



*Waiting For  
the King*

21 DAILY ADVENT MEDITATIONS

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*Week 2:  
Abiding Peace  
Abounding Joy*



## Day 8 of Advent

### Abiding Peace In Pursing Jesus

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6*

Do your circumstances feel somewhat chaotic? Does the world around you seem to spin out of control? Is the landscape of your heart ravaged by anxious thoughts?

I'm fairly certain you've nodded in affirmation to those questions.

Peace seems to slip through our fingers. One moment, we feel at peace because our circumstances seem working for our good.

And the next moment, anxiety, fear, or distress throw a rock at our fragile, glass-like peace, shattering it into a million shards.

But Jesus didn't come into the world to give us passing peace. He came to give us peace that passes understanding.

Peace that is not logical.

Peace that is not volatile.

Peace that is not circumstantial.

Peace that is not temporary.

But an abiding peace that holds us through all our circumstances. A deep peace that is not disturbed by the darkness around it.

How do we get a hold of that peace?

We put our trust in the Prince of Peace.

We are not called to pursue peace as an end in itself. We are called to pursue Jesus who is the Prince of Peace. As we move into deeper intimacy with Him, He enables us to trust His promises. As we walk in step with the Spirit, He fills our hearts with an abiding peace.

I love that our verse today starts with the words, "For to us..."

Jesus didn't come into the world for someone else. He came into the world for us. To be our "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.."

Jesus came to be your "Prince of Peace." Will you welcome Him, pursue Him, trust Him, and put your full weight on His promises today?

## ***Lean In***

Father God, You know how I desperately long for peace in the midst of my circumstances. I know that I can only find that peace in drawing closer to You and trusting in Your promises. Help me this Advent season to choose You over all the activity and noise. As I do that, I trust that You will fill my heart with abiding peace. In Jesus' name. Amen

## Day 9 of Advent

### Abiding Peace In His Presence

"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you." Isaiah 26: 3

Recently, I found myself speaking with an older woman from a different faith background. She was in deep distress because of a monetary crisis and lawsuit that her family was facing. As she spoke, the tension in her voice was palpable. She shook from the effort it took not to break down. She held her head in her hands and said, "There is no open door. There is no way out of this."

I listened. I offered some words of comfort. I prayed with her. But my efforts seemed to be just a bandaid on a gaping wound.



The lady couldn't shake off the anxiety she was experiencing. As I know her personally, her distress broke my heart. I knew the only answer for her was the Lord. He was the only way out for her. And He is the only way out for you and me.

Today's verse speaks of how God will keep us in perfect peace. Not if we ignore Him. Not if we put Him in a box. Not if we're determined to find our own answers. But if we trust Him and fix our thoughts on Him.

Instead of letting the Enemy keep us running on a hamster wheel of anxious thoughts, we need to fix our attention on God. When our minds wander, we need to make the choice—with the help of the Spirit—to bring our thoughts back to Him.



The best way we can fix our gaze on Him is by spending time with Him.

When we fill our minds with His Word, the Enemy doesn't have much space to gain a foothold. When we praise God through nerve-wracking situations, the Enemy doesn't have much wiggle room to cause fear. When we submit ourselves in prayer and come before Him in utter humility, the Enemy doesn't have the chance to discourage us.

This Advent, may we not just dress up in our cheery Christmas outfits. Let's put on the full armor of God, carry the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, and take our stand against the Enemy's schemes, especially when he tries to pull us into the pit of anxiety.

***Lean In***

Father God, This Advent we remember Your Son who gave up everything so we could have life and experience peace. Lord, help me to keep my thoughts fixed on You by spending time at Your feet this season. In Jesus' name, Amen

## Day 10 of Advent

### Abiding Peace In The Gift Of Salvation

*Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation..." Luke 2: 28-29*

Most of us have hung out in life's waiting rooms at different points of time. Maybe when you were young, you couldn't wait for summer vacation to begin. As you got older, perhaps you waited to hear back from a school for college admissions. Or maybe you waited for a long time for the spouse that God had chosen for you. All of have played the waiting game.

