10 TOPICS · 5 SERIES · NIV REFERENCES

Christmas Sermon Topics with Bible References

Ten Christmas sermon ideas, each with a guiding verse, a main idea and a simple outline you can build on, plus five Advent series with Scripture for every week.

01

Pick a topic

Scan the list below and choose the angle that fits your church and your services this year.

02

Start from the outline

Each topic gives you a guiding verse, the main idea and three points with references.

03

Plan the season

Preaching all of Advent? Pages 7 and 8 lay out five series, week by week.

THE 10 TOPICS AT A GLANCE

01	**The God of Small Things**	God's Love	Luke 2:12
02	**Christmas: A Fulfillment of the Often-Forgotten Promise**	God's Love	Matthew 1:17
03	**Would There Be Christmas if Joseph Ran Away?**	The Characters	Matthew 1:20
04	**Girl Interrupted: Mary's Unexpected Role**	The Characters	Luke 1:38
05	**Christmas According to the Shepherds**	The Characters	Luke 2:17–18
06	**The First Christmas: A Dark and Scandalous Night**	A Time of Crisis	John 1:4–5
07	**For to Us a Child Is Born**	Prophecy and Promise	Isaiah 9:6
08	**The Word Became Flesh**	Prophecy and Promise	John 1:14
09	**Gifts for the King**	Prophecy and Promise	Matthew 2:10–11
10	**Waiting Well: Simeon and Anna**	Prophecy and Promise	Luke 2:29–30

Plus five Christmas sermon series with a passage for every week: The Road to Bethlehem, Light in the Darkness, The Unexpected Christmas, God With Us, and The Voices of Christmas.

01

GOD'S LOVE

The God of Small Things

> *"This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*
>
> **Luke 2:12 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

God did not arrive with fanfare. He came as a baby, in a small town, announced to a handful of shepherds. The details of the Christmas story show that God's love often comes in small, easy-to-miss ways.

OUTLINE

1. A small town: God chose Bethlehem, "small among the clans of Judah" (Micah 5:2).
2. A small sign: a baby in a manger was the sign the angels gave (Luke 2:12).
3. A small faith God can grow: the mustard seed becomes a tree (Matthew 13:31–32).

YOUR NOTES

02

GOD'S LOVE

Christmas: A Fulfillment of the Often-Forgotten Promise

> *"Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah."*
>
> **Matthew 1:17 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

Christmas is not an isolated story. Matthew's genealogy shows God keeping His promise across generations of waiting. The God who kept that promise will keep His promises to you.

OUTLINE

1. God made a promise: all nations blessed through Abraham (Genesis 12:3).
2. God kept it across generations, including the unlikely names in Jesus' family line (Matthew 1:1–17).
3. God keeps His promises to you: in Christ, every promise is "Yes" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

YOUR NOTES

03

THE CHARACTERS

Would There Be Christmas if Joseph Ran Away?

> *"But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.""*
>
> Matthew 1:20 (NIV)

MAIN IDEA

Joseph had every reason to quietly walk away. He chose to trust God's word instead. His story shows that in hard situations, the way forward is toward God's plan, not away from it.

OUTLINE

1. Joseph's dilemma: a righteous man with a painful choice (Matthew 1:18–19).
2. God speaks in the dark: the angel's message and the promise of Immanuel (Matthew 1:20–23).
3. Joseph obeys right away, without all the answers (Matthew 1:24–25).

YOUR NOTES

04

THE CHARACTERS

Girl Interrupted: Mary's Unexpected Role

> *""I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled.""*
>
> Luke 1:38 (NIV)

MAIN IDEA

Mary's life was interrupted by a calling she never planned for, and her "yes" to God made Christmas possible. The season invites us to say yes to God, even in unexpected circumstances.

OUTLINE

1. The interruption: Gabriel's greeting and Mary's fear (Luke 1:26–29).
2. The promise: "For no word from God will ever fail" (Luke 1:30–37).
3. The surrender: "I am the Lord's servant" (Luke 1:38).

YOUR NOTES

05

THE CHARACTERS

Christmas According to the Shepherds

> *"When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them."*
>
> **Luke 2:17–18 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

God announced the Savior's birth first to shepherds, people with little status. They saw Jesus, then told everyone they met. Christmas is good news for everyone, and those who receive it are sent to share it.

OUTLINE

1. Chosen though overlooked: God's first announcement went to night-shift workers (Luke 2:8–9).
2. Good news for all the people (Luke 2:10–12).
3. Sent to tell what they had seen (Luke 2:15–20).

YOUR NOTES

06

A TIME OF CRISIS

The First Christmas: A Dark and Scandalous Night

> *"In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*
>
> **John 1:4–5 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

The first Christmas was not tidy: an unexpected pregnancy, a near divorce and a birth among animals. God chose to enter the darkest places, and His light still shines there.

OUTLINE

1. A scandalous pregnancy (Matthew 1:18–19).
2. A humble birth, with no room and a manger for a bed (Luke 2:7).
3. A light the darkness has not overcome (John 1:5).

YOUR NOTES

07

PROPHECY AND PROMISE

For to Us a Child Is Born

> *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*
>
> **Isaiah 9:6 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

Isaiah wrote these words about 700 years before Bethlehem, to people living under threat and in darkness. Each of the four names answers a need your congregation brings into the Christmas service.

