

**FAMILY
ADVENT
GUIDE**



Listen to the Magnificat

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A note to parents

Perhaps one of the easiest yet most difficult times of year for family discipleship is Advent. While there are so many opportunities to point to the coming of Christ, there are also so many events and to-do lists competing for our time and attention. We can often intend to dedicate time to family devotionals only to look up and see that it's time to start packing up the Christmas decorations.

We hope that this Advent Guide can help your family live with intentionality this Christmas season. The hope is that you will have minimal prep on your end for being able to execute this weekly family devotion. We encourage you to pick a time of the week that you will do this as a family. Try scheduling it on your calendar so you can protect and prioritize the time. We pray God will use this guide to draw you closer to Him as a family this Advent season.

Memorization Challenge!

On behalf of the Compass Kids team, we'd also like to challenge you to consider memorizing the Magnificat as a family this holiday season!

Northway Collective has recorded the passage to music to serve as a memorization tool for you. The NextGen team would love to hear your family recite this passage, and we'll have a small prize for each child who is able to recite it!

WEEK 1

Luke 1 : 46 - 48a

*God is Worthy,
Deserving of Glory*

**Nov 27-
Dec 3**

CONSIDER

This Advent season we are focusing on a passage of scripture often called the Magnificat. Magnificat means, “my soul magnifies the Lord,” in Latin and is actually a song by Mary! Let’s find out why Mary was singing.

An angel named Gabriel appeared to Mary with a very important and life-changing message for her: she was going to have a baby who was the Son of God. He also told her that her cousin, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby in her old age. After Mary received this news from Gabriel, she hurried to visit Elizabeth, who immediately praised God for the gift of Mary’s baby, declaring how blessed Mary was to have the honor of giving birth to the Son of God. Elizabeth knew immediately that this was no small, ordinary thing: this was a really big deal! God had chosen Mary to give birth to the Son of God who He was sending to save the world from their sins. Nobody else has ever been given this same privilege and task.

What was Mary’s response to Elizabeth? Mary realized what an honor and blessing it was that God chose her to be the mother of Jesus, God’s only Son. So, she responded in a song of praise. Mary wasn’t just answering what her cousin had said to her but was praising God for who He is. Each week we are going to look at a different part of Mary’s Song, the Magnificat, and an attribute of God it shows us.

READ

“And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.’ ”

Luke 1:46–48a

After hearing she would be the mother of Jesus, Mary responded with worship. Mary’s response to God telling her she will be the mother of Jesus was to worship Him. She saw that God is worthy, meaning only God deserves all glory. Why did she see God as worthy?

Mary knew that God was sending Jesus to save sinners. Mary called God “my Savior” because she knew that she was a sinner who had been born with a heart sick with sin and only a Savior could make her heart healthy. She knew that by sending his Son, God would save those who love and trust Him. She did not know all the details, but she knew that God had a plan to save His people.

When we read and sing the Magnificat, we can remember God is worthy: He is the only one who deserves all glory.

PRAY

God,

You are worthy: You are the only one who deserves all glory. Help us give you the glory and praise you deserve and worship you. Thank you for sending Jesus, your only Son, to save us from our sins.

Amen.

TALK

1

Instead of being afraid of what God was calling her to do, Mary chose to praise God and rejoice in the honor of serving God.

What is God calling you to do that you can choose to respond to in praise to God rather than fear?

2

Mary sang with praise and love for God because she saw God as worthy of all glory.

What are ways God is showing He is worthy in your life that you can praise Him for? How can you share these praises with others?

WEEK 2

Luke 1 : 48b – 50

*God is Merciful
to the Generations*

**Dec 4-
Dec 10**

CONSIDER

Do you remember who is speaking (or in this case, singing!) in the passage of scripture we're learning about? If you said Mary, you're right! Last week we learned that part of chapter 1 in Luke is often called the Magnificat, which means "my soul magnifies the Lord." We also learned the Magnificat was a song Mary sang to praise God. God told her she would be the mother of Jesus, and she responded with joy! This week we're going to take a look at the next 3 verses in Luke 1!

Have you ever heard the word "generation"? A generation refers to a group of people who are all born and live around the same time. Let's think about the generations represented in your own family. Are there people in your family who are around the same age as you? These people could be brothers or sisters, but they could also be cousins! All the people you listed form a generation in your family! Now let's think about your mom or dad: who are the people in your family who are about the same age as them? These people could be aunts or uncles (your parents' brothers and sisters) or even your parents' cousins! All of these people form another generation in your family. Now think about your parents' parents, or your grandparents. These people form yet another generation in your family. That makes 3 generations of people in your family!

In the passage we're going to read today, the generations that Mary talks about aren't just in her family. Each generation includes all of the people in God's family who are around the same age. This means she is talking about a lot of people!

READ

“For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.”

Luke 1:48b-50

Mary praised God for being merciful. When we say God is merciful, it means that He does not give His children the punishment they deserve. All people deserve to be punished for their sin against God, but God forgives everyone who loves and trusts him.

