

Teacher's Notes – How to use this study for your group

Adore: A Teen Girl's Guide to Advent is a 4-week long study meant to be used each week of Advent. It is written specifically for girl's Bible studies or girl's youth groups. [Though with some moderation on your part, it can be made into a co-ed study. However, the included group activities are definitely female based and won't work for co-ed youth groups.]

This study includes 4 Advent devotionals for a group setting. Each lesson has 5 separate parts:

- **The main teaching about the Advent Candle(s)**
- **The Christmas song**
- **The discussion**
- **The questions**
- **The group activity**

1. The Main Teaching

Each devotional starts with the main teaching about the weekly Advent Candle.

You will notice that there is an optional Christmas song that is themed to the main teaching. The lyrics will be attached in a separate folder. [The song portion is completely open to interpretation. You can play it whenever you want during the study. You can find a version you like of it online, or you can get someone to play it/sing it for you. It can be background music or it can be sung along to.]

It is recommended to light the Advent candle(s) prior to starting the devotional. Nothing special is required for the candles. However, you can light the traditional pink, purple, and white candles if you so choose.

After the candle is lit, have the girls settle in. Pray with them and begin the main teaching.

[For each lesson, you will find a folder of Scripture verses that go along with the main teaching and discussion. The purpose of these is to cut them out for the group and hand them out randomly. This ensures that there's no "unfairness" when it comes to the students reading Scripture passages.]

2. The Discussion

There will be a Discussion portion for each week also. This smaller portion is meant to be more informal and less "teacher-y." It encourages conversation and thought-provoking content for the girls to mull over. **It is recommended that you do not skip this portion, as it really is the "meat" of the entire study.**

3. The Questions

The questions encourage even more conversation. They tie into the Discussion.

4. The Group Activity

The group activity is a fun way to end each lesson. The activities are also excellent ice breakers. Though they are optional and up for interpretation, the group activities tie into the weekly theme.

Additional Content

Introduction (Week 0) - You will find a brief introductory lesson explaining the history of Advent. This quick lesson is meant to be completed with your group any time before the first lesson. It shouldn't take more than a couple minutes to complete.

Christmas Day Devotional - Additionally, there is also an optional Christmas Day devotional and a coloring page that the students can do alone on Christmas Day. **(The Christmas Day Devotional is not meant for a group setting!)** The devotional is simple and self-guided, and meant

for the student's own personal study. If using, be sure to pass it out to each member the week prior to Christmas.

Other Tips for a Successful Bible Study:

- Have what you need ready before the study begins.
- Study the lesson prior to teaching it. Reflect on it, make changes, and pray for a great lesson.
- The questions at the end of each lesson should be answered as a group setting, unless otherwise stated.
- If you aren't sure when Advent starts this year, you can either Google it, or count backwards four weeks prior to Christmas day. However, don't feel pressured to complete the study at the start of each Advent week. Whenever your group meets is just fine.
- To really get into the Christmas spirit, make some hot chocolate for your group and get cozy! There's nothing like a cup of hot cocoa on a cold, winter day as you read about Jesus. (Unless you live in the southern hemisphere. In that case, grab a cool drink and a festive snack, and enjoy this devotional with the comfort of air conditioning!)
- If using the Christmas song of the week, be sure to have the Christmas music picked out before starting the lesson. This ensures that everything flows smoothly (and nothing weird plays.)
- Encourage your group to meditate on the lesson throughout the week.
- Pray for your students and have fun!

For more information about this study, the author's beliefs, or the physical book copy of *Adore – The Teen Girl's Guide to Advent*, visit www.p40ministries.com.

Introduction to Advent

[This is the optional introductory lesson about Advent. This can be completed with your group any time prior to the first lesson.]

[Teacher's note: Introduce yourself, pray, and allow the girls to get settled into their positions before beginning the introduction.]

"When you think of Advent, what do you picture?"

[Let the girls raise their hands and say what thing(s) they think about Advent. Most will say something like, "candy calendars."]

"Most of us picture Advent as a part of the Christmas season, with candles, gifts, chocolate, and pretty decorations. But guess what? Advent didn't start out as a Christmas tradition at all!

"*Advent*, or *adventus*, is an old Latin word that means "coming." Dating all the way back to the 6th century, Roman Christians began celebrating Advent, or the "coming," of Jesus. It was a 40-day tradition to prepare for Jesus's **second** coming into the world, **not** the first. Advent had absolutely nothing to do with Christmas Day or Jesus's birth at all!

"Later on, as Christmas rose to popularity, Advent became a celebration of Jesus's birth. It signified a time of light and joyfulness. Each week candles are lit to commemorate a different aspect of the Advent holiday.

