



The Tradition of Advent

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An ancient church tradition, Advent, helps us prepare our hearts to celebrate Jesus' birth. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word, *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "arrival." Observances often include an Advent calendar, daily devotionals and a wreath.

Using an Advent wreath is a fun visual object lesson that can impact all ages – from toddlers to grandparents. The Advent wreath involves an evergreen wreath with four candles, lit on successive Sundays in Advent, though some traditions add a fifth candle to be lit on Christmas Eve. Traditionally, the candles are purple, pink and white; however, you can choose to use all white candles instead.

The symbolism of each candle generally includes these variations:

- **First candle (purple):** Hope or Promise: We begin by remembering God's promise to provide a Savior to the world. This and subsequent candles may be purple to represent repentance. [ISAIAH 9:2](#)
- **Second candle (purple):** Preparation or Prophecy: The second candle reminds us that the prophets waited for a Messiah to come and save his people. It also offers opportunity to reflect on your own life, asking yourself how you're preparing for Jesus' return. [ISAIAH 40:3](#)
- **Third candle (pink):** Joy or Peace: The third candle reminds us that Jesus' birth brings joy to all who believe in him. This candle may be pink to represent rejoicing. [LUKE 2:10](#)
- **Fourth candle (purple):** Love or Adoration: The fourth candle reminds us that God demonstrated his love by sending his son, Jesus, to be born in a manger, to suffer and die for our sins, so we may live forever with him. [1 JOHN 4:10](#)
- **Fifth candle (white):** The fifth candle reminds us that the waiting is over. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is born! The candle is white to remind us that Jesus is the sinless, spotless, pure Savior that makes us whiter than snow. [LUKE 2:11](#)

The evergreen wreath represents the eternity of God and everlasting life, available to all who believe in Jesus. The candles remind us of the light of Christ that overcomes the darkness of the world.

Create a family tradition by observing the Christmas season with an Advent wreath. Have your family members take turns lighting the candles and reading a special portion of Scripture related to the theme of the week. Make it a fun, memorable occasion that will ingrain the true meaning of Christmas in your children's hearts and minds for years to come.

Rediscover the joy of Christmas and point your little ones to Jesus by unwrapping his names one by one. Get your free 3-day sampler of *Unwrapping the Names of Jesus: An Advent Devotional* at tinyurl.com/UnwrappingTheNames.