

A gingerbread house is the central focus, decorated with white icing swirls and red and green round candies. A chimney is visible on the right side of the roof. The background is a dark blue sky with white stars. The text is written in white on the gingerbread house.

A
FAMILY ADVENT
GUIDE FROM

OAKWOOD
K!DS

BY

LifeWay

Merry Christmas!

During the holidays, we load our lists with plenty of to-dos as we prepare for meals, gifts, and guests. If we're honest, it can be a challenge to focus our hearts on Jesus. But preparing our hearts doesn't have to be hard and it doesn't have to be viewed as one more to-do on our list. With some intentionality, preparing to celebrate Jesus' coming can be simple and fun!

The mission of Oakwood Kids is to disciple children to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and equip parents to do the same. This Christmas season, we are partnering with Lifeway Kids to equip you with this family ministry tool. We hope this resource will guide you to have faith conversations around your table, in the car, or during morning or nighttime routines. Use these devotions, activities, and connection questions to help your family rest in the love, peace, joy, and hope that only Jesus can bring. He's the reason for this beautiful season.

Be sure to like the Oakwood Kids Facebook page, where we will have weekly posts to encourage you to intentionally engage your family this holiday. We invite you to share how God is using this tool in your home.

Commit to a consistent day and time to complete the devotions, activities and questions each week. Don't forget to use the daily Bible readings to reflect upon each week's theme.

We encourage you to adapt this resource to meet the needs of your family. Do what works with your schedule and with your families interests. Don't forget to keep things simple, yet significant. Have fun as you make room for Jesus this season and discover how only He can fill our hearts.

Let's Celebrate!

Oakwood Kids Team

WEEK 1: *Hope*

Look For Hope

"I hope I get a new bike for Christmas" was heard over and over during Thanksgiving. Tucker had pointed out, circled, even torn out the page from the sales flyer that pictured "his" bike. He placed the picture on the refrigerator for everyone to see (especially his parents). The only thing Tucker hoped for this Christmas was a shiny gold bike!

What are you hoping for this Christmas? God sent us Jesus, The Hope of the world to give us salvation from our sins; the best gift ever. As you begin the Christmas season, look for Hope (Jesus) and ways to share The Hope with others.

*"...I will
fulfill the
good promises
that I have
spoken..."*

JEREMIAH 33:14

Family Activity: Pictures of Hope

As a family, list or draw pictures of things kids are hoping for this Christmas. Together, decide and circle one or two things for which they are really hoping. Ask how these things could help them share Jesus (The Hope) with others.

Choose one way to share The Hope (Jesus) with a friend. As a family, plan how to carry out that act of sharing.



CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is Jesus "The Hope of the World"?
2. How can we share Jesus with friends and family?

DAILY FAMILY READING: Isaiah 7:14 • Matthew 2:10 • Luke 2:12 • Matthew 1:21 • Acts 5:31

WEEK 2: Love

One Verse Says All

One basic need that we all share as humans is to be loved. By our family. By our friends. How? Unconditionally. Unconditional love simply means you are loved without restrictions or rules. You are loved no matter what happens. What an overwhelming reality, though, to be told in Scripture that you are unconditionally loved by the Creator of the universe!

A second need is to have the assurance of where each of us will spend eternity. And, as only God can do, in this same, small verse we are told that because of God's love, He sent Jesus to die for our sins. By trusting in what He did on the cross, we can believe and have the assurance of being a part of God's forever family!

"For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

JOHN 3:16

Family Activity: Make a List and Check it Twice

As an adult or child, it is always a good idea to make a list of ways that God has shown His love to you. Draw one line down the vertical center of a sheet of paper. Draw two horizontal lines through the vertical line dividing the page into six boxes. In each box, draw a picture (yes, even you adults!) of one way that God shows His love to you.



CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it difficult to love someone unconditionally?
2. How can we praise God for His unconditional love?

