

Family Advent Devotions

There are so many things around the Christmas season that demand our attention and pull us from fully focusing on the awe of Jesus, the light of the world. Included in your packet are four weeks of devotions. Each week includes:

Candle lighting

Dim the lights, light the candle, and take a deep breath. In observance of the Sabbath it is Jewish custom for the people to cover their eyes while saying words of blessing. When they uncover their eyes they see the light, truly see, as if to see it for the very first time. May we pause to see and hear, as though for the first time. Practice this tradition as you pray through the opening prayer.

Opening prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead your time. Use the provided prayer or say your own.

Scripture reading

Read the two provided scripture passages from your Bible.

Discussion questions

Remember, reflect, relate, and respond to the readings. Some suggestions provided.

Family activity

Engage with an activity that correlates with the theme.

Individual blessing

Parents, place your hands on your child and recite the blessing provided (or say your own). If you have multiple children, bless each child individually. Remember to fill in the blank line.

Closing prayer

Pray together as a family. If comfortable, allow each person to thank God for something specific in his/her day or ask God's guidance for a specific situation.

REMEMBER VERSE

Jesus said, "I am the light
of the world."

- John 8:12

It's Just a Phase

Understand the phase your child is in to maximize your influence.

0-4

Thinks like an **ARTIST**. Their world is full of imagination. Learn best through senses and how people respond. **EMBRACE** their physical needs to know God's love and meet God's family.

K-5TH

Thinks like a **SCIENTIST**. They take one idea at a time to discover what it means for them personally and practically. Still concrete thinkers. **ENGAGE** their personal interests to trust God's character and experience God's family.

6TH-8TH

Thinks like an **ENGINEER**. They personalize an idea by connecting pieces of information. Beginning to understand abstract thinking. **AFFIRM** their personal journey to own their faith and to value a faith community.

9TH-12TH

Thinks like a **PHILOSOPHER**. They're questioning everything and often learn best through processing out loud. **MAXIMIZE** their potential to keep pursuing authentic faith and discover a personal mission.

All Phases: Don't pretend to be an expert. Affirm their questions. Ask a question with a question. Most of the time they have an answer or thought about the question they are asking.

Week 1

Candle Lighting

Opening Prayer

God of Light,
Thank you for the undeserving gift of your son, Jesus.
As we read Your Word, we invite the Holy Spirit to guide our time.
In your Son's Name we pray.
Amen

Scripture Reading

John 1:1-15, John 9:1-12

Discussion Questions

REMEMBER: Summarize this passage. What sticks out to you?
REFLECT: What does this passage tell me about who God is? (the Word, He has always existed)
RELATE: How does this relate with who God made me to be? (witness to the light, share the light with others)
RESPOND: How does this change how I love others?

Family Activity

1. Take a sharpie marker and write one word of the Remember Verse on each glow-in-the-dark star. (Jesus, said, I, am, the, light, of, the, world, John 8:12).
2. Place the stars under direct light for about 30 seconds.
3. Allow someone to hide the stars in a dark room so they glow.
4. Search for the stars.
5. Once found, put the stars in order of the verse. For extra fun, remove one star and recite the verse, then remove another. Continue until each word from the verse has been removed.

Individual Blessing

(Child's name), you are a child of God.
I'm so proud of you for _____.
May you know Jesus as your light.

Closing Prayer

Week 2

Candle Lighting

Opening Prayer

God of Light,
Thank you for the undeserving gift of your son, Jesus.
As we read Your Word, we invite the Holy Spirit to guide our time.
In your Son's Name we pray.
Amen

Scripture Reading

John 3:16-21, 1 John 1:5-7

Discussion Questions

REMEMBER: Summarize this passage. What sticks out to you?
REFLECT: What does this passage tell me about who God is? (Sent Jesus to save the world - not to judge the world, wants us to acknowledge the dark so we can turn to the light, darkness goes away when the light is turned on)
RELATE: How does this relate with who God made me to be? (help others see the light in this dark world, God wants me to be in community with others)
RESPOND: How does this change how I love others?

