

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



CHRIST FORMS US
IN THE WAITING

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NEW CITY

— DELHI —

FOREWORD

There is a quiet wisdom in the Church's rhythm of Advent. While the world rushes toward Christmas, Advent slows us down. It invites us to listen, to wait, and to prepare room in the soul for the One who has come and who will come again.

This devotional was born out of that rhythm - out of the belief that waiting is not wasted time but formative time. Each week moves through the great themes of Advent:

Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, culminating in the birth of Christ, the One who fulfills them all.

But this is not only a reflection on events that happened long ago. It is an invitation into formation - into the quiet transforming work of Christ being shaped within us. Every reading, every prayer, every moment of reflection becomes part of that slow miracle:

Christ formed in you.

May these pages help you walk more attentively through Advent's days, so that when you reach Bethlehem, you not only celebrate His birth but also sense His presence alive and growing within your own heart.

New City Delhi

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INTRODUCTION

“The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.” - John 1:14

“My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.” - Galatians 4:19

Advent is more than a countdown to Christmas. It is the Church's gentle schooling in how to wait. For centuries believers have marked these weeks not with hurry but with holy slowness - lighting candles, singing ancient hymns, reading Scriptures that ache with anticipation. Advent reminds us that before celebration comes longing, before fulfillment comes waiting.

We wait, as Israel once did, for promises long foretold. We wait, as Mary did, for God's hidden work to take form within us. And we wait, even now, for Christ to come again and make all things new. But this waiting is not passive - it is formative. Every pause, every longing, every act of trust becomes part of God's quiet work of shaping our hearts. In Advent we learn to wait with hope, rest in peace, endure with joy, and live in love.



Waiting That Forms

We live in the tension of the “already and not yet.” Christ has already come — light has entered the darkness — yet His kingdom is not yet complete. It is in this in-between that God forms us. Paul described formation as “Christ formed in you.” Advent gives us a rhythm to experience that shaping. Waiting stretches us; longing purifies us; anticipation teaches us to trust. In the silence and shadows, God chisels impatience into endurance, fear into faith, weariness into worship. Waiting, far from wasted time, becomes God’s workshop.

Why Formation Belongs in Advent

Formation belongs in Advent because this period holds the story of God forming His people through hope, peace, joy, and love — not seasonal themes but the patterns of a Christ-shaped life.

- Hope anchors our hearts in God’s promises.
- Peace steadies our trust amid chaos.
- Joy multiplies when shared, revealing grace in ordinary places.
- Love completes them all, forming us into people who embody Christ’s self-giving heart

Each candle on the Advent wreath is more than a symbol; it is an invitation. Each flame lights the way toward the Christ who longs to be formed within us.

The Rhythm That Shapes

Formation happens through rhythm, not rush. Advent gives us that sacred pattern — to pause, reflect, and pray. Small practices, repeated daily, reshape the soul.

Just as a seed grows unseen in the soil, so Christ is quietly formed in us through habits of prayer, reflection, and faithfulness. Our culture prizes speed and visibility; God prizes depth and endurance. Advent slows us enough to remember that transformation takes time.

The Four-Week Gift

Each week draws us deeper into the story of the God who came near:

- Week 1 – Hope: God is still writing His story, even on blank pages.
- Week 2 – Peace: Rest in His promise more than your performance.
- Week 3 – Joy: Discover grace in ordinary places.
- Week 4 – Love: Reflect the heart of Jesus to the world.

These weeks prepare us not just for Christmas but for life itself.

The Christ Who Forms Us Still

When Christmas morning comes, may it be more than celebration — may it be the realization that something new has been born in you. Advent is not a season we leave behind; it is a pattern we live by. The same God who once took on flesh in Bethlehem now takes form in every heart that makes room for Him. He still comes. He still dwells. He still transforms.

May these weeks slow you down, reform your attention, and open your hands once more to receive the God who came near — and who is still coming near, to be formed in you.

HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL

Advent is not about rushing through readings; it is about learning to wait well. This devotional is designed to help you enter that rhythm — slowly, prayerfully, and with open hands before God.

1. Begin with Rhythm, Not Rush

Each week begins with a longer Anchor Essay (around 1000 words) that introduces the week's theme — *Hope, Peace, Joy, or Love*.

Read it slowly, perhaps on Sunday evening or Monday morning. Let it set the tone for the days ahead. These essays give you a big-picture vision of how each theme connects to formation — how God shapes your heart through waiting, trusting, rejoicing, and loving.

2. Move Into Daily Practice

Each of the six **daily devotions** flows naturally from the week's theme.

They follow a simple rhythm:

- **Scripture** — God's Word as anchor. Read it slowly, aloud if possible.
- **Reflection** — Ponder what it reveals about God's work in you and in the world.
- **Practice** — A small, tangible act to embody the truth.
- **Prayer** — A moment to respond, to speak honestly before God.

This rhythm is intentional. Formation happens not through information but through repetition — through daily moments of encounter and surrender. By beginning each week with a longer essay and then living it out through daily readings, you experience both **depth and rhythm** — *head, heart, and habit*.

3. Keep Space for Silence

Formation flourishes in quiet. Between readings, let there be room for stillness. Don't fill every space with words or noise. Christ was born in the stillness of the night; He still comes in silence.

4. Mark Christmas as Fulfillment

On Day 25, the readings culminate in an extended reflection —Christ, the Fulfillment of Formation. Read it slowly, perhaps before the celebrations begin. Let it center your joy not merely on the season, but on the Savior who has come to dwell in you.

5. Continue Beyond Christmas

After the final Benediction, resist the urge to rush ahead. The habits you've practiced — Scripture, stillness, reflection, and prayer — are meant to continue. Advent may end on the calendar, but its work continues in the soul. The God who came near at Christmas continues to walk with you into the new year.

