

Come and See

exploring the names of Jesus
as a family through Advent



A FAMILY TIME TRAINING RESOURCE

COME AND SEE

Come *and* See



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as a family through Advent



written by Beth Meverden
edited by Jenna Hallock

Come and See: Exploring the Names of Jesus as a Family through Advent

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Introduction

Merry Christmas!

For many of us, Christmas is the best time of the year. Warm memories and festive decorations make our hearts peaceful and joyful. But Christmas can also be a sad or busy time of the year, seemingly lacking 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 adults, 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.

Parents, you’ll want to use the “Parent Devotional” in advance of your Family Time activity to prepare your heart. Decide on a day each week that you’ll do your Family Time this Advent. Sundays would be a traditional time, but you can do anytime that works best with your family’s schedule. You’ll also find additional activity suggestions and responsive prayers to use throughout each week.

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 to 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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Materials List



Every Week:

- Set of Advent candles
- Lighter or matches
- This “Come and See” Family Advent Guide
- Isaiah 9:6 Bible memory cards – you’ll want to hang these in a prominent place



Week One:

- A mug for each family member
- Hot chocolate mix (in a container or plastic bag)
- Hot water in a tea pot or kettle
- Marshmallows



Week Two:

- Chairs
- Blankets
- Dark colored sheet

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- String of white Christmas lights
- Pillows
- Flashlight
- Optional: Clothes pins and snack



Week Three:

- 2 evergreen scented items (i.e. candles, essential oil, potpourri or, scented plug-in air freshener refill, car freshener trees, fresh evergreen sprigs)
- 5 familiar scented items (i.e. orange peel, coffee grounds, peanut butter, fabric softener sheets, a favorite candle)
- 7 lunch-sized paper bags



Week Four:

- *Optional: blanket for each person*
- Small jars (baby food or small mason jars work great)
- Silver or white glitter
- Miniature Christmas decorations (trees, snowman, nativity scene) that will fit inside the lid of the jar
- Hot glue or super glue
- Water



Bonus Activity:

- Index cards
- Crayons/markers/colored pencils
- Scissors

Week One

Wonderful Counselor



Parent Devotional

As we come to the end of a year and approach the hope and potential of a new year, it is easy to desire a crystal ball and a glimpse of what's to come. As humans our nature is to "want to know", that's what got us in the mess in the garden. But, what if we approached this season and the upcoming year with a desire to know the One who knows all things rather than trying to figure out all the things we don't know? Our Heavenly Father, our Creator, had a plan to send His Son to this earth to walk in our shoes, being fully God and fully man. Our Father sent a counselor to walk with us, how amazing!

Jesus has many names, one of which is found in Isaiah's prophecy, Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6). This reference is the first time we hear of the coming Messiah and the only time throughout the Bible that we hear this particular name. Isn't it fascinating that our first hint of the character

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and person of Jesus points to someone who will lead and guide His people?

The Hebrew word for “wonderful counselor” is *pele-yoez*. *Pele* means “a miracle, a marvel, a wonder” which indicates something incomprehensible or beyond explanation. The second term, *yoez*, means “to advise, counsel, purpose.” As we combine these definitions and look to God’s Word, we see that this child, who will be miraculously born, will become an amazing adviser working ALL things together for God’s purposes in miraculous and marvelous ways. That means we will stand in awe and marvel at both His goodness *and* His ability to bring about goodness.

So, what’s our part?

Just like the wisemen and the shepherds who saw the star and followed the light we, as children of God, we must see the light, Jesus, and follow His wisdom and leading. Light is a person and His ways are not our ways... They are FAR beyond our imagination! He has woven each of us together on purpose, for purpose and with purpose, therefore we can trust the miraculous One to have purposeful plans for His purposed people.

As you rest in this season of remembrance and prepare for a new year, may you marvel at the Wonderful Counselor, Creator of life and weaver of circumstance, as He shapes your heart and sanctifies your life for His glory and your good!

Suzanne Phillips



Teaching Goal

To understand that Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor and we can trust Him completely to guide us to good things in our lives



Key Scripture

Isaiah 9:6 -

*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.***

Jeremiah 29:11 - “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

James 1:5 - *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.*



Materials

- Blindfold
- Progressive Treasure Hunt supplies (see materials list for week one)

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In Advance

Place the hot chocolate treasure hunt items with their clues in designated areas throughout the house. For children with food allergies, this progressive treasure hunt can be done with any recipe that needs a few ingredients (i.e. trail mix, smoothie, or peanut butter and jelly sandwich on a plate). Just change the clues to fit the ingredients.

