

Short Advent Reflections- Week 1

(Longer reflections and questions for families will be available daily from www.ministryandmarshmallows.blogspot.com)



Day 1: John 1: 1-5 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201%3A1-5&version=NIV>

Here at the start of John's Gospel, we have John setting the scene for all that was to follow- that what was going to be read and heard was about Jesus, fully God and fully man, there with the Father from the very beginning. We find ourselves rooted in the story, the story where God is the source of all, life and love. It is the story of God's redeeming love, made human for each of us, to dwell with us and for us in relationship.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

Today I am thankful for...

Day 2: Isaiah 9: 2-7 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+9%3A+2-7&version=NIV>

In today's passage we hear the familiar words from Isaiah of who Jesus would come to be, bringing light to the darkness. That list- Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace- may seem ambitious and setting the bar high for the coming Messiah, but for Jesus, this is only the beginning of what he accomplished through his birth, life, death and resurrection.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

I am thankful that I have...

Day 3: Isaiah 11: 1-10 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+11%3A1-10&version=NIV>

Pruning trees, bushes and shrubs can seem like a harsh business, cutting right back to the stump on occasion, leaving little behind. However, shoots come from the stump, as we see in today's reading, shoots that are stronger, more vigorous. Pruning is about health, cutting back dead wood and weight to leave behind what is able to grow- we see this in God's story of his people, but also see it in our own lives as we leave behind the old to walk in the new life that is found in Jesus.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

I am thankful for people who ...

Day 4 : Jeremiah 33:14-16

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+33%3A14-16&version=NIV>

We live in a world where there is war and famine, where over the past year Coronavirus has changed how we live and caused the death of many. We live in a time where issues of justice are distorted and peace is fragile. Today, think about a country or topic in the news and pray for justice and peace to break in and change the situation.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

I am thankful that today ...

Day 5 : Luke 1: 5-10 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+1%3A5-10&version=NIV>

Patience and trust: Two words we have to work hard at, especially when life feel tough or where years of prayer seem to have gone unanswered. The story of Zechariah and Elizabeth shows us despite their disappointments, they kept close to God and God had a plan for their lives. God has a plan for our lives too even when it is hard to see through the disappointments and struggles of today.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

I am thankful for animals especially ...

Day 6: Luke 1: 11-17 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+1%3A11-17&version=NIV>

Surprise! I think that being surprised is a bit like marmite- you either love or hate it. However you feel about surprises, I think that being visited by an angel would top any

surprise you have ever experienced, and then when we hear the message that was brought to Mary, that's a bigger surprise still! Imagine how you think Mary would have felt as she got the surprise of her life- a message from God himself.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

I am thankful for my ...

Day 7 :Luke 1: 18-25 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+1%3A+18-25&version=NIV>

This must have been an unbelievable moment for Zechariah. He had lived his life following the God he loved. His faith was strong and he was a man of prayer. However, as the angel speaks, Zechariah's faith falters. Instead of rising to faith he begins to doubt and question. Sometimes when our lives get complicated, we want explanations and we want assurance that God really is in control. It is in these times that we really need to hold on to God and his promises.

Read the passage to yourself slowly- what stands out for you today? What might you want to think about further?

I am thankful that we are ...

This week why not listen to:

O come, O come, Emmanuel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTsCC0hwL5g>