In the Bible, we read about Simeon, a devout man of God who lived in Jerusalem.

Now, the Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die before he had seen the Messiah. What an amazing promise. But, what a long wait! I don't know how long Simeon waited in anticipation. Maybe each morning he would pray during breakfast and ask God, "Will it be today, Father?"

On that eventful day, as Mary and Joseph came into the temple with Jesus to present Him to God, Simeon too went into the temple courts as he was prompted by the Holy Spirit. There as Simeon saw Jesus, he knew that he had seen the Savior. And now he could leave this earth in perfect peace.

Friend, our search for peace is not found in a solution or answer to a problem. Our search for peace is found in the Savior because He is the answer.



Simeon took the child Jesus in his arms and said to God, "You may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation..."

The gift of our salvation secured by Jesus gives us eternal peace. Because Jesus came into this earth as a baby, identified with us in our humanity, and carried our sins upon the cross, we can have peace with God.

This Advent, have you taken the opportunity to pause and look at Jesus as your Savior?

Without the gift of eternal peace through Christ, we can't experience true peace. Take a moment today to praise God for the gift of salvation in Christ

### ***Lean In***

Father God, I praise You for sending Jesus so I could be reconciled to You through His work of salvation. Because of Jesus "my eyes have seen your salvation" and I can be in perfect peace. In Jesus' name. Amen

## Day 11 of Advent

### Abounding Joy: When Everything Is Not Perfect

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2: 10-11*

I recently watched the cutest video of a little boy in the UK speaking with his mother. The video (which went viral on TikTok) shows the boy, grinning from ear to ear and beaming with pride as he tells his mom that he got a "classic role" in the nativity play at school. His mom is bemused and asks him whether he got the role of Joseph.

Nope. It wasn't Joseph.

One of the three wise men? No. Not them.

The inn-keeper then? It wasn't him either.

What was the “classic role” then?

With a sparkle of joy in his eyes, the boy says to his mom, “I’m going to be ‘Door Holder Number 3’. I’ll be holding doors open.”

Oh, the sweet joys of children!

The little boy’s enthusiasm got me thinking. What if I approached the season of Christmas with that kind of effervescent, abounding joy?

Maybe everything doesn’t have to be perfect.

Maybe all the baking doesn’t get done.

Maybe all the gifts don’t get wrapped.

Maybe all the parties I plan to host don’t quite make it out of my planner to real life.

Maybe all I get to do is be “door holder number 3.”

And yet, there is joy. Not just joy—but *great* joy.

Because the joy is in Jesus and not our circumstances. The angels proclaimed "the good news that will cause great joy for all the people"

The good news is quite simply this: God the Father sent His only Son Jesus into the world so through His sinless life, perfect sacrifice, and powerful resurrection, we could be rescued from our sin and brought into a relationship with our Creator both now and forever.

That is cause for celebration. That is the reason for our joy.

Whether we have the lead role on the stage of life or simply get to be "door holder number 3" we can rejoice because of Jesus.



## ***Lean In***

Father God, As I spend time at Your feet this season, help me to reclaim my joy in the Lord. Help me to remember and be thankful for the beautiful gift of salvation and Your continuing work of sanctification through Jesus. It is such amazing news of great joy. In Jesus' name.

Amen

## Day 12 of Advent

### Abounding Joy: The Cost and The Reward

Is your Christmas tree up yet?

In keeping with our yearly tradition, we invited our extended family over to decorate the tree and kick off the Christmas season. But, of course, the season doesn't truly "kick-off" till there's high-calorie food involved. So, yes, the evening included everything from brown-sugar-laced mulled apple cider and cumin-spiced roast lamb chops to rum-soaked Christmas cake served with creamy custard.

But as I think about my favorite holiday of the year, I realize what needs to come first is not the tree or the lights or good food or parties.

Very simply, it's not WHAT needs to come first, but WHO needs to come first. And His name is Jesus.

If you're a Christian, you sense that in your spirit. You long for your Christmas season to be more than just baking cookies, binging at parties, and barraging through malls.