When Mary praised God for His mercy, she included a very important phrase: “his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.” This means that God is not just merciful to a few people. He is merciful to all who love and trust Him of any age! Mary knew God was sending His Son to be born so that all generations could know the mercy of God instead of the punishment they deserved. Even now, over 2,000 years after Jesus was born, those who love and trust him receive mercy from God. That’s something worth praising God for!

PRAY

God,

You are merciful. Thank you for sending Jesus so that all who love and trust you do not get the punishment for sin that we deserve. Help each of us grow in understanding our need for your daily mercy.

Amen.

TALK

1

We learned that a generation is a group of people who were all born and lived around the same time. Think of some people who are in your generation. Maybe family members, friends at school, or kids in your class at church.

Have any of them talked about how God has been merciful to them? Have any of them publicly shared their love and trust in Jesus by being baptized?

2

Today we talked a lot about God being merciful to His children.

Who are the people in your life that you need to show mercy to just as God shows mercy?

(Parents: this could also be a meaningful opportunity to share your testimony with your family.)

WEEK 3

Luke 1 : 51 – 53

*God is Good
Throughout History*

**Dec 11-
Dec 17**

CONSIDER

One thing that often causes people to worship the Lord is looking back and reflecting on what God has already done. When people who love and trust Jesus look back on their lives, they can see things God was doing and ways He was at work that they may have missed while they were going through it. This can lead people to respond in praise and worship to God for being almighty. When we praise God for being almighty, we are celebrating that nothing is too hard for God.

In today's verses, we find Mary was praising God for things He has done in the lives of the generations before her. Keep this in mind as you read these verses of the Magnificat.

READ

“He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.”

Luke 1:51-53

Let's think about some ways God had been at work in the generations before Mary, specifically in the lives of the Israelites, God's special and chosen people. Do you remember when Pharaoh had enslaved the Israelites and was holding them captive, forcing them to do hard work for no pay? God didn't leave the Israelites in captivity under Pharaoh: God called on Moses to lead them out into the wilderness and away from Pharaoh's rule. When the Israelites cried out in hunger while they were in the wilderness, God even provided the food they needed.

Or what about David when he faced Goliath? Goliath was a huge giant with obvious strength. Did it make sense that God would choose to use a small teenager like David? No, but God chose to use David to defeat the Philistine army. God took care of the Israelites.

Even though these events happened years ago, we can read these stories in the Bible and see how God is almighty: nothing is too hard for God. Through both Moses and David, we see God working in situations where it seemed impossible to care for His children. Even today, many, many, many years later, we can read these stories and praise God for being an almighty God, just as Mary did in this portion of the Magnificat.

PRAY

God,

Help us look back at stories in the Bible and in our own lives and respond in praise to You for being Almighty God. Help us believe that nothing is too hard for You, and help us see where You are at work this Christmas season.

Amen.

TALK

1

Pick one of the following stories from the Bible or the Jesus Storybook Bible (or another story that means a lot to you!) and spend time reading it as a family: **The Israelites at the Red Sea** (Jesus Storybook Bible pg. 92) | **David and Goliath** (Jesus Storybook Bible pg. 122) | **The Battle of Jericho** (Jesus Storybook Bible pg. 108).

What attributes of God do you see? How can you praise God for what He did in this story?

2

As a family, think about things God has done in your lives over the past year.

How has God shown you that he is almighty? Spend some time celebrating this as a family and thanking God in prayer.

WEEK 4

Luke 1 : 54 – 55

*God is Faithful
to His Promise*

**Dec 18-
Dec 24**

CONSIDER

Have you ever made a promise to somebody that you've broken? Of course you have— all of us have! The only one who has never broken a promise is God. Today we're going to remember that **God is faithful: God always does what He says He will do.**

Near the very beginning of the Bible, God made a promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). God promised that He would bless Abraham and ultimately the whole entire world. Do you know what blessing God is ultimately referring to? He's referring to the gift of His Son, Jesus, dying on the cross to save us from our sins. But Jesus wasn't born right after God made this promise, and Jesus wasn't even born before Abraham died. In fact, the world had to wait 2,000 years before Jesus was born! But God is faithful and kept His promise to Abraham because He always does what He says He will do.

READ

“He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Luke 1:54–55

In the last lines of Mary’s song, she praised God for keeping His promise to Abraham by sending Jesus. Mary knew the baby she was going to have was the answer to the promise God had made a long time ago and that this baby was coming to save people from their sins.

PRAY

God,

You are faithful. You alone keep every promise You make because You always do what You say You will do. Help us always remember that You loved us enough to send Your Son to save us from our sins.

Amen.

TALK

1

Read "The Present" in the Jesus Storybook Bible (pg. 62) about God making a promise to Abraham that He would send a blessing for the whole world through his family.

How do you think Abraham would've felt after hearing this promise from God?

2

Today we read about Mary praising God for keeping His promise to Abraham by sending Jesus.

Have you spent time thanking God for sending Jesus to save sinners? How important is this truth to you?

3

Spend time thinking about all of Mary's Song, the Magnificat. Remember, Magnificat means "my soul magnifies the Lord."

What can you praise God for this Christmas? Spend time praying as a family to thank God for all He has done.

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

