STUDY GUIDE

The Advent of Jesus

A COMPANION TO THE PODCAST

CREATIVE THINKING with Kim Thomas

A RESOURCE OF THE VILLAGE CHAPEL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Week One: The Places of Advent 2

Episode 1: The Womb, The Manger, The Hillside 2

Episode 2: The Wilderness 5

Week Two: The People of Advent 9

Episode 3: The Outsider, The Excluded, The Undeserving... 9

Episode 4: Herod, The Religious, The Magi 13

Week Three: The News of Advent 17

Episode 5: Strange, Old & Good News 17

Episode 6: Waiting for News 20

Week Four: The Promise of Advent 24

Episode 7: The Call to See 24

Episode 8: Behold as Revelation 27

WEEK ONE

The Places of Advent

Episode 1: The Womb, The Manger, The Hillside

Read Colossians 1:15

The story of God's redemption has always been rooted in place.

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light..."

ISAIAH 9:2

Adventus (Latin): arrival, coming.

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

1. The womb is the place of Christ's humanity.

2. The manger is the place of Christ's humility.

"The Word of the Father, by whom all time was created, was made flesh and was born in time for us. He, without whose divine permission no day completes its course, wished to have one day for His human birth ... The Maker of man became Man that He, the Bread, might be hungry; that He, the Fountain, might thirst; that He, the Light, might sleep ... To endure these and similar indignities for us, to free us, unworthy creatures, He who existed as the Son of God before all ages, deigned to become the Son of Man..."

AUGUSTINE

3. The hillside is the place of invitation.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in."

READ REVELATION 3:20

"The joy of God has gone through the poverty of the manger and the distress of the cross; therefore it is invincible and irrefutable."

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

THE ARTWORK:



The Nativity
1597

FEDERICO BARROCCI, (1530-1612)
OIL ON CANVAS, 53×41
PRADO MUSEUM, MADRID, SPAIN

WEEK ONE

The Places of Advent

Episode 2: The Wilderness

The Wilderness is:

1. A place of preparation

"The child grew and became strong in spirit, and He was in the wilderness until the day of His public appearance to Israel."

LUKE 1:80

"Righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and decrees of the Lord."

LUKE 1:6

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

2. An unmasking place

3. A place of transition

4. His (place) workshop for redemption

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain."

C. S. LEWIS

THE CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

AUTHOR:
PHILLIPS BROOKS (1868)

TUNE:
ST. LOUIS (REDNER)

O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by

Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven

No ear may hear His coming
But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive him still
The dear Christ enters in

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today

We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel

Week 1: The Places of Advent

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what areas of your life are you expecting God to show up in big moments, and where might His presence already be quietly meeting you in the everyday ordinary routines?

2. Kim highlights that the ultimate "Advent place" is the human heart. Where in your life do you simply need to pause and receive God's peace just as you are?

3. If you are currently experiencing silence or waiting, how might this season be an invitation to rest in God's care rather than a sign of being forgotten?

4. The call to "prepare the way" is an invitation to clear space for the Lord. What mental noise or need for control can you gently lay down today to make room for His comfort?

5. Where in your life do you need to pause and allow God's peace to meet you right where you are?

WEEK TWO

The People of Advent

Episode 3: The Outsider, The Excluded, The Undeserving, and The Insignificant

Read: Matthew 1



EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

In Matthew 1, we see the family tree of Jesus: a lineage filled with outsiders, the excluded, the undeserving, and the insignificant. It's a story that reminds us: God's grace is not reserved for the worthy, but extended to the willing. Join us this week as we rediscover the wonder of the Advent — and who Christ came for.

The Family History:

"A descendant of David would reign forever."

2 SAMUEL 7:16

1. The Outsider

"The Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

EPHESIANS 3:6

2. The Excluded

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

GALATIANS 3:28

3. The Undeserving

"Christ is the kind of person who is not ashamed of sinners — in fact, He even puts them in His family tree."

MARTIN LUTHER

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our sins, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved."

EPHESIANS 2:4,5

4. The Insignificant

"We were made not primarily that we may love God, but that God may love us — that we may become objects in which the Divine love may rest 'well pleased.'"