I'll be the first to share that first on my Christmas "wishlist" is joy. After a year of stress and sickness, I long for joy to infiltrate our home, to soak into every room and fill every crevice.

But, it turns out, joy is not sold on Amazon Prime. Nor is it available in any retail store. I can't shop for joy at the mall or find it even if I pay full price.

You and I can find joy only in close communion with Jesus.

Will it cost us something? Not monetarily.

But it may cost us our time as we set aside moments to spend at the feet of the Lord.

It may cost us impressing guests as we prioritise full hearts and not just extravagantly laden tables.

It may cost us the latest fashion trends as we check in with Him instead of checking out the latest sale in town.

It may cost us likes and follows on social media as we stay in His presence instead of scrolling through posts.

But no matter how high the cost, the reward will be worth it as He floods our homes and our hearts with joy.

### ***Lean In***

Heavenly Father, This Advent help me not just to "remember the reason for the season" but to truly put You first. First in my day, first in my thoughts, first in my priorities. Amen



## Day 13 of Advent

### Abounding Joy: Bringing Joy To The King

The other day, a friend mentioned that her five-year-old daughter thoughtfully asked her this question: Mama, what do you think Santa would like for Christmas?

The sweet little girl considered what Santa might want after riding his sleigh all around the world making people happy.

The little girl and her mom hold a secular, commercial view of Christmas. To the child, the center of the Christmas narrative was Santa Claus and presents. She doesn't know better because she hasn't heard the gospel.

Yet, it gave her great joy to think of how she could bless the guy in the red suit.

What about those of us who do know the true meaning of Christmas?

Have we ever asked ourselves: What does Jesus want for Christmas?

If we truly understand that the Christmas narrative is about Him, then shouldn't that be our first question?

While none of us can ever "earn" our salvation or work toward it, how do we respond to this incredible gift that Jesus has secured for us? Do we live to please Him? Do we even think about what He might want from us?

How do we bring joy to our King?

Like the little girl who wanted to give Santa some presents, what can we offer the Lord this Christmas?

I think back to the simple Christmas song "Little Drummer Boy" – the lyrics go: "I have no gifts to bring pa-ra-pa-pum... That's fit to give a King..." Those lines may be true of us. We don't have anything "befitting" to offer Him.

But just as the little drummer boy played his best for the King, we can too. We can bring Him joy by doing ALL we do for His name and glory.

The Lord is pleased when we honor Him with the gifts and resources He gives us. May it be our joy to bring Him joy.

***Lean In***

Heavenly Father, In the frenzy of the Christmas season, I know I spend so much time thinking about gifts for everyone. But I often forget about what Jesus might want from me. Help me to offer myself to Him, and to offer my time, talents, and treasures to Him. In Jesus' name. Amen

## Day 14 of Advent

### Abounding Joy: God Fills Us Up

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15: 13*

The verse above captures the three themes we've been covering over the last two weeks of Advent: joy, peace, and hope. And the verse makes it clear that we can't manufacture any of those qualities by ourselves.

God is the One who does the filling. We are the ones who do the trusting.

As we meditate on His promises this Advent, as we spend time in His presence, and as we walk in step with the Spirit, His unspeakable, inexplicable joy fills our hearts.



In Christ, the believer is “filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy” (1 Peter 1:8).

While this joy sometimes bubbles over and spills into different parts of our lives, it is not a surface-level joy. Like the Sunday Schools song from a few decades ago goes: “I’ve got joy that is down in my heart, deep down in my heart.” Not only do the lyrics make for a fun “action song,” they also hold the truth: true joy is deeply rooted in our hearts, undeterred by our circumstances, dependent on the Holy Spirit.

Yes, joy is one of the fruit of the Spirit.

If you and I want to experience the joy of the Lord this season, then we don’t do it by slapping on a smile and choosing positivity. Those “quick fixes” to a joy problem will fizzle out.

Instead, we abide in the Vine and we allow Him to prune us so we can produce good fruit, including the fruit of joy.

### ***Lean In***

Father God, You know how much my heart longs for joy. But thank You for also showing me that true joy is different from fleeting happiness. I can only experience Your joy when I abide in You and yield to the power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen