

ADVENT: WEEK 1

WAIT EXPECTANTLY FOR THE LORD

THINK ABOUT IT:

Have you ever waited for something to happen? What did you wait for? How did you feel while you were waiting? What did you do while you were waiting?

LISTEN TO IT:

Jesus said, "No one knows the day or the time. The angels in heaven don't know, and the Son himself doesn't know. Only the Father knows. So watch out and be ready! You don't know when the time will come." (Mark 13:32-33)

TALK ABOUT IT:

Have you ever heard people trying to predict when the world will end or trying to predict when Jesus will come again? What are your thoughts when you hear these kinds of conversations? Do Jesus' words frighten you or give you hope? Explain.

LEARN FROM IT:

In Jesus' time, just like today, there were people who were anxious to know when the world would end. But Jesus does not want us to be concerned about such matters since only God knows. Rather Jesus wants us to prepare our hearts so that we are always ready to receive him. When Jesus was born, no one expected the Messiah to come as a baby. But God often surprises us in wonderful ways! In the coming days, as you begin to get ready for Christmas, be open to God's surprises in your life and prepare your heart so that you will be ready to welcome the Savior. (Mark 13:32-37)

PRAY ABOUT IT:

Lord Jesus, help me to wait for you. Prepare my heart to receive you. My hope is in you. In your holy and precious name I pray. Amen.

ACT ON IT:

While waiting for Christmas, purchase a Scripture-based "window" Advent Calendar (one with Bible verses on the back flap of each window) or make your own Advent Calendar. If making your own calendar, photocopy the month of December from a wall calendar or create your own on a sheet of white drawing paper, and copy the following Bible verse citations from Luke's Gospel in each of the 25 boxes for the first 25 days in December: 1:5-7; 1:8-10; 1:11-13; 1:14-17; 1:18-20; 1:21-22; 1:23-25; 1:26-28; 1:29-33; 1:34-38; 1:39-45; 1:46-50; 1:51-53; 1:54-56; 1:57-58; 1:59-60; 1:61-62; 1:63-64; 1:65-66; 1:67-68; 1:69-71 1:72-75; 1:76-80; 2:1-7; 2:8-20. Read the assigned Scripture each day and affix (or draw) a star (from a sheet of star stickers) in each day's box.

LET US PRAY:

Loving Jesus,

In your name this holy season:

We bring forth light to defy the claims of darkness

We bring forth joy and song to defy the claims of sadness,

We bring forth a spirit of generosity to defy the claims of want,

We bring forth peace to defy the claims of violence.

In the darkness, may we look to Bethlehem.

In the form of a most vulnerable child, you came among us to say,

"There is a light in this world."

Let us be light to others. Let us be bearers of the gift of your grace.

And may you be born anew, into every season into every age

Into every land and every human heart.

Come Lord Jesus.

Amen.