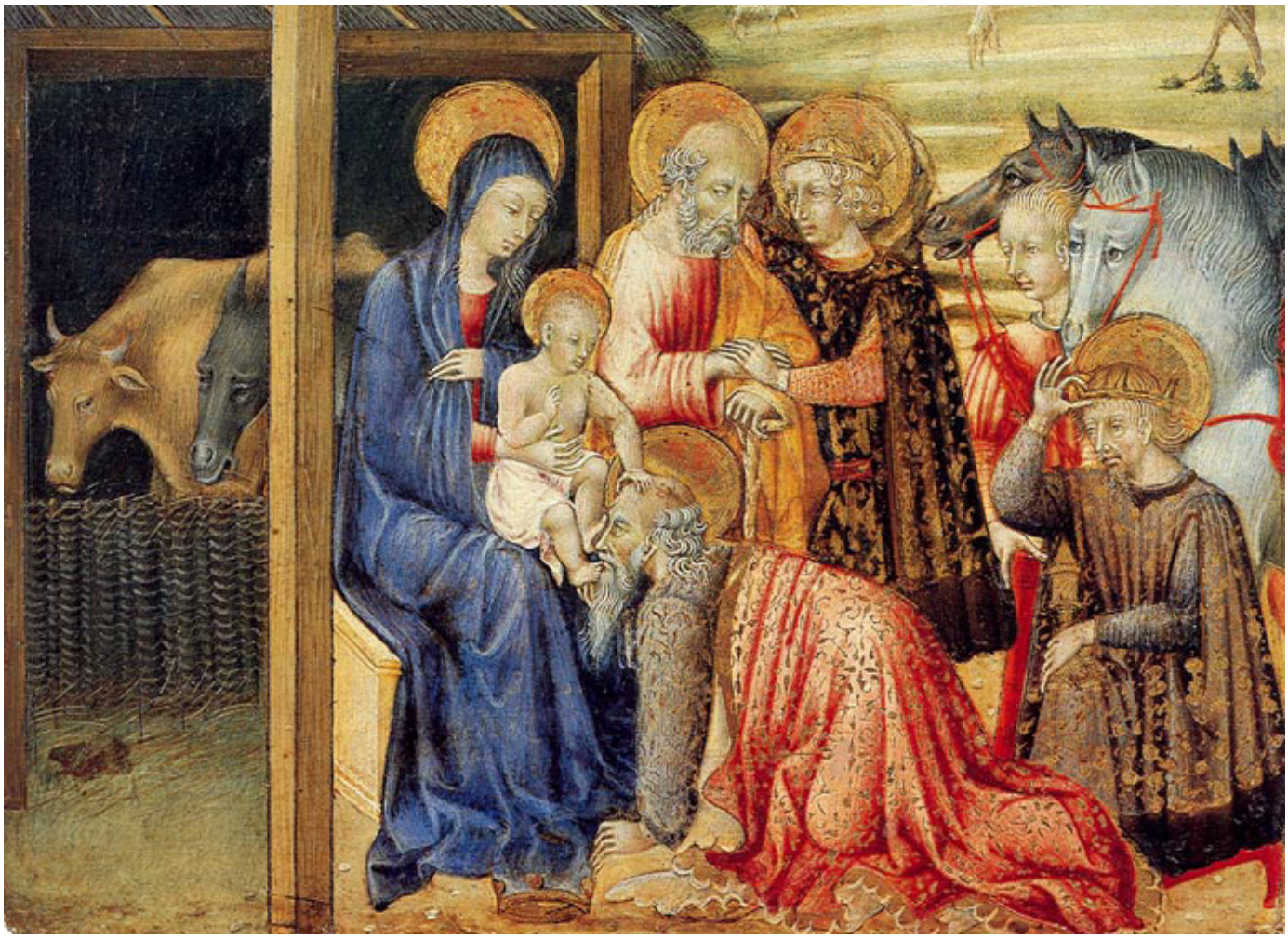
C.S. LEWIS

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

JOHN 3:16

The Outsiders welcomed, the Excluded included, the unsparing mercy of God toward The Undeserving, and the Insignificant chosen.

THE ARTWORK:



The Adoration of the Magi
1460

GIOVANNI DI PAOLO
TEMPERA AND GOLD ON WOOD
10.5" X 9"
NEW YORK METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

WEEK TWO

The People of Advent

Episode 4: Herod, The Religious, The Magi

Read: Matthew 2

In Matthew 2, we meet a restless king, wandering magi, and people who almost missed the miracle happening right in front of them. Advent encourages us to think about our own lives. It asks us to give up control for trust, distance for worship, and restlessness for peace.

