

SEASON OF
ADVENT
STUDY GUIDE

Week 1: “The God Who Comes Down”

1. READ

Pastor Watley’s Scripture: Luke 2 : 8 – 14 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

Further Reading: Matthew 5 : 3 – 12 New King James Version (NKJV)

³ “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

⁵ Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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Luke 19 : 41 – 44 New King James Version (NKJV)

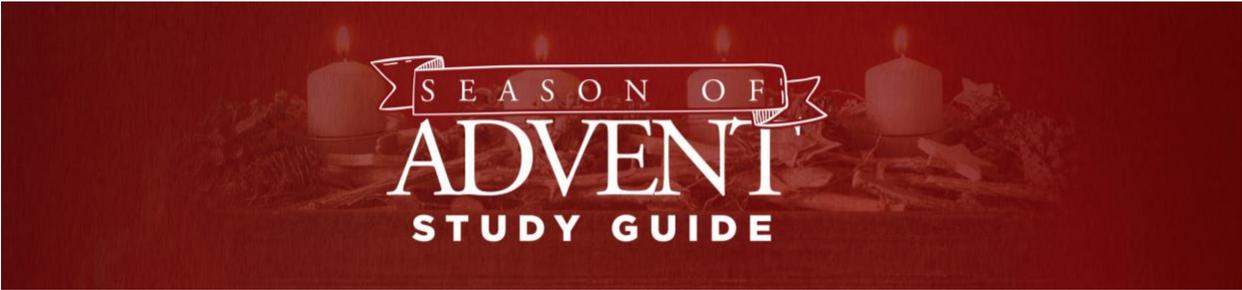
⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

2. REFLECT

[Click the image to go to our YouTube page for more content!]



As some of you may know, the four weeks leading up to Christmas are celebrated in many denominations of Christianity. This period of time is called **Advent**. The Advent season is our opportunity to prepare our hearts and minds for the birth of Jesus. Not only are we encouraged to celebrate the savior’s birth during this time, but we are also encouraged to eagerly await a season of spiritual rebirth within each of us. Each year, we can reflect on the coming of Christ with child-like anticipation, as we remember the significance of His arrival on Earth.



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This week our Senior Pastor Rev. Matthew L. Watley started a new series of sermons that will focus on the Advent season. Throughout this series, we will explore some of the biblical themes that marked the arrival of Jesus and accompanied his presence on Earth. As we study the Word of God for the weeks leading up to Christmas, we will specifically reflect on the following four major themes: **Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love.**

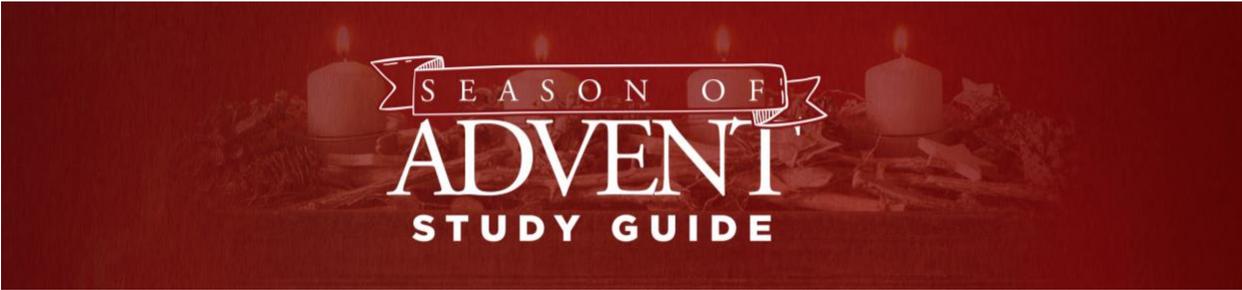
The first theme we are meditating on for this week is *Peace!*

In our lesson for week one entitled “The God Who Comes Down,” Pastor Watley reminds us that there are some things that only God can do. Before the birth of Jesus, generations of kings, priests, and prophets all tried to restore humanity back into right relationship with God. However, no matter how hard they tried, the debt of sin and rebellion was never paid. Thankfully for us, God was willing to come down and take matters into His own hands. When Christ our savior was born on Earth, it marked a major historical moment and a dramatic transition in our relationship with our Creator. The Word of God came alive and offered life to all of humanity.

And yet, the coming of Jesus not only meant that we are able to be restored into right relationship with God; His arrival also brought countless other promises that we as believers are able to experience. In our scripture for this week (Luke 2:8-14), we see that one of these promises is for us to have *peace*. Verse 14 says, “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth **peace**, goodwill toward men!” In order for us to better understand this biblical promise, we must comprehend the meaning of the word “peace.” The word for peace in Hebrew is “shalom,” which means complete or whole. This is important because peace is not simply the absence of trouble, but peace is actually the presence of wholeness and completion. The birth of Jesus was the fulfilment of God’s Word, and the means to bring wholeness and completion into a broken world!

However, many of us may be currently asking ourselves: “If Jesus brought peace, then why don’t we have peace?” As Pastor Watley mentions, the answer is simple. In order for us to partake in the peace of the Lord, we must be obedient to His leading and willing to embrace the fullness of His kingdom. By aligning ourselves with God’s will and devoting ourselves to Him, we are able to live whole and complete lives. In addition, we are also called to be peacemakers. In the disfunction of this world, we have been empowered to establish wholeness by mending cracks and divisions. As kingdom believers, we have been trusted to construct and build peace in the face of great turmoil and chaos. Jesus Himself in Matthew 5:9 says, “blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.” As children of God, we have been given the authority to create peace in places where it feels like no peace is present!

For additional content on peace, enjoy the Bible Project’s video on peace [HERE](#).



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3. RESPOND

Introspective Questions

- Would you consider yourself a *peacemaker*? Why or Why not?
- How do you create peace in the midst of chaos?

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think the shepherds were afraid when they saw the angel of the Lord?
- How would you have reacted to the angel telling you that the Prince of Peace was coming? Would you have believed?