Family Activity

1 John 1:5-7 tells us that God calls us into community. Spend time as a family enjoying one another. Play charades with the clues we've provided or chose your own game to play. Enjoy your time in fellowship!

Charades ideas: Opening presents, three wise men, hanging ornaments, Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem, sledding, building a snowman, reading a story, angel appearing to Mary, making a snow angel

Individual Blessing

(Child's name), you are a child of God.
You bless me by _____.
May you shine Jesus' light in this dark world so others may know the saving power of Jesus.

Closing Prayer

Week 3

Candle Lighting

Opening Prayer

God of Light,
Thank you for the undeserving gift of your son, Jesus.
As we read Your Word, we invite the Holy Spirit to guide our time.
In your Son's Name we pray.
Amen

Scripture Reading

John 8:12-18, Ephesians 5:8-10

Discussion Questions

REMEMBER: Summarize this passage. What sticks out to you?
REFLECT: What does this passage tell me about who God is? (the light that leads to life, God is judge, Jesus turns on the light so we can able to see and understand God)
RELATE: How does this relate with who God made me to be? (people of light)
RESPOND: How does this change how I love others?

Family Activity

1. Find a container for your plant. It doesn't need to be fancy. A coffee mug or a disposable cup will work.
 2. Pour the soil into the container.
 3. Plant the seed about half an inch deep.
 4. Add enough water so that the soil is moist to the touch.
 5. Put the container in indirect sunlight.
 6. Throughout the week, make sure the soil stays moist to the touch.
 7. Watch as the plant grows just as we grow when we have the light of Jesus.
- * It will take 5-7 days for the plant to break through the surface.

Individual Blessing

(Child's name), you are a child of God.
I like to watch the way you _____.
May you always look to Jesus as the light that leads to life and grow to be like Jesus our teacher.

Closing Prayer

Week 4

Candle Lighting

Opening Prayer

God of Light,
Thank you for the undeserving gift of your son, Jesus.
As we read Your Word, we invite the Holy Spirit to guide our time.
In your Son's Name we pray.
Amen

Scripture Reading

John 12:35-36, 44-47, Matthew 5:14-16

Discussion Questions

REMEMBER: Summarize this passage. What sticks out to you?
REFLECT: What does this passage tell me about who God is? (Savior, God shines light in a dark world, worthy of praise)
RELATE: How does this relate with who God made me to be? (children of the light, walk in the light, shine the light for all to see and praise God)
RESPOND: How does this change how I love others?

Family Activity

1. Decorate up to three light switch covers using the Remember Verse. (Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12)
2. Tape the cover to light switches around your home.
3. Beyond the Christmas season, let the decorated light switches be a reminder that Jesus is the light, and we can shine his light in the world.

Individual Blessing

(Child's name), you are a child of God.
I see how you shine the light of Jesus when you _____.
May you always let your good deeds shine so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Closing Prayer

Additional Resources

Candle Lighting

Using candles from your home, light an additional candle during your devotional time. For example, week 1 - light 1 candle, week 2 - light 2 candles, etc. Talk about how the light gets brighter and brighter each week. Just as when we grow in our love and understanding of who God is, His light glows brighter and brighter.

Downloadable Bible Apps



You Version Adult Bible App

Read the Bible in any translation or have it read audibly to you. Highlight passages, find a devotional plan, take notes, and more!



You Version Kid's Bible App

Interactive adventures and beautiful animations, kids explore the big stories of the Bible through touch-activated animations, content that brings the Bible to life, fun facts and activities designed to help kids remember what they learn, and special challenges that let kids earn rewards.



Parent Cue: Phases Content

Do something each week to help move your child toward a deeper faith and a better future. Read blogs, listen to podcasts, and make the app personal to your child(ren).

Bible Reading Plan

Phil Vischer, co-creator of the acclaimed VeggieTales, opens the Bible to the book of 1 John to answer the question, "What is a Christian?" With the help of some animated friends, Phil walks through the entire book in this family video series through short sessions that toddlers to adults will enjoy. Learn not only what the Bible says, but also why and what it means for us today.

For more information: rightnowmedia.com/Content/Speaker/999479

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Every family is pursuing authentic faith
and living life on mission with Jesus Christ.