PLEASE NOTE: You may choose to put the hot chocolate mix into containers so your child doesn't guess what they are making right away.

NOTE: Words written in **BOLD** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.



Candle Lighting

Our theme for Advent this year is “**Come and See.**” We want to learn more about Jesus so we can “**see**” Him more clearly and find ways to invite those who don't know Him to “**come and see**” Him too!

Who knows what “Advent” means? Listen to the answers.

Advent is the hope and anticipation (or looking forward to) the celebration of Jesus' birth. It's like when we look forward to (or anticipate) celebrating someone's birthday or a special event. Every year we remember the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas and celebrate that God sent His Son to earth for us.

What are things we do to prepare for someone's birthday in our family? Listen to answers.

One thing we can do to celebrate someone's birthday is light candles. We are going to do that same thing each week by lighting one special advent candle. Light the first candle.

This candle reminds us that God is our Wonderful Counselor and He can be trusted.



Pray

Lord Jesus, Thank you that you are trustworthy and faithful. Thank You that we can rely on You. We celebrate YOU this season. In Your Name, Amen.



Discussion

Invite someone to read Isaiah 9:6:

***“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.”***

The first Name of Jesus in this passage is Wonderful Counselor. What do you think “wonderful” means? Listen to the answers. *Wonderful is defined as “inspiring delight, extremely good, marvelous.”*

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What is something that you think is wonderful? Listen to the answers and be prepared to answer yourself, as well.

Those are great answers. In the Bible verse we read, Isaiah says that the Son (Jesus) will be called *Wonderful Counselor*. What do you think a counselor does? Listen to the answers. *A counselor is someone who gives advice or guidance.*

Who are some of the people you go to for advice or guidance? Listen to answers and discuss the importance of having godly, trustworthy people in our lives to help guide us. Examples might include parents, grandparents, coaches, or teachers.

When we trust someone to guide us, we hope they will guide us to something good. We know we can trust God to guide us to good things. There may be hard things we have to endure along the way, but we know God has good plans for us.

Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

God was speaking to specific people when He said these words, but they are true for us, as well. God is good and He wants good for us. We can trust Him to lead us to good things like a guide on a treasure hunt.



Activity

We are going to go on a progressive treasure hunt around the house following some guiding “counsel” (clues). We will find parts of the treasure and the next clue as we go! When we get to the end, we will put all the parts we find together for a good and yummy treasure. Come and see the good treasure I have for you!

Hand your child the first clue to help them get to the first part of the treasure hunt. Give hints if they need help figuring out the clue. You can also play hot and cold if your child needs extra help. (You can say “hot” when your child is right next to the item, “warm” when she is getting closer, and “cold” when your child is far from the item.)

- CLUE 1: I am nice and cozy in your favorite place to snuggle up. (couch/bed/favorite chair – Place the **mugs** in a cozy spot, you can even have blankets curled around the mugs.)
- CLUE 2: I am camouflaged as soil, the foundation of growing good things. (planter/anywhere with dirt – Place **hot chocolate mix** on top of the soil in its container/bag or in a small planter on its own.)
- CLUE 3: I am steaming and hot and in a tea pot. (**water** – Have your child help you start to boil the water, so it is ready to mix in the treasure.)
- CLUE 4: I am in the front hall disguised as a snowball. Or I am by the front door like snow on the floor. (**marshmallows** – Have your child grab the marshmallows then go mix all the ingredients together for the hot chocolate treasure.)

When your child completes the treasure hunt and has all the items for hot chocolate, mix them all together and then discuss the experience together while you sip your yummy treasure.

The treasure hunt clues were “counseling” you to the hot chocolate treasure. Would you have known there was a treasure without the guidance of the clues (and my guidance)? Why or why not? Listen to the answers.

What did you like about the progressive treasure hunt? Listen to the answers.

Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor. He’s wonderful because if we listen to Him, He will guide us perfectly throughout our lives. He will guide us to good things for His glory.

We can learn His wisdom by reading the Bible, praying, and talking to wise people who trust Him, too. Our progressive treasure hunt clues in this game remind us that the Bible helps lead us to the good things God has for us. God has also given us wise people in our lives to give us counsel to lead us to Him.

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James 1:5 says, “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.”



