

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE**Advent***Everlasting Father & Prince of Peace***OVERVIEW**

Advent, which is derived from the Latin word “adventus,” means coming. For the Christian Church, Advent is the season marked by waiting and preparing for the celebration of Jesus’ birth in history (his first coming) and the anticipation of Christ’s triumphant return (his second coming). This is the time of year set aside to think about the coming of God’s Son to earth. As we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward, anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming.

APPLY // LUKE 5:12-26, 31-32

1. Read Luke 5:12-17. Discuss why leprosy was such a severe disease (physically, socially and spiritually; see Leviticus 13:45-46) and what this leprous man might have been feeling.
2. How might we apply this man’s leprous condition to us today?
3. What does Luke 5:12-17 teach us about the might of Jesus? What does this passage teach us about the mercy of Jesus?
4. Read Luke 5:17-26. What prevents us from understanding that forgiveness of sin is our greatest need?
5. How does Christmas remind us that forgiveness of sin is our greatest need?
6. Why do you think the Pharisees misunderstood who Jesus was? How might we be in danger of the same error?
7. Read Luke 5:31-32. How does this verse humble us? Encourage us?

STUDY // JOHN 16:16-33

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

Preliminary Notes/Thoughts

Our Advent series is based upon Isaiah 9:6-7. This passage informs us that the Messiah – Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God with us – will bring a government that has no end. His Kingdom is forever. We also learn 4 titles/names for this Messiah: Wonderful Counselor; Mighty God; Everlasting Father; Prince of Peace.

Over the next two weeks we’ll focus on Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. The idea of Everlasting Father is NOT saying Jesus is the same as God the Father. The name/title is a description of what Jesus is like. He will provide and protect his own as a father does. In John 16 we see Jesus providing for his disciples and promising peace to them.

1. Read John 16:16-24.
2. What is Jesus' main point in these verses? How does this relate to the Advent season?
3. How does Jesus describe the time during which the disciples wait? How does this help inform what we should expect while we wait?
4. How does Jesus first coming (what we celebrate at Christmas) comfort us as we wait for his second coming?
5. What will cause the disciples' grief to turn to joy? How does this same knowledge turn our mourning into joy?
6. How does Jesus say this waiting and sorrow should instruct our prayers?
7. What does Jesus mean when he says ask the Father "that our joy may be full"?
8. Read John 16:25-33.
9. Focusing on verse 33, what does Jesus tell his disciples we can expect in this world? Why should we expect this? Do you think we live with this expectation before us? Why or why not?
10. What does it mean when Jesus says, "in me you may have peace"? What is this peace Jesus speaks of? Why does Jesus give us peace? How does Jesus give us peace?
11. What does it mean to "take heart"?
12. What does it mean to you that Jesus has "overcome the world"? How does this relate to the Advent season?

NOTES FROM ESV STUDY BIBLE:

[John 16:16–19](#) A little while ... again a little while ([v. 16](#)). The first reference is plainly to the brief period between the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus, and the second reference is to the resurrection appearances (the "little while" after which the disciples will see Jesus again). The phrase is repeated by both Jesus and the disciples ([vv. 17–19](#)), recalling four previous instances of "a little while" in John's Gospel (cf. [7:33](#); [12:35](#); [13:33](#); [14:19](#)).

[John 16:23](#) In that day (that is, after Jesus' resurrection) you will ask nothing of me probably means that Jesus' disciples will not have to ask him questions about the meaning of his death and resurrection, because they will understand and because the Holy Spirit will be present to guide them "into all the truth" ([v. 13](#)).

[John 16:24](#) Until now you have asked nothing in my name. While Jesus was on earth the disciples had not prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus. But now he was saying that they should do so. Regarding the meaning of praying "in Jesus' name," see notes on [1:12–13](#); [14:13](#). Ask, and you will receive reminds believers that frequent answers to prayer will give Jesus' followers great joy as they see God actively at work in the world in answer to their prayers.

[John 16:32](#) Jesus' prediction of a coming hour at which each of his followers will be scattered, each to his own home (cf. [19:27](#)) probably alludes to [Zech. 13:7](#) (quoted in [Matt. 26:31](#) par.; cf. [Matt. 26:56b](#)). The shepherd will be deserted by his sheep.

[John 16:33](#) On peace, see note on [14:27](#). In the midst of the suffering and hardship that was to come, Jesus' disciples, and all following them, can have such "peace" in fellowship with Christ. Fittingly, Jesus' Farewell Discourse ([13:31–16:33](#)) ends on a note of triumph (cf. [1 John 2:13–14](#); [4:4](#); [5:4–5](#)).

[John 14:27](#) The expression peace (Hb. *shalom*) had a much richer connotation than the English word does since it conveyed not merely the absence of conflict and turmoil but also the notion of positive blessing, especially in terms of a right relationship with God (e.g., [Num. 6:24–26](#); cf. [Ps. 29:11](#); [Hag. 2:9](#), and also, as a result, the idea that "all is well" in one's life). This may be manifested most clearly amid persecution and tribulation; see also [John 15:18–19](#); [16:33](#).

- General Bible study questions:
 - What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
 - What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
 - How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
 - How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: In what do you need to come to Jesus to take away your shame and/or ask for forgiveness of your sins?