Formation Beyond Advent

The goal of this devotional is not only to prepare you for Christmas Day but to shape you for a lifetime of discipleship. Advent is a microcosm of the Christian life: waiting in hope, resting in peace, rejoicing in joy, and abiding in love — all while longing for Christ's return.

Formation does not end on December 25. The habits you cultivate here — daily reflection, prayer, and practice — can carry into the new year, continuing to shape you into Christ's likeness. Advent is not only about celebrating Christ's birth but about preparing for His reign in your life and His return in glory.

A Word of Invitation

As you begin this journey, resist the pull to hurry. Let Advent slow you down. Sit with the Scriptures. Linger in the prayers. Try the practices, even in small ways. Allow the Holy Spirit to use waiting and longing as tools of formation.

You may discover that Advent changes not only how you experience Christmas, but how you live the rest of your life. For when Christ is formed in us, every season becomes sacred.

A PRAYER TO BEGIN



Lord Jesus, as I open these pages, open my heart.

Teach me to wait, to listen, and to be formed by Your presence.

Let this Advent draw me nearer to You —

until Christ is born anew in me.

Amen.

Notes

- Advent 2025 begins on Sunday November 30, and carries through Thursday, December 25.
- Each Sunday (Nov 30, Dec 7, 14, 21) begins a new week with the Anchor Article.
- Each Monday–Saturday carries six daily reflections that unfold the theme.
- Christmas Day (Thursday, Dec 25) is grand reflection — the fulfillment of waiting.
- The Benediction on Dec 26 acts as a post-Advent reflection — a moment to transition into the New Year still shaped by Christ's presence.

DAY 01

November 30, 2025 (Advent Sunday)

Anchor Article

HOPE THAT SHAPES US

Advent Begins in the Dark

Advent does not start with light and celebration. It begins in the shadows. Israel knew what it was to wait — years of exile, centuries of silence, generations of longing for God's promises to be fulfilled. Prophets had spoken of a coming king, a suffering servant, a child who would be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, but their fulfillment seemed far away.

Isaiah's words capture the tension: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light." (Isaiah 9:2). Notice that he does not say the people are already in the light, but that they are still walking in darkness when hope is promised. Advent hope is born in waiting, in the not yet, in the tension between promise and fulfillment.

And that is where we live too. Christ has come — the Light of the world entered history — but His kingdom has not yet fully come. We still see wars, sickness, betrayal, and grief. Advent invites us to live in that tension with faith, letting waiting shape us.

Hope as Formation

Hope is not just an emotion, nor is it shallow optimism. Hope is a discipline. It requires us to lift our eyes beyond what we see to what God has promised. That act reshapes us.

Think of the farmer waiting for rain. His waiting is not passive; it directs how he tills, plants, and prepares. Likewise, waiting on God directs how we live. It teaches patience, endurance, and trust. It prunes false hopes — in wealth, control, or quick solutions — and anchors us in the One who cannot fail.

Formation through hope means allowing longing itself to do its work. Every unfulfilled desire becomes a teacher pointing us to Christ. Every delay tests and strengthens our faith. Every unanswered prayer deepens our hunger for the One who is Himself our ultimate hope.

The Purifying Power of Waiting

We live in a culture allergic to waiting. With instant deliveries, constant connectivity, and endless distraction, waiting feels like wasted time. Yet God often chooses waiting as His tool of formation. Abraham waited decades for Isaac. Israel waited 400 years in Egypt. The exiles in Babylon waited seventy years for their return. The world waited centuries for its Messiah.

Why? Because waiting refines desire. It exposes what we really lean on. In this waiting, our idols are revealed: our craving for control, our demand for comfort, our obsession with outcomes. God uses waiting to strip away illusions so that our hope can be anchored in Him alone.

This is why the psalmist says, “I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits.” Hope is not just about the end of waiting; it is about what waiting does to us in the meantime.

Hope as Resistance

In a world filled with despair, hope is an act of resistance. To hope in Christ is to defy the darkness and declare that it will not have the final word. The early Christians, living under brutal Roman persecution, clung to the promise of Christ’s return as their anchor. They buried their dead with hymns of resurrection. They faced hardship with songs of hope.

Advent hope forms us to be people who resist despair by looking to the light that is coming. We say with the Church across the ages: “Come, Lord Jesus.” Our waiting is not empty; it is defiant worship in a broken world.

Living Hope Today

What does it look like to let hope shape us in daily life?

- **In discouragement** — hope lifts our eyes from the immediate to the eternal.
- **In prayer** — hope keeps us coming back, even when answers seem delayed.
- **In community** — hope encourages us to remind each other of God’s promises when we are weary.
- **In mission** — hope fuels us to keep sowing seeds of the gospel, trusting that God will bring the harvest in His time.

Hope steadies our hands when the going gets tough. It softens our hearts when cynicism numbs us. It strengthens our voices when despair tells us to stay silent.

Hope Fulfilled in Christ

Ultimately, our hope is not in circumstances but in a person. Jesus is the embodiment of every promise of God. Paul writes: “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ.” (2 Corinthians 1:20, NIV).

At His first coming, Christ fulfilled promises long awaited. At His second coming, He will fulfill every remaining longing — wiping away every tear, defeating death, and making all things new. Advent invites us to dwell in this quiet waiting — celebrating the first coming while yearning for the second.

This is how hope shapes us: it anchors us in Christ, stretches us in trust, and forms us into a people who live by faith in the promises of God.

A Word for the Week Ahead

As you step into this first week of Advent, ask God to let waiting be your teacher. Do not rush past the longing but let it shape your prayers and desires. When discouragement rises, return to the promises of Scripture. When impatience stirs, breathe deeply and whisper: “My hope is in You, Lord.”

This week is about being shaped by hope. A hope that steadies in waiting. A hope that resists despair. A hope that anchors in Christ.