Application

As we celebrate advent and coming of Christ this season, we are reminded that we can go to Him for anything, anytime. There is no time Jesus is too busy to listen to us and He is always with us. There is treasure in simply getting to be with Him. He has life eternal for us, but also life with Him in relationship and friendship now. We want everyone to “come and see” this wonderful Truth too!



Memorize

Isaiah 9:6

*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.*



Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, Thank You for being our Wonderful Counselor and being there to listen to us and help us make wise choices. Thank You for being trustworthy. Help us to look to you when we need guidance, advice, and counsel. We love you and want others to come and see you this Christmas season. In Your Name, Amen.

More Activity Ideas!

1. Create a treasure hunt for someone as a Christmas gift. It can be a progressive treasure hunt that has a few things that work together to make the final gift (like an art set with a sketch book, colored pencils and a homemade card) or simply give the person clues that lead to the gift that is wrapped and hidden instead of under the tree.
2. Make hot chocolate mix (or a little basket with hot chocolate packets and marshmallows) to take to a neighbor with an invitation to your church's Christmas Eve service.
3. We can talk to God our counselor when we pray. Consider making or purchasing "prayer journals" for each family member. Decorate the cover with the words "Jesus is my Wonderful Counselor." Encourage family members to talk to God in prayer using their journal each day during Advent.

Week Two

Mighty God



Parent Devotional

During the previous lesson, you became more acquainted with Isaiah 9:6. Maybe you've also enjoyed these words while listening to Handel's Messiah. I want to dive into one of the names of Jesus described in this passage: "Mighty God".

When looking at the babe in the manger during the Christmas season, we and our children or grandchildren focus on this helpless little one. So cute! So innocent! Of course, "No crying He makes". Our former lead Pastor told the story of his wife's collection of many Nativity scenes in their house. One Christmas, they noticed that all the baby Jesus's were missing from the mangers. When it was time for their 3-year-old granddaughter to go home to her house, they found her at the door, ready to leave, with all the baby Jesus's tucked under her shirt.

This little baby in the manger is "Mighty God"? How do we explain this to our own little ones? This may be challenging for us as well. We are not alone. Scholars and theologians have been discussing the meaning and implications of Isaiah 9:6 for over 2750 yrs.

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The very word used in the original language of Isaiah 9:6 for “God” is the same word that is used in Nehemiah 9:32, “Now therefore, our God, the great God, mighty and awesome, who keeps his covenant of love....” It never signifies anything but absolute Deity.

Isaiah also called Him Immanuel in 7:14, meaning “God with us”. He implied this at the beginning of Isaiah 9:6 when he wrote “Unto us”.

In the New Testament, John chapter 1 echoes this same truth: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was with God in the beginning.³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

The Word was God. The Word took on human flesh, coming to live with us. And there you have the birth of Jesus! Christmas!

Then there’s the “Mighty” part. Omnipotent is the theological term we use to describe God. All-Powerful. All-Mighty. There is no one and nothing more powerful than He.

The very event that mankind had been desperate for actually took place in fact and in truth! Mighty God came to earth to live with us! Grew up from a baby and became an adult. Performed the miraculous! Lived a perfectly sinless life! Showed us the ways of the Father. Led us to heaven! Died for us on the cross, taking our sin upon Himself. Rose from the dead defeating death. Returning again.

1. What does it mean for you that the Lord Jesus Christ is Mighty God?
2. How does that change the face of Christmas?
3. How does it impact the way we celebrate Christmas?
4. What does it mean for your children/grandchildren?

Robb Dunham



Teaching Goal

To understand that we can do everything we need to do with Jesus' strength as our Mighty God.



Scriptures

Isaiah 9:6 -

*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.*

Proverbs 18:10 - *The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.*

Philippians 4:13 - *I can do all things through him who gives me strength.*



Materials

- Chairs
- Blankets
- Dark colored sheet
- String of white Christmas lights
- Pillows
- Flashlight
- *Optional: Clothes pins and snacks*

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In Advance

Place the materials in the room you plan on building your fort tower. You can also make a snack to eat inside the fort tower while you're looking up at the "stars".

NOTE: Words written in **BOLD** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.



Review

What name of Jesus did we talk about last week when we started celebrating advent? Listen to answers. *Wonderful Counselor.*

Last week's candle reminded us that Jesus can be trusted as our Wonderful Counselor.



Candle Lighting

Today we light the first and second candle. This candle reminds us that Jesus is strong. He is our Mighty God.