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

Herod, the Religious and the Magi

"The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight. We call it peace, but it means far more than peace of mind or a cease-fire among enemies. In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight... in other words, the way things ought to be."

CORNELIUS PLANTINGA

1. Herod: The Restless King

"You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."

AUGUSTINE

2. The Magi: The Seekers Who Found

3. The People Who Missed and the People Who Found

- This, too, is the geography of the soul. Advent invites us to seek this Jesus. To exchange control for trust, distance for worship.
- Plantinga's vision of shalom: "the way things ought to be"

"When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy."

MATTHEW 2:10

"For unto us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be
upon His shoulder,
and His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,Everlasting
Father, Prince of Peace."

ISAIAH 9:6

THE CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High

WORDS BY:
JAMES CHADWICK

MUSIC BY:
CHARLES HUTCHINS, EDWARD SHIPPEN BARNES

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains

CHORUS
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song

CHORUS
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him Whose birth the angels sing
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King

CHORUS
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo

See within in a manger laid
Jesus Lord of Heav'n and Earth
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid
With us sing our Savior's birth

CHORUS
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo

Week 2: The People of Advent

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever felt like an outsider or excluded, and how does knowing you are included in God's family change how you see your worth?

2. How does knowing that God gives more grace influence how you view your own past or the mistakes of others?

3. How does it feel to remember that God sees, values, and loves you in your quiet, ordinary days?

4. Like Herod was terrified to lose power and control, what "small kingdom" or area of life are you holding onto tightly out of fear?

5. Where is God inviting you to take a quiet step of trust, leaving the final outcome in His hands?

WEEK THREE

The News of Advent

Episode 5: Strange, Old & Good News

1. Strange News, Luke 1:26–38

"We cannot tell in what strange ways God will work. We can be sure that He is utterly worthy of our trust."

NT WRIGHT

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

2. Old News, Matthew 2

"The Christian landscape is strewn with the wreckage of derelict, half-built towers — the ruins of those who began to build and were unable to finish... They have covered themselves with a decent, but thin, veneer of Christianity — respectable, but not uncomfortable."

JOHN STOTT

Francoise Fenelon said in so many words, we make the sanctuary out of what was meant only as the porch.

3. Good News, Luke 2:8-14

"I bring you good news of great joy for all people. Today, in the city of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord."

LUKE 2:10

Savior, Lord, Christ.

"God intends the restoration of a lost world to Himself... and in Jesus Christ, He makes this possible."

ALISTER MCGRATH

"The gospel narratives are not about what you should do, but about what God has done. The birth of the Son of God is good news — an announcement. You don't save yourself. God has come to save you."

TIM KELLER

THE ARTWORK:



The Annunciation
1457

JAUME FERRER THE YOUNGER
OIL, TEMPERA, AND GOLD ON WOOD PANEL
UNFRAMED: 67 11/16 X 49 1/8

WEEK THREE

The News of Advent

Episode 6: Waiting for News

Episode 6: Read Luke 2:22–36

The Long Waiter – Simeon

"Sovereign Lord, as You have promised, You may now dismiss Your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the sight of all nations — a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."

LUKE 2:29

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

"Almighty God, give me wisdom to perceive You, intelligence to understand You, diligence to seek You, patience to wait for You, and eyes to behold You..."

BENEDICT OF NURSIA

The Faithful Watcher – Anna

"And there was a prophetess, Anna...She was advanced in years, ...She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem."

LUKE 2:36-38

Expectant waiting for reliable promises is never disappointed.

> "If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God first, it will in the end make no difference what you have chosen instead."
>
> **WILLIAM LAW**

"While other worldviews lead us to sit in the midst of life's joys, foreseeing the coming sorrows, Christianity empowers us to sit in the midst of this world's sorrows, tasting the coming joy."

TIM KELLER

The Good News has come, and it was worth the wait.

THE CAROL

Joy to The World

WORDS BY:
ISAAC WATTS

MUSIC BY:
LOWELL MASON

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Week 3: The News of Advent

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When life takes an unexpected or strange turn, as Mary's did, what helps you anchor your heart in God's trustworthiness?