"That is why you and I celebrate Advent as a month-long tradition filled with festivities, candles, trees, delicious candy, and Christmas lights. We associate Advent as a Christian reminder of Jesus's **first** "coming" into the world as a baby nearly 2,000 years ago.

"Even though there is nothing wrong with celebrating Advent at Christmastime, it should be reflected upon all year long.

"For these next few weeks, we are going to dive into the heart of Advent. We will discuss how it's not only a reminder of baby Jesus's birthday, but also a reminder of what we are really waiting for: Jesus's **second coming** into the world!"

Week One: Hope – The Prophecy Candle

Scriptures – Isaiah 9:6-7, Luke 1:5-17, Luke 1:26-38

This Week's Theme and Main Idea – The Prophecy candle and the prophets - Jesus brings us hope more than anything else ever could.

[To start, light one candle. Pray with the students and allow them to settle in. You may also choose to play the Christmas song of the week now.]

Christmas song of the week: *"Oh Come All Ye Faithful"* [lyrics attached in separate folder. Feel free to print them out for each student to use to sing along.]

The first candle - The Prophecy Candle

“The first candle is called the “Prophecy candle.” It symbolizes hope. It's lit on the first day of Advent to remember the prophets of old, who wrote about the birth of the Messiah long before He was even born!

“Can anyone name a few prophets that predicted Jesus's birth?”

[Allow the girls to raise their hands to see if they know of any prophets.]

“Those are all good answers! Here are some notable prophets that we are going to discuss today:”

“There was a really popular prophet named Isaiah who lived hundreds of years before Jesus was born. He wrote some of the most famous verses about the birth of the Messiah, also called the Savior. Today, we know Jesus is our Savior, but back in Isaiah's days, Jesus wasn't born yet. So, the prophets weren't sure Who the Messiah would be. They just had faith that the He was coming and was going to save humanity.

Let's see what Isaiah has to say about the Messiah.

“Who has **Isaiah 9:6 (WEB)**?”

⁶For a child is born to us. A son is given to us; and the government will be on his shoulders. His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

“As you can see from this passage, Isaiah was hopeful about the Messiah’s birth. He was trying to express that hope to Israel, who desperately needed a Savior. You see, Israel had the Old Testament Law which was given to them by God, but they were terrible at keeping the law. They were constantly breaking it and sinning. They needed a Savior that would give them salvation and a new way of living.

“For years afterward, the Israelites would read Isaiah’s words and anxiously wait for the birth of their Messiah.

“There’s another famous prophet mentioned in the Bible. You may have heard of him. I’ll give you a hint: he was Jesus’s cousin! Can anyone guess who he is?”

[\[Allow the girls to raise their hands to see if they know the answer.\]](#)

“John the Baptist! He’s another famous prophet who told the people about the Messiah’s coming. He wasn’t much older than Jesus, but he knew early on in his life that Jesus was the Messiah. Over the course of his short life, he spread the word about Jesus to everyone he could.

“Now John the Baptist was kind of a crazy guy. He ate weird things and was kind of a “survivalist” who made his home out in the desert. And guess what? He was born in some of the craziest circumstances ever.

“You see, John’s father was named Zechariah, who was a priest. Now, before John was born, Zechariah was really old and so was his wife, Elizabeth. They weren’t able to have any children. But one day, Zechariah was performing his priestly duties in the temple. Suddenly, an angel appeared to him with a spectacular message:

“Let’s read **Luke 1:11-16 (NIV)** Who has verses 11 through 13?

11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. 13 But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

“Okay, whoever has verses 14-17, please finish reading.

14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. 16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

“Isn’t that bonkers? John’s parents were super old. They never should have been able to have children at their age. But John was a special child who needed to be born. His crazy birth story just shows how special of a person he really was, and how important his message about Jesus was going to be to the entire world!

“You see, Isaiah, John, and the other prophets knew what it meant to have hope. They had hope that Jesus would do everything that was prophesied about Him. They had hope that Jesus would bring peace to a dying world. That’s why we light the Prophecy candle on the first week of Advent - to remind everyone about the wonderful hope we have through baby Jesus’s birth.”

Discussion about Hope

[This portion of the teaching is meant to be more informal and discussion-based. There are discussion questions attached in a separate folder.]

“The prophets talked about the hope that Jesus was going to bring to the world. So, what are you hoping for this Christmas? What is the coolest gift you could possibly get? Or what is a really cool gift you once got that you loved?

[Have the girls raise their hands and encourage a little discussion about fun gifts that they want or once got. You may choose to tell a story about a time you were a kid a received a gift you hoped for on Christmas.]

“Those are all awesome gifts! Do you know who else was waiting for a cool gift? The Israelites, of course!

“A long time ago, they would read the words of the prophets and long for the best gift ever - the Messiah. The prophets told Israel that a baby would

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