Turn off the other lights in the room except the candles for a moment. **Just like these tiny little candles light-up the entire**

dark room, the power of Jesus is strong and powerful to bring light into a dark world.



Pray

Lord Jesus, Thank you that you are strong and mighty. Thank you that you are so much stronger than we are and that you love us. We love You and want to be the light in a dark world that calls others to “come and see” your strength and might. In Your Name, Amen.



Discussion

Start by inviting a family member to read Isaiah 9:6. Then, try to say the verse together without looking at the words. ***“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.”***

What is the second name of Jesus in this verse? *Mighty God.*
Does anyone know what “mighty” means? Listen to answers. *Mighty means “possessing great and impressive power or strength.”*

What do you think of when you hear the word “mighty?” Listen to the answers and be prepared to answer yourself, as well.

There are lots of powerful things in our world, but no powerful thing on earth can overpower the power of Jesus. He is THE STRONGEST and THE MIGHTIEST. There is NO ONE and NOTHING stronger than Him. Who are people in your life or characters in books or movies you think are strong? Listen to

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answers. **The Bible tells us that God is stronger than anyone else!**

It also calls Him a strong (or fortified) tower.

The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. Proverbs 18:10

What is the tallest and strongest building you can think of? Listen to answers. Give an example of a tall building your child might recognize. The tallest building in the United States in 2020 is One World Trade Center which is 1776 feet high.

People used to build forts and towers to protect themselves from attacking enemies. We need to trust in God and His mighty power. We need to run to Him when we are afraid or concerned. We can do that by praying to Him and trusting Him to give us strength to handle hard things that come our way.



Activity

We are going to build a tall fort tower for our family to fit in, then we can look up at the “stars” and see what kinds of shapes we can see that remind us that only God has the power to create the universe!

Make the fort tower (near an outlet) as tall as you can using chairs, pillows, blankets, and whatever else works for fort building in your home. Make sure there is enough space for your family to all fit in the middle of the fort. Place a dark sheet over the top of the fort tower then place a string of white Christmas lights (spread out like stars in the sky) on top of the blanket and plug in the lights. Place a blanket on the ground and have everyone go into the fort tower and turn off the other lights in the house. Have everyone get inside the fort and use the flashlight to read the rest of the lesson.

Many people only rely on themselves and their own strength to get through hard things in life. The Bible says that when we rely

on God, He is with us and gives us HIS strength to do whatever He wants us to do.

Invite someone to read *Philippians 4:13*. “***I can do ALL THINGS through Him who gives me strength.***”

What are some things you need God’s strength for in your life right now? Listen to answers and share your own struggle.

When we rely on God to help us, we have all the strength we need.

When we are afraid, He will give us the strength to keep doing what’s right and push through our fear.

When we are tired and exhausted, He will give us strength to keep doing what’s right and then will give us His rest in due time.

When we are unsure or don’t feel ready to do something we’ve been training to do, (examples might be a taekwondo belt test, riding a bike without training wheels, the SAT, etc.), God will give us the strength to keep growing in that area of our life.



Application

When we are distracted by less important things, God will give us the strength to fight our sin and live for Him! He wants us to “come and see” all the amazing things He will do in His mighty power for us and through us.

There are people we know who are trying to live in their own strength just like we do sometimes, and we want to invite them to “come and see” our Mighty God and receive His strength.

As we celebrate the advent and coming of Christ this season, we are reminded that our Mighty God gives us His strength to do what He wants us to do. He surrounds us with His mighty strength like this fort tower surrounds us.

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Memorize

Isaiah 9:6

*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.*



Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, Thank You for being our Mighty God and stronger than anything else in our lives, including us. Bring to mind the people who we need to share your strength and love with this week. We love you. We celebrate you. In Your Name, Amen.

More Activity Ideas!

1. As you are looking for Christmas lights, drive past the tallest buildings in your town and remind your child that God is mightier and stronger than the tallest buildings anywhere.
2. Build a tower with Legos as a reminder that God is the Mighty God.
3. Look online together at some of the tallest buildings in the world as a reminder of this family time activity.

Week Three

Everlasting Father



Parent Devotional

Isaiah 9:6 - *“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.”*

Romans 8:15 - *“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’”*

Christmas is a wonderful time to point our hearts and the hearts of our children back to Jesus Christ. I believe there are only three main questions that every person must answer: Where did I come from? Where am I going? What’s my purpose in between?

