

ROOM TO PRAY - JOY TO THE WORLD

An Advent Fast

Advent, the four weeks prior to December 25, is the time many of us prepare for the celebration of God's incarnation in Jesus Christ. The word *Advent* is taken from the Latin and means *to come*.

"The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before... What is possible is to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. And you begin to grasp what it was you missed, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, watching God's [back] fade in the distance.

So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder. There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing. For now, stay. Wait. Something is on the horizon."

Jan L. Richardson, *Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas*

Why fast during Advent?

"Let every heart prepare him room."

We hope this fast will:

- centre us more deeply on Jesus in this busy season
- remind us that Jesus is the One who makes all things new as we wait amidst difficult and demanding situations in our lives and in the world

THE PLAN

- 1** Mark off the following four Sundays of Advent on your calendar. These will be the days on which you fast.
- 2** Decide that you will use that day to focus on Jesus and His birth.
- 3** Then choose how you will fast:
 - Give up a meal or two and use that time to read Scripture, reflect and pray.
 - If you can't fast from food for medical reasons, give up an activity and spend that time with God.
- 4** Follow the prayer prompts and questions provided (or choose other Scriptures to direct your prayers.)
- 5** Keep a record (journal). Record verses, insights, answers to prayer as you reflect each Sunday.
- 6** Let Baptist Women know how it went. Perhaps your experience will encourage other women. Reach out to our Facebook community or e-mail the office.

John 1:14 (NIV)

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."



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PRAYER PROMPTS

(Week 1) Sunday, December 2

Joy to the world, the Lord has come!
Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room
And Heaven and nature sing.

John 18:37 (NET): Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this reason I was born and for this reason I came into the world—to testify to the truth."

Ask the Lord throughout this day: "This season, what would you have me do in my heart and life to really receive you as king?" Pay attention to His prompts. Then obey them.

(Week 2) Sunday, December 9

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

Luke 1:46-48 (NET): "My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has begun to rejoice in God my Savior, because he has looked upon the humble state of his servant . . . he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name."

Ask the Lord: "How can I be more intentional about remembering all the situations in my life where I have seen You save me?"

(Week 3) Sunday, December 16

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found

Matthew 11:28 (NET): "Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Ask yourself: "Where do I need to experience the Lord's forgiveness and healing today? Where is there thorn-infested ground in my life?" Pay attention to what God shows you then invite Him to forgive and to heal.

(Week 4) Sunday, December 23

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love

Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV): "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Ask the Lord: "Do I live and serve with the humility needed to display Your truth, grace and wondrous love?"