DAY 02

December 1, 2025 (Monday)

HOPE IN THE WAITING

Scripture

“I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope.”
(Psalm 130:5, NIV)

Reflection

Hope is born in waiting. Israel waited centuries for the Messiah, and we wait still for His return. Waiting is rarely comfortable. It tests our patience, stretches our faith, and often tempts us to despair. Yet Scripture insists that waiting is not wasted — it is formative.

When we wait, we are forced to acknowledge that we are not in control. We learn to trust God’s word rather than our timelines. This reshapes our desires, aligning them with His promises rather than our own demands.

Waiting trains us to listen. It purifies our hope from being wishful thinking into being anchored trust. Advent invites us not to run from waiting but to let it form us into people of deep, steady hope.

Practice

The next time you feel impatience — in a line, in traffic, in prayer — breathe deeply and whisper: “My hope is in You, Lord.”

Prayer

Lord, teach me to wait on You with trust. Form me into someone who leans not on my timeline but on Your promises. Amen.

DAY 03

December 2, 2025 (Tuesday)

HOPE THAT FORMS US

Scripture

“But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently,” (Romans 8:25, NIV)

Reflection

Hope is not passive. It shapes how we live while we wait. A farmer waiting for rain prepares his soil, tills the ground, and plants the seed. His hope directs his actions.

In the same way, Christian hope is not idle. It shapes our choices, our prayers, our endurance. It turns waiting into a workshop for the soul. Every time we cling to God’s promise, even when we cannot see fulfillment, our faith muscles are strengthened.

Hope is not simply about what lies ahead; it is about who we are becoming in the meantime. Advent hope forms us into patient, resilient disciples who learn to live by faith and not by sight.

Practice

Write down one area of life where you feel “unfinished.” Ask God to show you how He is shaping you through this waiting.

Prayer

Lord, form me in the waiting. Let hope shape my character into trust and patience. Amen.

DAY 04

December 3, 2025 (Wednesday)

HOPE AS RESISTANCE

Scripture

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5, ESV)

Reflection

In a world prone to despair, hope is an act of resistance. To keep believing when others give up, to keep praying when others walk away, to keep looking for light when all seems dark — this is hope as defiance against despair.

The early church clung to this hope under persecution. They buried their dead singing hymns of resurrection. They faced suffering with courage because their hope was anchored in Christ.

Advent hope trains us to live with the same stubborn faith. It teaches us to say, even when the night is long: “The light is coming.” This kind of hope is not denial; it is declaration. It proclaims that the darkness will not have the final word.

Practice

Identify one area where you are tempted to despair. Speak aloud: “Christ is my light, and the darkness will not overcome Him.”

Prayer

Lord, strengthen me with hope that resists despair. Teach me to declare Your light even in the dark. Amen.

DAY 05

December 4, 2025 (Thursday)

HOPE THAT ANCHORS

Scripture

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” (Hebrews 6:19, NIV)

Reflection

An anchor holds firm when waves crash and winds howl. The writer of Hebrews tells us that our hope in Christ is such an anchor. It does not prevent storms, but it keeps us from drifting.

When circumstances shift, hope steadies us. When discouragement whispers, hope silences the lie. When fears rise, hope grounds us in God’s unshakable promises.

Hope is not a flimsy wish. It is anchored in Christ’s finished work and His

promised return. Advent calls us to drop our anchor deep into His faithfulness, confident that He will hold.

Practice

Place your hand over your heart and pray: “Christ, anchor me in Your promises.” Repeat this when anxiety rises today.

Prayer

Lord, when storms rage, anchor me in You. Let my soul find rest in Your unshakable hope. Amen.

DAY 06

December 5, 2025 (Friday)

HOPE THAT PURIFIES DESIRE

Scripture

“Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.” (1 John 3:3, NIV)

Reflection

Hope does more than comfort us; it purifies us. When we set our hope on Christ, we begin to long for what He longs for. Waiting becomes a refining fire that burns away our base desires and aligns our hearts with His holiness.

Unfulfilled longing has a way of revealing what we truly love. Do we hope most for comfort, recognition, or control? Or do we hope for Christ Himself? Advent hope teaches us to say: “I don’t just want what You give, Lord — I want You.”

This purifying work of hope makes us ready to see Christ face to face.

Practice

Ask God: “Lord, what desires in me need to be purified by hope in You?”
Write down what comes to mind.

Prayer

Lord, let hope refine me. Shape my longings so that they match Yours.
Amen.

DAY 07

December 6, 2025 (Saturday)

HOPE FULFILLED IN CHRIST

Scripture

“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ.”
(2 Corinthians 1:20, NIV)

Reflection

The culmination of hope is not in an event but in a Savior. Every promise of God finds its “Yes” in Jesus. At His first coming, centuries of waiting were fulfilled. At His second coming, every longing will be satisfied, every tear wiped away.

Advent teaches us to live in this “already and not yet.” Christ has come, and hope is fulfilled — but He will come again, and hope will be complete. In the meantime, we live as people shaped by anticipation.

Hope fulfilled is not the end of the story but the beginning of eternity with Him. Our lives are formed by this double horizon: celebrating what has come, and longing for what will be.

Practice

Today, thank Jesus for one promise He has already fulfilled in your life. Then pray in hope for one promise yet to come.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the fulfillment of every promise. Help me to live in hope until the day You come again. Amen.

DAY 08

December 7, 2025 (Sunday)

Anchor Article

PEACE THAT STEADIES US

Scripture Anchor: “You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.” (Isaiah 26:3, NIV)

The Longing for Peace

Few words are as desired and yet as misunderstood as peace. For many, peace simply means quiet — no arguments in the home, no conflicts in the workplace, no wars in the world. But biblical peace runs much deeper. The Hebrew word *shalom* speaks of wholeness and harmony. It is not just the end of hostility; it is the presence of flourishing.

From Genesis to Revelation, the story of God’s people is a story of longing for peace. The peace of Eden was broken by sin. The prophets envisioned a day when swords would become plowshares and lions would lie down with lambs. When Christ was born, the angels declared, “Peace on earth.” and Jesus Himself promised, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.”