The good news is that there is one common answer to all three questions: **Jesus**. As Isaiah 9:6 reminds us, Jesus is the “Everlasting Father.” Before His incarnation, He has always been as one with the Father who created the heavens, the earth and you and me. He always will be ruling over the

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universe at the right hand of God, the Father, Almighty, and will welcome into paradise all who have received Him as Savior. He is guiding us each day with the love of our “Abba, Father.” (Romans 8:15)

That’s great news for us as parents. Our job is a lot easier if we can answer life’s big questions for our children with the message of Jesus, our Everlasting Father. Amid this Christmas season that can often get hectic and focused on worldly things, it is a comfort to know that we, ourselves, are in the comforting hands of our dear “Daddy” (the essence of the word, abba). When we don’t know how we can ever fulfill our purpose to be the parents we need to be, we can cry out to Jesus, “Help me, Daddy!”, and be certain He’s right there to forgive, renew and empower us.

Don’t let this parenting thing overwhelm you. Keep it simple especially this Christmas season. It’s all about Jesus. And, Jesus is all about YOU, as the most loving and caring Daddy one could ever wish for. He’s ALWAYS been there for you since He helped form you. He WILL be there for you at the gates of paradise to welcome you home...even after your parenting failures...as a gift of grace. He IS here for you today and every day to comfort and guide you with His fatherly love. This is the promise of the incarnation: Immanuel, God is with us! (Matthew 1:23)

PRAY: Dear Daddy, Jesus, please forgive my parenting fears and failures in the past, present and to come in the future. By your grace, fill me with your everlasting love and help me pass it on to my dear children...clearly and simply. Help me to fill our home with the love and joy and eternal hope of YOU this Christmas. I love you, Daddy! Amen.

Todd Biermann



Teaching Goal

To understand God has always been, is now, and will always be with us as our Everlasting Father



Scriptures

Isaiah 9:6

*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 40:28

*Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.*

James 1:17 - *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

Matthew 1:23 - *“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).*



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Materials

- 2 evergreen scented items
- 5 familiar scented items (see weekly materials list)
- 7 lunch-sized brown bags



In Advance

Place each of the scented items in a different unmarked paper bag.

NOTE: Words written in **BOLD** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.

This is our third week of celebrating advent by learning about the **Names of Jesus from Isaiah 9:6.**



Review

What are the names of Jesus we have already talked about as we've been celebrating advent? Listen to answers. *Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God*

What have you learned this Christmas season about Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God? Listen to answers. **Have you had a chance to invite anyone to “come and see” Jesus?** Discuss and include any of these individuals in your prayer time during today's lesson.



Candle Lighting

This candle reminds us that Jesus is with us. He has always been and will always be the Everlasting God. Unlike this candle, He is the light that never goes out.



Pray

Lord Jesus, Thank You that You have always been and will always be God. Thank you that you are the light that never goes out in our lives! Help us to know more about how we can invite others to “come and see” you as Everlasting Father. In Your Name, Amen.



Discussion

Practice your memory verse together. ***“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***

Have your family sit within view of your Christmas tree, an evergreen wreath, or a smaller Christmas tree to use as an object lesson.

What is the third name of Jesus in this verse? *Everlasting Father.*

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What does “everlasting” mean? Listen to answers. *Everlasting means something does not end or has always been and will always be.*

There are two different categories of trees. There are deciduous trees which lose their leaves each year usually in the fall. Do you know the name of the other category of trees? Listen to answers. *They are called evergreen trees because they don't lose all their leaves in the fall. They stay green all year long.*

Evergreens are a great reminder of God being our Everlasting Father.

Isaiah 40:28 says,

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.”

God has always been there for us and will always be there for us as our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God and Everlasting Father. He is not changed by things happening around us, just like an evergreen tree isn't changed by the seasons changing around it.

James 1:17 says, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

Christmas trees are a symbol of our Everlasting Father. It's easy to “come and see” God as Everlasting Father during Christmastime because seeing a Christmas tree can remind us of God being everlasting and always with us. The smell of an evergreen can remind us He is unchanging and present in our lives no matter the season we are in.



Activity

Our sense of smell is a gift from God. Different scents can remind us of people, events, and even the seasons!