2. Where might God be inviting you to move from simply head knowledge to worship and wonder of His nearness?

3. In what ways are you tempted to rely on self-effort or earn approval, and how can you rest in God's free gift of grace today?

4. Just as Simeon waited his entire life for God's promise, trusting in the faithfulness of the Lord, what prayer or deep longing are you holding right now?

5. What internal noise or hurry can you quiet so you can notice the subtle ways God is present around you?

WEEK FOUR

The Promise of Advent

Episode 7: The Call to See

Read Isaiah 7 & Matthew 1

In Isaiah 7 and Matthew 1, we see the promise fulfilled—God with us, Immanuel. Not distant, not indifferent, not waiting until we're ready–but present, living among us.

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

1. Behold the Promise

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

ISAIAH 7:14

2. Behold the Person

3. Behold the Purpose

"You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

MATTHEW 1:21

Behold! God with us.
Jesus is The living promise,
the person revealed, and
the purpose fulfilled.
Not far off. Not against us.
Not indifferent.
Not waiting until we
get good enough,
fixed, figure it all out.
But with us. Now,
and to the end.

THE ARTWORK:



Annunciation to the Shepherds
1663

ABRAHAM HONDIUS
24" X 31"
OIL ON PANEL

WEEK FOUR

The Promise of Advent

Episode 8: Behold as Revelation

Read Matthew 1 & Luke 2

In Matthew 1 and Luke 2, we behold the person and purpose of Christ: the Savior who comes to redeem, to save His people from their sins, and to bring joy and hope to all. Advent reminds us that God's love is near, tangible, and life-changing.

EPISODE RESOURCE PAGE

One of Scripture's great invitations.
Behold means stop — look — pay attention.
It's heaven's word for don't miss this.

1. Behold the manger:

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

MATTHEW 1:23

"The creation was completed by the Incarnation, because God thereby included Himself in it."

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

"Behind the glory of the manger is the glory of the eternal purpose of God."

SAMUEL DWEMER

2. Behold the Savior

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

LUKE 2:10, 11

* "Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God."

1 JOHN 3:1

3. Behold the glory

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased.'"

LUKE 2:13,14

"Other works of God are for His glory, but the redemption of the world is for His glory in the highest."

MATTHEW HENRY

Behold the manger where God drew near, the Savior who came to redeem, and the glory that still fills the earth with light. What began with Behold! in Bethlehem will one day end with Behold! from heaven:

"Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him."

REVELATION 1:7

Through this season, we've journeyed together —
through the **Places of Advent** where heaven touched earth,
through the **People of Advent** who remind us that grace welcomes all,
through the **News of Advent** that still breaks into our weary world with joy.
And now, all of it leads us here — to ***Behold***.

To look upon the mystery of God made flesh.
To worship before the wonder of love come near.

THE CAROL

O Holy Night

WORDS BY:
JOHN S. DWIGHT

MUSIC BY:
PLACIDE CAPPEAU

O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
'Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth

A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn
Fall on your knees; O hear the Angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born
O night, O Holy night, O night divine!

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming
Here come the Wise Men from Orient land
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger
In all our trials born to be our friend
He knows our need, to our weakness
is no stranger
Behold your King; before Him lowly bend
Behold your King; before Him lowly bend

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His Gospel is Peace
Chains shall He break, for the slave
is our brother
And in His name, all oppression shall cease

Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we
Let all within us Praise His Holy name
Christ is the Lord; O praise His name forever!
His power and glory evermore proclaim
His power and glory evermore proclaim

Week 4: The Promise of Advent

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. To "behold" means to stop, look, and pay attention to what God is doing rather than rushing past. Where in your life are you being invited to slow down and rest in God's promises?

2. How does remembering that God is near in your current moment change how you experience your daily routine?

3. How might receiving God's grace today inspire you to offer simple kindness to someone in your life?

4. The wartime story of O Holy Night illustrates how beholding Christ dispels hostility and invites peace. Where in your relationships are you longing for God's peace to heal tension?



We hope you have benefited from this study of The Advent of Jesus. If so, please feel free to pass it along to friends and family who you think might be encouraged by it. In addition, TVC will be producing other study guides in the near future. If you'd like to be informed about those, please subscribe to our newsletter. If you'd like to support the ministry of The Village Chapel, visit thevillagechapel.com/give.