



WAITING PREPARING

HONGING REFLECTING

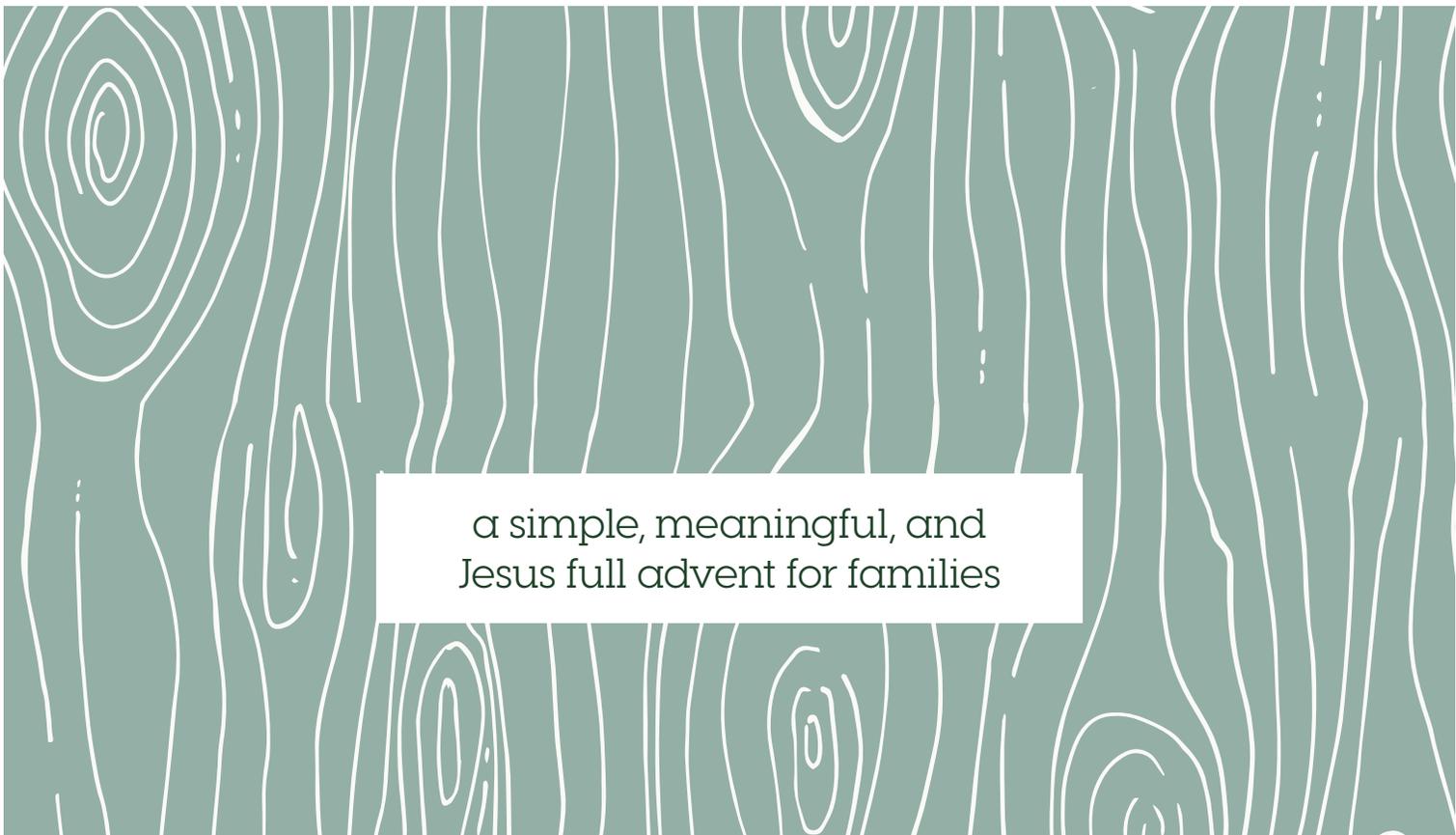
Expectant!