What are some smells that remind you of springtime? Listen to answers. (*flowers, rain, etc.*)

What are some smells that remind you of summertime? Listen to answers. (*campfire, sunscreen, watermelon, etc.*)

What are some smells that remind you of the fall? Listen to answers. (*pumpkin spice, apple cider, fallen leaves, etc.*)

What are some smells that remind you of winter or Christmas time? Listen to answers. (*cinnamon, peppermint, evergreen, etc.*)

I am going to test your nose today! I have placed TWO things that smell like evergreen trees and FIVE other things with a scent that you will recognize in paper bags. You won't be able to see what is inside the bags, but you will each get a chance to smell what is inside with your eyes closed and guess the smell.

One bag at a time, have each family member smell. (This works best if one adult carries the bag and places it under each person's nose – no peeking!) Then have everyone reveal their guess.



Application

Why is it important for us to be reminded that God is our Everlasting Father and does not change? Listen for answers. *Things are always changing around us and it helps us to know that God doesn't change and is always with us.*

40 Come and See

We can take comfort knowing that God is eternal – He has always been and will always be. Evergreen Christmas trees are everywhere this time of year. They are a wonderful reminder that God has always been, is now, and will always be with us. They are also a great way for us to connect God with Christmas for those who don't know Him. Evergreens are a way for others to “come and see” our Everlasting Father!

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). - Matthew 1:23



Memorize

Isaiah 9:6

*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.*



Closing Prayer

Dear God, Thank You for being our Everlasting Father and always being with us. When things around us change, remind us that you never change. In Your Name, Amen.

More Activity Ideas!

1. Burn an evergreen scented candle sometime during the week and ask your child what the smell reminds them of from your Family Time Activity.
2. Do a neighborhood Christmas Tree judging contest. Make cards that say, "We think your Christmas tree is the most (beautiful/creative/sparkly/festive) tree in the neighborhood. Thank you for spreading Christmas cheer! Merry Christmas!" Then sign and leave the cards on your neighbors' doors.
3. Make a Christmas tree craft letting your child decorate a cut out Christmas tree using green construction paper, glitter, markers, etc. or cutting a tree out of green cellophane or tissue paper and hanging it in a window as a reminder of God being Everlasting Father.

Week Four

Prince of Peace



Parent Devotional

This year, 2020, has been anything but peaceful. With all the chaos, confusion, change and COVID, finding peace in our own lives, let alone having a peaceful home, can be a challenge. But as parents and grandparents, we need to invite the **Prince of Peace** into our home daily. We certainly want the Prince of Peace to be at the heart of our home during Advent.

We know that Christ came to bring peace. Christmas conjures peaceful imagery, but in reality, there are aspects of the Christmas season that lend more to chaos. When peace seems to be missing in your home this Advent season and beyond, here is a simple acrostic that might help you be the peacemaker, and model that peace at the same time.

P - Pray with one another, for one another, and ask the Lord for wisdom

"pray continually." - 1 Thessalonians 5:17

"I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths." - Proverbs 4:11

44 Come and See

E - Encourage each to listen to one another

"Everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger." - James 1:19b

A - Ask each to think "What Would Jesus Do?"

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." - John 14:27

"Forgive, and you will be forgiven." - Luke 6:37

C - Contagious *thankful* hearts

Thankfulness is contagious! Problems and conflicts seem to dissipate, even disappear, and peace is restored.

"...give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus..." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

E - Expectancy and Excitement to see the *Prince of Peace* at work

Build excitement about how the *Prince of Peace* is working in your home this Christmas season. Be looking for answers to prayer. Have them put on their "I Spy" eyes and then they can tell their friends to **Come and See** what Jesus did this week.

"I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Here is a **simple tip** I have found that helps bring peace in the home and encourages thankful hearts: At dinner, turn down the lights and light candles on the table. It reminds everyone in a subtle way we want to "dine" peacefully, not just a quick "eat and run." If you're lighting Advent candles weekly, this will be a wonderful way to continue the habit into your family's routine!

Sherri Martinelli



Teaching Goal

To understand that when we have Jesus, we have peace no matter our circumstances or feelings.



Scriptures

Isaiah 9:6

*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.***

Philippians 4:6-7 - *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

John 16:33 - *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

John 14:27 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*



46 Come and See

Materials

- Small jar for each person
- Silver or white glitter
- Mini Christmas decorations (you can purchase these at a craft store; they are usually found near the miniature Christmas trees)
- Hot glue or super glue
- Water
- *Optional: blankets warmed in the dryer*



In Advance

Collect your snow globe supplies, and read the super glue instructions.