Advent invites us to see that true peace is not something we manufacture; it is Someone we receive.

Peace With God and the Peace of God

Scripture makes an important distinction. Through Christ, we have peace with God — reconciliation through His cross. Once enemies, we are now friends of God, welcomed into His presence. This is the foundation of all other peace.

From that foundation flows the peace of God — the daily calm that steadies our hearts in anxiety and storms. Paul describes this in Philippians 4:7 as a peace that “surpasses all understanding” and “guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

Peace with God is a settled reality. The peace of God is a continual gift. Together, they anchor us in Christ and keep us from being swept away by fear.

Trust as the Pathway to Peace

Isaiah reminds us that perfect peace is given to those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in God. Peace is not the fruit of control but of surrender. Mary modelled this beautifully when she said, “Let it be to me according to your word.” She didn’t know how Joseph would respond or what the future held. Yet she trusted, and her trust brought peace.

Our culture tells us peace comes from securing every detail. God tells us peace comes from entrusting every detail to Him. When we release our need to control outcomes, we discover the quiet strength of His presence.

Peace in the Storm

One of the most vivid pictures of peace in Scripture is Jesus calming the storm (Mark 4:39). The disciples were terrified, certain they would drown. Jesus, asleep on a cushion, rose and rebuked the wind: “Peace, be still!” And the sea grew calm.

Notice that peace came not because the storm was small but because the Savior was strong. The disciples thought survival depended on calm seas; Jesus showed them it depended on steadfast trust. True peace is not the absence of storms; it is the presence of Christ in the boat.

Advent peace forms us in this same way. It trains us to see Jesus' authority over every wave, to hear His voice above the chaos, and to trust that we are safe in His care.

Peace as Resistance in an Anxious World

We live in an age of chronic anxiety. News cycles keep us fearful, busyness keeps us restless, and comparison keeps us insecure. Against this backdrop, peace becomes a countercultural witness. When the world panics, a steady heart anchored in Christ testifies to His reign.

Peace is not passive; it is resistance. To rest in God's promises when everything shouts for fear is to declare that Christ is King. Advent peace turns us into people who refuse to be defined by anxiety but instead embody calm presence for others.

Practicing Peace

How then, does peace take root in us? Scripture points us to practices that form peace:

- **Prayer:** "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7). Every prayer of release is an act of trust.
- **Stillness:** "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10). Peace grows when we slow down and recognize God's sovereignty.

- **Reconciliation:** Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Peace is not only received but extended. As we forgive and reconcile, we live out the peace Christ has given us.
- **Worship:** Fixing our minds on God reorients us. Songs of peace shape us into people of peace.

These are not one-time actions but ongoing habits that form us into vessels of shalom.

Advent Peace as Formation

Peace steadies us, but it also shapes us. As we learn to rest in Christ, we become less reactive, less fearful, and less controlling. We begin to embody a non-anxious presence in our families, churches, and communities. This presence is not from our own strength but from the Spirit who lives within us.

Advent peace is both a gift and a formation. It is given by Christ and cultivated through trust. It roots us in reconciliation with God, steadies us in life’s storms, and sends us into the world as carriers of His calm presence.

A Word for the Week Ahead

As you enter this second week of Advent, ask yourself: Where do I need peace most? In my relationship with God? In the storms I face? In the anxiety I carry? Invite Christ into those places.

This week, let Him steady you. Let His peace guard your heart and mind. And let His presence form you into someone who not only receives peace but brings it into every room you enter.

DAY 09

December 8, 2025 (Monday)

PEACE WITH GOD

Scripture

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Romans 5:1, NIV)

Reflection

The first kind of peace the gospel offers is not a feeling but a fact — peace with God. Through Christ’s cross, the hostility caused by sin has been removed. We are no longer estranged but embraced, no longer enemies but beloved children.

This peace is the foundation for every other kind of peace. Without reconciliation with God, our lives are restless and anxious. With reconciliation, we are free to rest in His

love. Advent reminds us that the baby born in Bethlehem would one day bear our sins on the cross, making lasting peace possible.

Practice

Take five minutes today to thank Jesus specifically for reconciling you to God.

Prayer

Thank You, Lord, for giving me peace with You. Let me never take this reconciliation for granted. Amen.

DAY 10

December 9, 2025 (Tuesday)

PEACE THAT TRUSTS

Scripture

“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.” (Isaiah 26:3, NIV)

Reflection

Perfect peace is given not to those who control everything but to those who trust God with everything. Mary modelled this trust when she said, “Let it be to me according to your word.” Her peace came not from knowing every detail, but from knowing the One who was faithful.

During Advent, peace calls us to release our grip and rest in God’s promises. Trust is the pathway to peace. As we fix our minds on God’s faithfulness, our hearts learn to be still.

Practice

When you feel anxious today, pause and pray: “Lord, I trust You with this.”

Prayer

Lord, help me to trust You so deeply that my heart rests in perfect peace.
Amen.

DAY 11

December 10, 2025 (Wednesday)

PEACE IN THE STORM

Scripture

“He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Quiet! Be still!’ Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.” (Mark 4:39, NIV)

Reflection

The disciples panicked in the storm, but Jesus slept. His calm revealed that true peace does not depend on calm seas but on a sovereign Savior. When Jesus spoke, creation obeyed.

Our storms may look different — illness, conflict, uncertainty — but His presence is the same. Advent peace does not promise storm-free living; it promises Christ-in-the-boat living. That presence steadies us more than any circumstance ever could.

Practice

Picture your current “storm” and invite Jesus into it with the words: “Lord, speak Your peace here.”

Prayer

Lord, in my storms, let me remember that You are near and Your word calms the seas. Amen.

