

JOY TO THE WORLD

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Few stories in Scripture are as captivating for all ages as the Christmas story. Over the next four weeks of your Joy to the World study, you'll walk through this narrative and other key passages of the Bible that give you a better understanding of Jesus's first Advent and His promise to come again. With this family devotional guide, we've made it easy for you to bring your family along with you on this Bible study journey.

HOW TO USE

For each week of the study, we've highlighted a key Bible passage from the Christmas story as told in Matthew and Luke. Read that passage aloud with your child. (If your child is pre-K or younger, you may want to summarize the story for him or her.) Then use the prompts provided to talk about what this part of Jesus's birth means and why it matters. You'll find some age-specific questions below that are in addition to the talking points included in your Bible study book. After you've talked about the Bible together, spend some time in prayer and worship, using the streaming videos as a guide.

WEEK ONE: THE LORD IS COME

READ or summarize Luke 1:26-38—The angel Gabriel appears to Mary.

TALK about Mary's trust in God and how nothing is impossible for Him. Explain that Mary's baby would be Jesus, and He is the Son of God. God sent His Son to the world as a baby because of how much He loves us (John 3:16).

ASK:

- **Younger Kids:** How do you think you would feel if an angel showed up and started telling you about God's plans for you? Scared? Excited? Happy? Nervous? Confused?
- **Older Kids:** Who is one person you trust? How do you know you can trust that person? How do we know we can trust God?
- **Teens:** How do you know God is trustworthy? What is something going on in your life where you need to show the kind of trust in Him that Mary showed here?

SING ALONG with Ellie Holcomb as she sings "Joy to the World" (Week One video). If you have teenagers, watch the devotional teaching with them as well.

PRAY: Thank You, God, for Jesus. Help us believe and trust in You like Mary did.

WEEK TWO: THE SAVIOR REIGNS

READ or summarize Matthew 1:18-25—The angel appears to Joseph.

TALK about how the angel gave Jesus two names: Jesus, which means God saves, and Immanuel, which means God is with us. Jesus came to save us from our sins, which is a fancy word for all the ways we disobey God. We all have sinned, so we all need Jesus.

ASK:

- **Younger Kids:** Think about the last time you did something you weren't supposed to do. What happened?
- **Older Kids:** Think about the last time you disobeyed me. Why can it be hard to obey me? What does this show you about sin (disobeying God)?
- **Teens:** What does it mean to you to know that Jesus became human, lived, and died just so He could save you from your sins? How does this truth change our lives?

SING ALONG with Ellie Holcomb as she sings “O Come All Ye Faithful” (Week Two video). If you have teenagers, watch the devotional teaching with them as well.

PRAY: God, You are so kind and good. Thank You for sending Jesus to save us from our sins and for giving us a way to be in Your family forever.

WEEK THREE: NO MORE LET SINS & SORROWS GROW

READ or summarize Luke 2:1-20—Jesus is born and the shepherds visit.

TALK about why Jesus’s birth was “good news of great joy” (Luke 2:10) for the shepherds and is still that for us today. Explain everything that changed for the world at the moment of Jesus’s birth. Discuss how we glorify and praise God like the shepherds did.

ASK:

- **Younger Kids:** What is one thing that made you super excited today?
- **Older Kids:** What is something that brings you joy at Christmastime?
- **Teens:** What is something about the Christmas story that brings you joy? What is one way you can praise God today like the shepherds did?

SING ALONG with Ellie Holcomb as she sings “O Holy Night” (Week Three video). If you have teenagers, watch the devotional teaching with them as well.

PRAY: God, help us to love You and to praise You in all we do.

WEEK FOUR: WONDERS OF HIS LOVE

READ or summarize Matthew 2:1-12—The wise men visit Jesus.

TALK about the significance of the wise men and the star. This part of the story shows us God keeps His promises, because long before Jesus, God promised He would raise up a King from Bethlehem. It also shows us that Jesus is King for all people; the wise men came from far away to worship Jesus.

ASK:

- **Younger Kids:** What is something you love? How do you know that I love you?
- **Older Kids:** Think about the Christmas story we’ve been reading. How does it show you how much God loves you?
- **Teens:** How do you know God loves you? What are some ways you feel His love in a normal day? What are some things we can do as a family to show other people the love of God before this year is over?

SING ALONG with Ellie Holcomb as she sings “Silent Night” (Week Four video). If you have teenagers, watch the devotional teaching with them as well.

PRAY: God, help us love and worship You with our whole hearts, and give us opportunities to tell others about You.