AWAITING SOMETHING

WATCHFUL OPEN-EYED

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a simple, meaningful, and
Jesus full advent for families

Expectant Family Advent Guide
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WAITING PREPARING
LONGING REFLECTING
AWAITING SOMETHING
WATCHFUL OPEN-EYED

Expectant

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

[Isaiah 9:2, ESV]

As the holiday season approaches you might be feeling the anxiety and overwhelm creeping in. The voice of the world says that we have to do more, craft more, wrap more, and be more. But sweet friend, I have a powerful truth for you. This season is not about being more or doing more. It's about an incredible rescue mission. Jesus entering our brokenness as the most incredible gift to restore our relationship with God and the hope that He will one day come again to make all things new. He came into the world for you because He loves you deeply, no perfection or striving required. What a marvelous gift! I don't have to prove myself worthy of it.

The older I get the more I am realizing that I want this season (and all my days) to be about Him. I don't want to be so busy that I miss the miracle of Advent. I don't want this season to leave me frazzled, but in deep awe and worship of a King so worthy of my adoration.

Advent means coming or arrival. It is a special season where we reflect, wait, and prepare our hearts for the arrival of Jesus Christ. We wait with hopeful expectation to celebrate Jesus coming as a baby and long for the day when He will return again and make all things new. In a culture that screams do more, Advent invites us to a different rhythm. A simpler, slower, and contemplative pace. One that allows us to prepare our hearts, fix our eyes on Jesus, and fill our hearts with anticipation and wonder as we get ready to declare, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" [2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV] Advent beckons us to intentionally let go of rush and hurry and leave white space to truly ponder and savor the minutes, hours, and days of this season. It gives the beautiful gift of space to reflect and ready our hearts to celebrate our coming King. As your family engages with the living God this Advent season, I pray that you will tangibly feel the incredible hope, peace, joy, and love we have because of Immanuel, God with us.

May this year be full of longing and hopeful expectation of the arrival of Jesus because everything else pales in comparison. Let us celebrate with joyful and expectant hearts because Jesus our King, the LIGHT of the world has entered our darkness. *Let it be simple, meaningful, Jesus full.*

For His glory,

Ashley

*The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.*

[John 1:5, ESV]

getting started

- 1** Print the hope, peace, joy, love, and Christ cards on heavy cardstock and cut out each card around the gray line. Laminate the cards for added durability.
- 2** Set up an Advent wreath (see the next page for instructions).
- 3** Each Sunday leading up to Christmas light the candle(s) and use the cards to help guide your family through scripture, engage in meaningful conversation, and prepare your hearts for the arrival of Jesus.

You can read through each card in one sitting or you could spread it out throughout the week. In years past our family has introduced the new candle each Sunday of Advent and then we'll read scripture and go more in depth throughout the week when we light the candle each night at dinner. I'm always amazed at the conversations that are sparked and the sheer delight in a simple liturgy of lighting the candle(s) each evening leading up to Christmas.

Week One: Hope
Week Two: Peace
Week Three: Joy
Week Four: Love
Christmas Eve/Christmas Day: Christ



advent

Did you know that...

Advent means 'coming' or 'arrival.'

The circle of an Advent wreath reminds us that God is eternal – He has no beginning or end. The evergreen represents the hope and new life we have in Christ.

The candles remind us that Jesus brings light into our darkness – He is the Light of the World.

Each candle represents the four Sundays of Advent. Typically there are three purple candles (hope, peace, and love), one pink candle (joy), and a white candle in the center (Christ).

*Please Note: I've seen many variations of this, so don't get too caught up in the colors and feel free to use whatever you have. Remember, this is about preparing our hearts for the arrival of Jesus, not if you're using the right candles or the perfect wreath.

advent wreath supplies

- Candle holder or plate
- 5 candles (traditionally 3 purple, 1 pink, and 1 white)
- Greenery (optional)

Putting together an Advent wreath is super simple! Place your wreath on your table or somewhere in your home where you'll see it often. Put the 5 candles in your candle holder or on a plate and add some greenery. That's it! Just in case you need the reminder again, get creative with what you have on hand. Your wreath doesn't have to be a circle or a wreath at all. It's not about the 'perfect' wreath anyways.