DAY 12

December 11, 2025 (Thursday)

PEACE AS RESISTANCE

Scripture

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.” (John 14:27, NIV)

Reflection

We live in an anxious age. Fear dominates headlines, restlessness fills our calendars, and worry grips our hearts. In such a world, peace becomes a countercultural act of resistance.

When we choose to rest in Christ’s promises, we declare that He, not fear, is Lord. When we live calmly amid chaos, we bear witness to His reign. Advent peace is not passive; it is active defiance against the culture of anxiety.

Practice

Today, turn off the news or your phone for 30 minutes and sit quietly in God’s presence. Resist the pull of noise.

Prayer

Lord, let my calm trust in You be a testimony of Your kingdom’s peace.
Amen.

DAY 13

December 12, 2025 (Friday)

PRACTICES THAT FORM PEACE

Scripture

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7, NIV)

Reflection

Peace does not occur by accident. It is cultivated through practices. Prayer releases burdens. Stillness reminds us of God’s sovereignty. Reconciliation restores relationships. Worship reorients our focus. These habits train our hearts to rest in God.

Advent invites us into these practices not as rituals but as rhythms that form peace within us. Each prayer, each pause, each act of forgiveness makes us more like the One who is our Peace.

Practice

Choose one peace-forming practice today: prayer, stillness, reconciliation, or worship. Commit to it fully.

Prayer

Lord, teach me to practice peace daily until it becomes the steady rhythm of my life. Amen

DAY 14

December 13, 2025 (Saturday)

FORMED BY PEACE

Scripture

“The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”
(Philippians 4:7, NIV)

Reflection

The peace of God does more than comfort us; it shapes us. Paul describes it as a guard for our hearts and minds. This guarding presence forms us into people who are less reactive, less fearful, less controlling.

Peace is not just something we receive but something we become. As Christ steadies us, we in turn become a steadying presence for others. Advent peace shapes us into carriers of calm in an anxious world.

Practice

Think of someone in your life who is anxious. Pray for them and ask God to make you a calming presence in their life.

Prayer

Lord, form me into a person of peace.
Guard my heart, and let me carry Your calm into the lives of others. Amen.

DAY 15

December 14, 2025 (Sunday)

Anchor Article

JOY THAT STRENGTHENS US

Scripture Anchor: “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10, NIV)

The Nature of True Joy

Joy is one of the most misused words in Christian faith. For many, joy is reduced to happiness — a fleeting emotion tied to circumstances. But happiness evaporates when life becomes difficult, while biblical joy endures even in trials. Joy is not circumstantial; it is covenantal. It is rooted in who God is and what He has promised, not in how smooth life feels.

When the angels announced Christ’s birth to the shepherds, they declared it as “good news of great joy” (Luke 2:10). This joy was not a temporary mood boost but a world-changing reality: God had come near. Joy in Scripture is deeply connected to the presence of God — when He draws near, hearts overflow.

Joy in Community

Joy is rarely solitary. It thrives in community. Consider Mary visiting Elizabeth: as soon as Mary entered the room, John leapt for joy in Elizabeth's womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Spirit (Luke 1:41). Their joy was multiplied in fellowship.

Paul's letters echo this truth. He often writes of joy when remembering or praying for the churches. His joy did not depend on his circumstances — he wrote from prison! — but on the shared life of believers in the gospel.

Advent joy, then, is not a private treasure but a communal experience. It grows as we gather, sing, testify, and encourage one another.

Joy as Strength in Trials

When the exiles returned to Jerusalem and heard God's Word read aloud, they wept. Conviction and sorrow washed over them. But Nehemiah reminded them: "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Joy was not a distraction from sorrow, but a deeper wellspring that gave them courage to continue.

This is one of joy's most surprising qualities: it strengthens. Joy empowers us to endure hardship because it anchors us in God's unchanging goodness. James echoes this when he writes: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance."

(James 1:2–3).

Joy does not mean ignoring pain. It means discovering God's presence and purpose in the midst of it.

The Practices of Joy

If joy is a fruit of the Spirit – can we cultivate it? Scripture suggests we can. While joy ultimately flows from God’s presence, we align our lives with that joy through certain practices:

- **Gratitude:** Naming and remembering God’s gifts trains our hearts toward joy.
- **Singing:** Worship shapes our emotions. Songs of praise lift our spirits even when feelings lag behind.
- **Generosity:** Joy grows when we give — time, resources, encouragement. Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
- **Testimony:** Sharing God’s work with others multiplies joy. What we speak aloud strengthens faith.

These practices are like trellises that help the vine of joy grow in our lives.

Joy as Resistance

In a culture marred by cynicism, despair, and distraction, joy is a radical act of resistance. Choosing joy is not naive cheerfulness but a declaration that Christ has conquered death and darkness. Joy is rebellion against despair.

The early church embodied this resistance. Persecuted and poor, they sang hymns in prison cells. They broke bread with glad and sincere hearts. They faced suffering with hope because joy anchored them in the risen Christ.

Advent joy trains us in the same resistance. We declare, even in dark times, that the light has come and will come again.

The Formation of Joy

How does joy shape us? First, it strengthens us. A weary soul finds energy by delighting in God. Second, it humbles us. Joy shifts our gaze from ourselves to God, magnifying Him instead of our fears. Third, it unites us. Shared joy binds communities together in love.

Formation through joy means becoming people who do not collapse under pressure but endure with gladness, whose lives reflect heaven's song. It means becoming resilient, radiant disciples whose very presence lifts the burdens of others.

Advent Joy in Christ

Ultimately, joy is not an optional extra for the Christian life; it is the fruit of Christ's presence. Jesus told His disciples: "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:11, NIV). His desire is not for us to trudge through life with bleak persistence but to flourish in joy, even in hardship.

At Christmas, we remember that joy entered the world in a manger. At the cross, joy was secured for us — "for the joy set before him he endured the cross." At the resurrection, joy triumphed over death. And at His return, joy will be everlasting.