DAILY FAMILY READING: Luke 1:28-32 31 • John 1:14 • Matthew 1:22-23

WEEK 3: Joy

Joyful Stomach

Someone once told me that joy was the feeling of smiling in your tummy. Joy isn't just a smile or something you feel when you hear a funny joke. Joy is a happy feeling that comes from inside of you. People who believe in Jesus experience true joy. Jesus gives joy. Joy is knowing that Jesus loves you and that you can always depend on Him. Jesus has always been and will always be the true Source of joy.

Family Activity: Joyful Pancakes

One of my favorite meals is when my family gets to eat "breakfast for supper." For supper tonight prepare pancakes in the shape of the letters J, O, and Y. Don't worry, they won't be perfect!

As your family enjoys their supper, talk about things that make them happy.

Remind them that earthly things might make them happy for a little while, but the joy we receive from Jesus will always last.

"Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David."

LUKE 2:10-11



CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What are things that make you happy? What are things that make you joyful?
2. How do you think the shepherds felt when the angel told them about Jesus' birth?

DAILY FAMILY READING: Luke 2:1-7 • Romans 15:13 • 2 Corinthians 9:15 • Psalm 29:11

WEEK 4: *Peace*

Jesus Gives Us Peace

Peace. That's an interesting word. Do you know what it means? Peace is the feeling of being safe and secure. You may feel a sense of peace when you are sitting in your mom or dad's lap. True peace is trusting God to take care of your needs in any situation. A long time ago, God blessed the world with peace through the Prince of Peace, Jesus. Jesus allows us to have peace in our lives because He is the Savior of all the world.

God, thank You for blessing us with Jesus.

Family Activity: Peaceful Places

Bring a piece of paper and a pencil to the table for one of your meals as a family today. After you have talked with your kids about any daily things they would like to share, ask them to brainstorm with you about places they think are peaceful. Some ideas might be sitting on a chair at the beach, taking a walk through the woods, or sitting under a blanket while reading a book. Help each of your kids think about places where they feel peaceful. Write each of those ideas down on the sheet of paper. Remind kids that true peace is trusting God to take care of your needs in any situation. Ask your kids the difference between a peaceful place and the peace that God offers. Explain that being in a peaceful place is only a temporary peace.

*The Lord gives
His people
strength—
the Lord blesses
His people with
peace.*

Psalm 29:11



CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

1. How can we have peace when we are in a stressful situation?
2. How can we experience peace by trusting God?

DAILY FAMILY READING: Isaiah 9:6 • Luke 2:8 • Luke 2:9 • Luke 2:10

CHRISTMAS DAY: *Jesus*

Jesus is the Only Reason

Wow! Christmas is so exciting—presents, food, and family. So much to be excited about. Have you ever thought about what Christmas was like 2100 years ago? Probably not, because 2100 years ago, Jesus wasn't born yet. There was no Christmas. Today, remember that we celebrate Christmas because we have a reason to celebrate. We celebrate the birth of the Savior, Jesus Christ. Immanuel—God with us! Don't get so caught up in the hustle and bustle that you forget to celebrate Jesus—the only reason for Christmas.

Family Activity: Focus on Jesus

Reflect on the first Christmas as a family.

Sometime today, gather around the fire or under a blanket and read Luke 2:1-20 from your Bible.

Take time to focus on the true meaning of Christmas.

Ask your kids to name reasons why they are thankful for Jesus. Take time to answer the same question! Tell your kids how Jesus has given you hope, proven His love, produced joy, and comforted you with His peace. Your kids will love to hear your personal stories!

*Today a Savior,
who is Messiah the
Lord, was born for
you*

*...
Glory to God
in the
highest heaven, and
peace on earth to
people
He favors!*

LUKE 2:11-14



CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What is your favorite part of Luke 2:1-20?
2. How can we worship Jesus through our words and actions today?



Oakwood Kids exists to disciple kids to be fully devoted followers of Jesus and equip parents to do the same. We hope this family discipleship tool helps you lead your family to worship Jesus this holiday season.

Merry Christmas!