OUTLINE

1. Wonderful Counselor: wisdom for the decisions that keep you up at night.
2. Mighty God: strength when yours has run out.
3. Everlasting Father: a Father who stays, for anyone missing someone this Christmas.
4. Prince of Peace: peace with God that leads to peace with others.

YOUR NOTES

08

PROPHECY AND PROMISE

The Word Became Flesh

> *"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."*
>
> **John 1:14 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

John's Christmas story has no shepherds or angels, just one sentence that explains them all. The God who spoke the world into being stepped into it. A strong choice for a Christmas Eve service with many first-time guests.

OUTLINE

1. God came close: "made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14a).
2. God can be known: "we have seen his glory" (John 1:14b, 18).
3. God gives what we need: "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14c, 16–17).

YOUR NOTES

09

PROPHECY AND PROMISE

Gifts for the King

> *"When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."*
>
> **Matthew 2:10–11 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

The Magi traveled a long way to give their best to a child-King. Their story moves the focus of the season from what we receive to what we bring to Jesus.

OUTLINE

1. They sought Him, following the light they had (Matthew 2:1–2).
2. They worshiped Him with joy (Matthew 2:10–11a).
3. They gave Him their treasures (Matthew 2:11b).

YOUR NOTES

10

PROPHECY AND PROMISE

Waiting Well: Simeon and Anna

> *"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation…"*
>
> **Luke 2:29–30 (NIV)**

MAIN IDEA

Simeon and Anna waited for decades to see God keep His promise, and they recognized Jesus when others walked past Him. Their story speaks to anyone still waiting on God this Christmas. It also works well for the Sunday after Christmas.

OUTLINE

1. Simeon waited with expectation (Luke 2:25–26).
2. Anna waited with worship, fasting and prayer (Luke 2:36–37).
3. Both recognized Jesus and told others about Him (Luke 2:28–32, 38).

YOUR NOTES

FIVE CHRISTMAS SERMON SERIES

A series lets your church slow down and walk through Advent together. Each plan below gives you a title and a passage for every week.

The Road to Bethlehem

Focus: The big picture and prophecy

Week 1	**The Promise** God whispers hope to a broken world.	**Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 9:6–7**
Week 2	**The Preparation** God uses ordinary obedience to prepare the way.	**Luke 1:26–38; Matthew 1:18–25**
Week 3	**The Proclamation** The good news is for everyone, especially the outcast.	**Luke 2:8–20**
Week 4	**The Arrival** The wait is over; the King is here.	**Luke 2:1–7**

Why it works: Shows the Bible as one connected story, from God's first promise to its fulfillment in Jesus.

Light in the Darkness

Focus: Hope and comfort

Week 1	**Light for the Discouraged** Hope when you feel like giving up.	**Isaiah 9:2**
Week 2	**Light for the Searching** Guidance when you feel lost.	**Matthew 2:1–12**
Week 3	**Light for the Broken** Healing for past wounds.	**Isaiah 61:1–3**
Week 4	**Light for the Future** Confidence in what is to come.	**John 1:4–5**

Why it works: Builds toward Christmas Eve. Light an Advent candle each week as a living picture of John 1:5.

The Unexpected Christmas

Focus: Surrender and God's providence

Week 1	**Mary: When God Interrupts Your Life**	**Luke 1:26–38**
Week 2	**Joseph: Trusting God When It Doesn't Make Sense**	**Matthew 1:18–25**
Week 3	**The Shepherds: Chosen When You Feel Overlooked**	**Luke 2:8–20**
Week 4	**Jesus: God Showing Up in a Way No One Imagined**	**Philippians 2:5–8**

Why it works: Leans into the interruptions of the Christmas story and the very relatable tension of control versus trust.

God With Us

Focus: Presence over presents

Week 1	**God With Us in Our Waiting** Finding purpose in the silence.	Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22–23
Week 2	**God With Us in Our Weakness** Strength when we have none left.	2 Corinthians 12:9
Week 3	**God With Us in Our Worship** Responding to His nearness with joy.	Luke 2:13–14
Week 4	**God With Us Forever** The eternal promise of Christmas.	Matthew 28:20

Why it works: Offers comfort to anyone facing loneliness, hardship or uncertainty during the holidays.

The Voices of Christmas

Focus: Narrative and perspective

Week 1	The Voice of Longing: Zechariah and Elizabeth	Luke 1:5–25
Week 2	The Voice of Courage: Mary	Luke 1:46–55
Week 3	The Voice of Protection: Joseph	Matthew 2:13–15
Week 4	The Voice of Wonder: Shepherds and Magi	Luke 2:15–20; Matthew 2:1–12
Week 5	The Voice of Love: Jesus	John 1:1–14

Why it works: Each week introduces a new voice, which keeps the story fresh all month long.

Want more examples? Watch Christmas Day sermons from well-known pastors, or go deeper into Advent with sermon ideas from lesser-known Advent passages.

PLAN YOUR CHRISTMAS SEASON

WEEK	DATE	SERMON TITLE	PASSAGE
Advent 1			
Advent 2			
Advent 3			
Advent 4			
Christmas Eve			
Christmas Day			

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Watch the sermons

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