A Word for the Week Ahead

As you enter this third week of Advent, let joy become your strength. Sing, even if softly. Give thanks, even if life feels heavy. Share gladness with others, even if your own heart is weary.

Joy is not about denying grief but about anchoring in God's faithfulness. Let this week shape you into someone who reflects the joy of Christ — a joy strong enough to carry you, contagious enough to lift others, and enduring enough to last into eternity.



DAY 16

December 15, 2025 (Monday)

JOY ROOTED IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Scripture

"You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your
presence." (Psalm 16:11, NIV)

Reflection

Happiness depends on circumstances.
Joy depends on God's presence. The
angels declared "good news of great joy"
because God had drawn near. True joy
is not a mood but a Person.

This is why joy can endure in trials.
God's presence does not vanish in
difficulty; often it becomes even more
real. Advent joy anchors us in the reality
that God has come near and is with us
still.

Practice

Take five minutes today to sit quietly
and simply whisper, "You are with me,
Lord."

Prayer

Lord, let Your presence fill me with joy
that no circumstance can take away.
Amen.

DAY 17

December 16, 2025 (Tuesday)

JOY SHARED IN COMMUNITY

Scripture

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Luke 1:41, NIV)

Reflection

Mary and Elizabeth’s meeting overflows with joy. Joy is rarely solitary; it multiplies in fellowship. When we share our stories of God’s work, joy grows in us and in others.

Paul wrote from prison about joy because his heart was tied to the churches. Even in chains, their faith gave him gladness. Joy thrives in community, even in hardship.

Practice

Share with one person today something God has done for you recently, and notice how joy is multiplied.

Prayer

Lord, make me someone who brings joy into the lives of others by sharing Your goodness. Amen.

DAY 18

December 17, 2025 (Wednesday)

JOY AS STRENGTH

Scripture

“Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10, NIV)

Reflection

The returning exiles wept as God’s Word was read, but Nehemiah reminded them that joy, not grief, would sustain them. Joy gives strength to keep walking when life is hard.

James says to “consider it pure joy” when we face trials, not because pain is pleasant, but because joy anchors us in God’s purpose. Advent joy strengthens us to endure with hope.

Practice

When you feel weak today, pause and pray: “Lord, let Your joy be my strength.”

Prayer

Lord, give me strength through Your joy to walk faithfully in hard places. Amen.

DAY 19

December 18, 2025 (Thursday)

PRACTICING JOY

Scripture

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4, NIV)

Reflection

Joy is a gift of the Spirit, but it is also a practice. Gratitude trains our hearts. Singing shapes our emotions. Generosity expands gladness. Testimony multiplies delight.

We cannot manufacture joy, but we can prepare the soil of our lives to receive it. Advent calls us to actively practice joy, not only to feel it but to live it.

Practice

Sing a hymn or worship song aloud today, even if softly. Let the act of rejoicing form your heart.

Prayer

Lord, teach me to practice joy until it becomes the rhythm of my life. Amen.

DAY 20

December 19, 2025 (Friday)

JOY AS RESISTANCE

Scripture

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines... yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.” (Habakkuk 3:17–18, NIV)

Reflection

Joy is rebellion against despair. When the prophet Habakkuk saw barrenness and loss, he still declared joy in God. The early church sang hymns in prison cells. Their joy defied the darkness.

Advent joy is not denial of suffering but defiance of it. It says: Christ has come, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again. Nothing can cancel that song.

Practice

Speak aloud today: “Yet I will rejoice in the Lord.” Let those words resist despair.

Prayer

Lord, give me joy that refuses to bow to fear or despair, joy rooted in You alone. Amen.

DAY 21

December 20, 2025 (Saturday)

FORMED BY JOY

Scripture

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” (John 15:11, NIV)

Reflection

Jesus did not want His disciples to live with grim determination but with overflowing joy. His joy in us makes us resilient, humble, and united. Joy shapes us into people whose presence lifts the burdens of others.

Advent joy forms us into radiant disciples. It makes us strong enough to endure, humble enough to praise, and generous enough to share.

Practice

Ask God to make you a source of joy for someone else today — through a word, a smile, or an act of service.

Prayer

Lord, form me into a person of joy who reflects Your gladness to the world.
Amen.

DAY 22

December 21, 2025 (Sunday)

Anchor Article

LOVE THAT DWELLS WITH US

Scripture Anchor: 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)

The Heart of Advent: Love in Person

At the center of Advent is not simply a season of waiting, but the One we are waiting for — and He is Love incarnate. John tells us that the eternal Word of God “became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” This is more than divine proximity; it is divine presence. Love did not stay at a distance. Love put on skin, walked our roads, bore our pain, and shared our life.

Other religions may speak of gods who demand, who instruct, who bless from afar. But in Christ, God Himself came near. He did not come as a mighty general or distant ruler, but as a baby — vulnerable, needy, dependent. Love entered the world not with spectacle, but with humility.

This is the great miracle of Advent: God with us.

Love That Stays

The love of God is not fleeting. Jesus told His disciples, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.” (John 15:9). The invitation is not to sample God’s love, but to remain in it — to let it saturate and shape us.

In a world of disposable commitments and fractured relationships, the abiding love of Christ stands as a countercultural witness. His love does not abandon us when we fail. It does not waver when we wander. It stays. And as we abide in Him, we are formed into people whose love also abides — who remain faithful, forgiving, and present in a world desperate for lasting love.

Love That Listens and Serves

Advent love is not abstract. It is embodied in action. Jesus showed this when He bent to wash His disciples’ feet. The Lord of all stooped to serve. True love does not cling to power; it pours itself out for others.

Love also listens. James reminds us: “Be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” (James 1:19). To love is to give our attention, to hear without rushing, to honor another with our presence. God Himself models this — hearing the cries of His people in Egypt, listening to Hannah’s prayers, receiving ours with patience.

