We are excited to gather for candlelight worship with the community at GBC. One of the reasons we gather to light candles is to let our lights shine before others (Matt. 5:16) in celebration of Christ's birth. When light shines, darkness has no choice but to run and flee!

Jesus Christ is the world's light, and he is every reason we celebrate Christmas. As you celebrate this evening in anticipation of Christmas day, remember that Jesus Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12) who came to take the sins away from the world. As we celebrate his first Advent, we look forward to the day he will return to the world!

READ ISAIAH 9:2-5



DECEMBER 25

*"For a child will be born
for us, a son will be given
to us, and the government
will be on his shoulders.*

*He will be named
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Eternal
Father, Prince of Peace."*

ISAIAH 9:6



JOY DAY 3

MERRY CHRISTMAS to you and your family from
Georgetown Baptist Church!

READ ISAIAH 9:6



Merry Christmas!

WRITTEN BY DR JAKE EDWARDS