

**EXPLORING THE NAMES
OF JESUS FROM ISAIAH 9:6**






COME & SEE

**BIBLE READINGS,
DISCUSSION
& CREATIVE
ACTIVITIES FOR
ADVENT**

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10 Publishing
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CONTENTS

Welcome	1
How to Use This Family Advent Guide.....	3
 Session One – Wonderful Counselor.....	6
 Session Two – Mighty God.....	18
 Session Three – Everlasting Father	29
 Session Four – Prince Of Peace	40
 Session Five – Come And See	52
What Next?	63
Author Bios	65
Materials List.....	66
Scripture Memory Tips And Tricks	69
Community Engagement Ideas.....	71



WELCOME

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

For many of us, Christmas is the best time of the year. Warm memories and festive decorations make us feel peaceful and joyful. But for others, Christmas can be a sad or busy time of the year, seeming to lack peace and joy. As Christians, our external circumstances are only part of our experience. It is the hope we have in Jesus Christ that buoys our hearts and minds throughout the year and this Christmas season.

“Come and See” is our theme for this Family Advent Guide because as we teach our children and learn more ourselves, we want to invite others to know Jesus, too! As parents, our desire is for our children to come and see Jesus. This should lead us as a family to tell others about the Good News of Jesus Christ.

As you focus on Jesus through learning the names given to Him in Isaiah 9:6, our prayer is that everyone in the family will come and rest in God’s Word this Christmas and see Jesus more clearly as they walk with Him daily.

Blessings to your family as you celebrate our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace! Our God truly is Immanuel, God with us.

Jenna Hallock

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HOW TO USE THIS FAMILY ADVENT GUIDE

This Family Advent Guide contains four sessions to do together throughout Advent and an extra fifth session for after Christmas. The weekly “Family Time” slot is where you all come together to read the Bible, pray, learn and worship. Many families struggle to find a devotional time each day but a weekly Family Time can be more manageable. You should allow 20 minutes for Family Time but you’re welcome to take longer if you’d like.

Deuteronomy 6:6–9 exhorts us to teach God’s Word to our children at every opportunity. We hope that you will build upon the foundations laid during Family Time to dwell on the biblical truths you’ve learnt throughout the week. Each session ends with some more suggestions for how to do this at other

times, specifically while you're on the go, at play time, dinner time and bed time.

COME AND SEE

Each session starts with Parent Time to help you to prepare spiritually and practically for Family Time. Read the devotional ahead of time to prepare your heart and mind and spend a few minutes praying for each of your children. Doing the practical preparations will help your Family Time to run smoothly, too.

Decide on a day each week that you'll do Family Time. Sundays would be the traditional time, but you can do it whenever works best. Choose somewhere comfortable to meet where there will be minimal distractions. Each session begins with an introduction. This will help prepare everyone for what you'll be looking at. You can make this really festive by lighting an Advent candle before you pray together.

There are two discussion slots in each Family Time. Discussion One (the main discussion) comes before the activity and Discussion Two (more application focused) is after the activity. The discussion time has been designed to be easily adapted to each family. You'll notice that questions are aimed at "Little Ones" (simple questions), "Bigger Ones" (more complex questions) and "teens and adults" (thought-provoking discussion starters for teenagers and grown-ups). If you have a mixture of ages and abilities in your family then feel free to pick and choose the questions that work best for you.

In between discussion sessions you'll be instructed to complete the activity. This is a fun way of reinforcing the teaching and helps to break up the discussion for any restless ones! All

preparation instructions have been provided and can be found in the Parent Time section.

Family Time concludes with a time to memorize the key Scripture and to pray together. Some top tips to help with Scripture memorization can be found at the back of the book. A set “call and response” prayer is included in this section. You may not be as familiar with this prayer style but it is another useful tool to help reinforce the truths you’re learning together.

It is our prayer that you will use the contents of this devotional in the way that works best for your family and that it will prove a useful resource for you as you invite your family to come and see Jesus this Advent.

SESSION ONE:

WONDERFUL COUNSELOR



TEACHING GOAL

To understand that Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor and we can trust Him completely to guide us in our lives because He is Wisdom itself.



PARENT TIME



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Over the next few weeks we will be preparing our children to celebrate Christ's coming and His return throughout the Advent Season.

Our key verse this Advent will be Isaiah 9:6, focusing on a different key name each week. This week we will be looking at Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor.

*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, the author of this prophecy, was writing around 700 years before the birth of Jesus. It was a time of fear and uncertainty for God's people as Judah was under threat from the superpower of the time, Assyria. Many of God's people had turned away from the Lord, refusing to repent and follow His commands. Ahaz, king of Judah, put his trust in an allegiance with Assyria rather than in God.

Isaiah speaks into this dark and fearful backdrop and, with his promise of a coming Wonderful Counselor, points Judah to their future King who would always lead them wisely because He would be God Himself. Where Ahaz had

failed to walk with the Lord and be wise, the promised King would be their source of ultimate wisdom and counsel in any circumstance.

Isaiah's words give hope to those of us who need wisdom! Do you feel like you could use some wisdom? We also face threats, fear, and the temptation to trust in our own strength. Maybe the month ahead has you anxious about finances, relationships, managing the family schedule, meeting year-end work goals, or any number of struggles completely unrelated to this time of year.

No matter your worries or joys at this moment, God has promised us the wisdom He gives as our Wonderful Counselor. James tells us, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you" (James 1:5).

We need to be reminded of this daily; moment by moment, even. God promises He will give us wisdom – generous portions of wisdom – and will not find fault in our asking. Let that truth sit in your heart and mind for just a moment. Take a long breath and savor that good promise from your Wonderful Counselor.

What specific thing(s) do you need your Wonderful Counselor to speak wisdom into right now? Have you asked Him for help? If not, stop right now and ask! If you have, look to see how He provides. Take a moment and write down your request, then write out James 1:5 below or on some paper in a place where you will see it daily.

PRAY



God of all Wisdom, I need Your insight and guidance in training and leading my children through this study and every day. Please use this devoted time to grant my children “the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives” (Colossians 1:9). I am so grateful for You.

In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

PREPARE PRACTICALLY



The activity for Session One is a progressive treasure hunt. You will hide clues around the house that will guide your children to the hidden treasure – ingredients needed to make hot chocolate.



INSTRUCTIONS

To prepare the progressive treasure hunt you will first need to write each clue out on a piece of paper. Keep the first clue to hand out when the activity commences.

Next, hide each item (in bold below) in the suggested location, along with the clue for the next location. You could decide to put the ingredients into containers so your children don’t guess what they are making right away. A blindfold may help to make it more difficult for older children.