Formation in love happens as we practice these habits — serving in small, hidden ways, and listening closely. These practices shape us into people who reflect Christ’s presence in a noisy, self-centered world.

Love Made Visible in Community

John writes, “No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” (1 John 4:12). God’s love, unseen, becomes visible through the lives of His people. The invisible is made tangible when we forgive, reconcile, serve, and dwell with one another in grace.

This is why Christian community is central to Advent love. The church is meant to be a dwelling place of God’s love — not perfect, but real. When we welcome the lonely, bear one another’s burdens, and embody patience and kindness, we reveal the God who is Love.

Love as Formation

How does love shape us? Love pulls us out of isolation into presence. It teaches us to stay when others leave, to forgive when others retaliate, to give when others hoard. Love re-forms our instincts. Where self-interest once ruled, Christ’s love trains us in self-giving.

The world says love is a feeling that fades. Advent says love is a presence that abides. The more we abide in Christ, the more His love reshapes our hearts. We become people who carry His dwelling presence into homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

Christmas: Love Come Down

As Advent leads us to Christmas, we remember that love did not remain a concept. It came down. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.” (John 3:16). Christmas is the ultimate declaration that God’s love is not only spoken but given, not only promised but present.

At the cross, this love reached its fullest expression — self-giving to the point of death. At the resurrection, this love triumphed. And at His return, this love will dwell with us forever in the new creation, where God Himself will wipe every tear.

A Word for the Week Ahead

As you enter this final week of Advent, let love dwell in you richly. Pause often to remember that God is with you — not far, not absent, but near. Let His love shape the way you listen, serve, and remain faithful.

Advent love is not sentimental. It is incarnational. It dwells, it stays, it serves. Receive it anew in Christ. And let that love flow outward, so that the world may see through you the God who came near.



DAY 23

December 22, 2025 (Monday)

LOVE MADE VISIBLE IN COMMUNITY

Scripture

“No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” (1 John 4:12, NIV)

Reflection

Advent Love is not a private sentiment; it is a dwelling love that moves outward. God’s unseen presence becomes visible when His people live as a community of grace. Every time we forgive, welcome, and bear another’s burden, we create a small dwelling place for His presence. In this shared life, we are formed by love — learning that God’s home is not a building but hearts knit together in mercy.

Practice

Reach out today to someone who feels unseen. Let your attention be a doorway for God’s dwelling love.

Prayer

Lord, let Your Advent Love be seen through me. Form me to dwell with others as You dwell with us. Amen.

DAY 24

December 23, 2025 (Tuesday)

FORMED BY LOVE

Scripture

“Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” (1 John 4:16, NIV)

Reflection

Love is not just an emotion we feel; it is a formation we undergo. To live in love is to be reshaped by God’s own nature. Love trains us to stay when others withdraw, to forgive when hurt, to give when tempted to keep.

As we abide in Christ, His steady love reforms our reflexes. The longer we dwell in His presence, the more His character becomes ours. Advent invites us not only to receive love but to be remade by it.

Practice

Ask God, “What part of me needs to be re-formed by Your love today?” Write the answer, then take one step of obedience.

Prayer

Lord, let Your love so fill me that it changes the way I think, speak, and act. Amen.

DAY 25

December 24, 2025 (Wednesday)

LOVE FULFILLED IN CHRIST

Scripture

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.” (John 3:16, NIV)

Reflection

Christmas Eve draws us to Love’s fulfillment. The candles of Advent—hope, peace, joy, love—all burn toward this moment when Love Himself takes on flesh.

God did not send us a concept or command; He gave a Son. The Creator entered creation, the Infinite became an infant. Love stooped low enough to lift us high. Tonight, the waiting ends, and the dwelling begins: Immanuel—God with us.

Practice

Before you sleep, light a candle or sit by one quietly. Whisper thanks that Love has come down for you.

Prayer

Jesus, Love made flesh, dwell in my heart this night. Let Your presence be my peace and my song. Amen.

CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25, 2025 (Thursday)

CHRIST — THE FULFILLMENT OF FORMATION

Scripture Anchor: “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.” (Luke 2:11, NIV)

The Climax of Waiting

At last, we arrive at Christmas morning. For weeks, Advent has slowed us down, teaching us to live with hope, peace, joy, and love. Each candle lit, each Scripture read, each prayer whispered has pointed us forward. Now, the waiting gives way to fulfillment: Christ is born.

For centuries, Israel lived in anticipation. Prophets spoke of a child who would come, a King who would reign, a light that would pierce the darkness. But generations passed, and the promises seemed to tarry. Then, one night in Bethlehem, heaven broke into earth: “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

The wonder of Christmas is this: God Himself has come near. He did not send another prophet or angel; He came in person. The Creator stepped into creation, the Eternal entered time, the Infinite became an infant. The God who holds the galaxies made Himself small enough to be cradled in Mary's arms.

This is no distant story. The miracle of the Incarnation is not just that God came then, but that He comes now — to dwell with us, to be formed in us, to shape our hearts into His likeness.

Christ as Fulfillment of Hope

All Advent long, we've lived with hope in the waiting. We've remembered Simeon and Anna, who spent decades longing for God's promise. We've thought about how waiting forms us, teaching us to anchor in what we cannot yet see.

At Christmas, hope is no longer in the distant future; it has entered the present. Every prophecy finds its "Yes" in Jesus. Isaiah's words — "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light" — are fulfilled in this child. Hope is not vague optimism; it is embodied in the One who has come.

When we look at the manger, we see the embodiment of God's promise: He has not forgotten, He has not abandoned, He has not failed.

Christ as Fulfillment of Peace

The angels' song that night was not sentimental background music. It was a declaration: "*Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.*"

This peace is more than a calm feeling. It is a reconciliation — God turning enemies into friends, sinners into children, wanderers into the welcomed. Christ Himself is our peace, breaking down dividing walls and calming our restless hearts.

The baby in the manger would grow to say, “*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.*” The kind of peace the world cannot give, because it cannot take it away.

Christ as Fulfillment of Joy

When the shepherds heard the angels’ news, they were overwhelmed: “good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” Joy comes not first to kings or scholars but to ordinary shepherds, reminding us that joy belongs to all who will receive it.

True joy is not shallow happiness that fades with circumstances. It is the deep gladness that God has drawn near. It is the joy that strengthens us, even in sorrow, because we know the One who holds us.

The shepherds’ joy turned into movement. They hurried to Bethlehem. They told others. They returned glorifying and praising God. Joy, once received, overflows.

Christ as Fulfillment of Love

At the center of Christmas is love in flesh. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.” The Incarnation is God’s love made visible, tangible, undeniable.

This love did not stay at a distance. It came down. It did not merely send instructions; it entered our brokenness. The One who was rich became poor. The One who was eternal stepped into time.

Christmas is God's declaration: "I love you, and I am with you."

Formation in Christ

The four candles of Advent — hope, peace, joy, love — are not just virtues to admire; they are ways Christ is formed in us. Paul's prayer echoes through this season: "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19).

Advent has not only been a remembrance of Bethlehem; it has been a rehearsal of formation. Waiting has trained our hope. Trust has steadied our peace. Worship has strengthened our joy. Abiding has deepened our love.

Today we remember: all formation finds its fulfillment in Christ. He is the anchor of our hope, the guard of our peace, the strength of our joy, the dwelling of our love.

Reflection for Christmas Day

This is the moment to pause. Christmas is not only about then, but about now. Christ was born in Bethlehem; will He be born afresh in you?

Like the shepherds, we are invited to come and see for ourselves. Like Mary, we are invited to treasure and ponder. Like Simeon, we are invited to hold Christ close and rejoice that salvation has come.

The most important question on Christmas morning is not, “What gifts are under the tree?” but, “Will I receive Christ today?”

When we receive Him, everything changes. Our hope is no longer fragile. Our peace is no longer shallow. Our joy is no longer circumstantial. Our love is no longer limited. Christ becomes the fulfillment of our formation — shaping us from the inside out.

Practice for Christmas Day

Before the day fills with gifts and gatherings, pause for a few minutes of holy quiet. Light a candle or sit by a nativity scene. Read Luke 2:1–20 slowly. Picture yourself in the story:

- Hear the angels’ chorus.
- Stand with the shepherds.
- Kneel by the manger.

Then whisper a simple prayer: “Lord Jesus, be born in me today.”

Let this be the truest celebration of Christmas — not just remembrance, but reception.



PRAYER



Lord Jesus Christ, on this holy day I rejoice in Your coming.

You are my hope fulfilled,

my peace secured,

my joy complete,

my love made flesh.

Dwell in me today.

Be formed in my heart.

Shine through my life.

As I celebrate, let me never lose sight of the gift that matters most — You.

Come again, Lord Jesus. Amen.

A Word of Sending

Christmas is not the end of waiting but the renewal of it. Christ has come, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again. Until that day, we live as people formed by hope, steadied by peace, strengthened by joy, and dwelling in love.

Go into this day not only to celebrate, but to carry Christ into the world. For the Savior has been born to you — He is the Messiah, the Lord!

BENEDICTION

CHRIST FORMED IN YOU - CARRYING ADVENT INTO THE EVERYDAY

“Until Christ is formed in you.” — Galatians 4:19

The candles have burned low.

The carols have softened into silence.

The lights still glow, but something deeper remains — a quiet awareness that the season has done its work.

Advent was never only about counting days.

It was about **becoming**.

You have waited in **hope**, learning to trust what you cannot see.

You have rested in **peace**, discovering that calm is not the absence of noise but the nearness of Christ.

You have rejoiced in **joy**, finding gladness even in the ordinary.

You have abided in **love**, letting the heart of God reshape your own.

And now, as the celebration fades into stillness, the true work of Advent begins — carrying these gifts into the days ahead.

When the year turns and routine returns, remember:

- **Hope** is not a candle you blow out; it is the light by which you walk.
- **Peace** is not a feeling you chase; it is the presence that holds you steady.
- **Joy** is not a decoration to store away; it is the strength that endures.
- **Love** is not a word to recall; it is the life of Christ growing within you.

The God who came near in Bethlehem still comes near today. He still enters the ordinary and fills it with glory. He still chooses the quiet heart, the open hands, the waiting soul.

The story does not end at the manger. It continues in you — in every word of kindness, every act of mercy, every moment of faithfulness where Christ takes form again in the world through His people.

Advent ends on the calendar, but not in the soul. What was once candlelight must now become the quiet flame of faith that burns through the ordinary days ahead.

Let the rhythms you practiced — waiting, praying, hoping, loving — become the slow habits of a formed heart. Let what began in reflection grow into action, and what began in longing mature into love.

You have been formed by the God who came near. Now go and live as one who bears His nearness — in every place, every season, and every breath.

A FINAL PRAYER



Lord Jesus, let the hope I have found this Advent become my anchor,
the peace I have tasted become my rest,
the joy I have received become my strength,
and the love I have known become my way of life.

Be formed in me, Lord —
until my thoughts, words, and actions
reflect Your light to the world.

Stay with me through the ordinary days ahead,
that every season may become holy ground
where You are present and at work.
Amen.

A BLESSING TO SEND YOU

May the God of Hope fill you with expectant faith.
May the Prince of Peace still your anxious heart.
May the Lord of Joy awaken wonder within you.
May the Love of Christ be born anew in all you do.

And as you go from this season of waiting,
may you find that Advent has not ended —
it has only moved inward,
into the very places where Christ continues to be formed in you.

*The waiting is over, but the forming continues.
Christ has come, Christ is here, and Christ will come again —
until His life fills all in all.*



CHRIST FORMS US IN THE WAITING

ADVENT
DEVOTIONAL



NEW CITY

— DELHI —