Mini Christmas Scene options:

1. You may opt to let the mini Christmas decorations float around in the jar instead of making a mini Christmas scene.
2. For very young children, glue the mini decorations to the inside of the lid ahead of time then have your child help with the glitter, water, and gluing the lid on the jar.

NOTE: Words written in **BOLD** are when the leader is speaking.
Feel free to use your own words.



Review

What are the names of Jesus we have already talked about as we have been celebrating advent? Listen to answers. *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, and Everlasting Father*

How have you been able to come and see God in a new way by learning about His names? Listen to answers.

How have you invited anyone to “come and see” Jesus this week? Listen and share.



Candle Lighting

The candle we light today reminds us that Jesus is our PEACE. What is peace? Listen to answers. *Peace is a quiet calm we can feel when we have a relationship with Jesus no matter what is happening in our lives.*

Invite a family member to read **Philippians 4:6-7**. “**Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**”

When we feel nervous or anxious about something, we can give those thoughts and feelings to Jesus and we can trust that He will take our worries and give us peace. He will take care of us and be with us. Our feelings and circumstances may not change, but we can be sure that God is working for us and is with us.



48 Come and See

Pray

Lord Jesus, Thank You that You are our peace no matter what is happening in our lives or in the world. In Your Name, Amen.



Discussion

Practice your memory verse together. ***“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***

What is the fourth name of Jesus in this verse? *Prince of Peace*

What is the opposite of peace? Listen to answers and share your own ideas. *Stress, anxiety, war, chaos, craziness, worry.*

Close your eyes and think about a big blizzard. Think about the wind howling and blowing snow all around. Imagine the cold snow blowing on your face and giving you a chill. It makes you crunch up your shoulders and want to curl up in a blanket, doesn't it? (Optional: Hand each person a warm blanket.)

A blizzard can be a picture of anxious and worried feelings. We need to hand over those feelings to God in prayer. There are hard things that we go through sometimes. Jesus even told His disciples that we would have hard times, but that He would overcome those hard things.

In John 16, Jesus is telling His disciples about hard things that were coming. Invite a family member to read John 16:33. *“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

There are hard things we all have to face. We will face sickness, loss, transitions (in relationships or even having to change schools), limitations, disappointments, and all sorts of other

things. These things can cause us to have trouble. The feelings these troubles bring are usually the opposite of peace and feel like a freezing cold blizzard that seems out of control all around us.

What are some hard things in your life right now or that have been hard in the past? Listen to answers and share your own examples. **Did you experience peace from God at that time? If so, how?** *Prayer, parents, friends, siblings, change of circumstances, healing, etc.*

Jesus says that in Him we can have peace because He has overcome the world. That means, at the right time, He will defeat all sadness and tears, worries and fears. We look forward to the second advent (coming) of Christ where He makes everything right.

When someone is a king, queen, princess, or prince, they have authority over something. The name of Jesus we are talking about today is Prince of Peace. This means Jesus has authority over peace and He chooses to give it to us.

Jesus knew His disciples were troubled when He was talking to them about what was to come. In John 14:27, Jesus says to them (and to all of us), *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*



Activity

We are going to make something today to remind us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

Hand each child a jar. Pour enough glitter in to cover at least the bottom of the jar.

Glue the miniature decorations onto the inside of the lid of the jar. You can help your child make a tiny Christmas scene or place the items in the jar on top of the glitter to float around in the water.

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While the glue is drying on the lid, add water to the glitter in the jar, making it about $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Pour some glue around the lip of the jar and screw the lid on tightly. Let the glue set for a few minutes then flip the jar over and shake it. Continue to shake it until you place it on a flat surface.

This snow globe looks like how we can feel inside sometimes, our own blizzard of worries. But when we pray and give those worries to Jesus, our Prince of Peace (place the jar on a flat surface), we begin to calm down like the glitter storm in this jar is calming down. When you are feeling upset, this snow globe can remind you to pray to your Prince of Peace. You can shake the jar and pray, then set it down as a symbol of you giving your worries to Jesus. While the glitter calms down, you can be reminded to trust Jesus to calm your heart and mind just like the glitter is settling.



Application

Before Jesus came to earth, people needed his peace and hope. Today, we need Jesus to come and bring His peace and hope, too.

As we celebrate advent, we are reminded that not everyone has the peace of Jesus yet. Many people feel their own blizzard of worries inside and need Jesus' peace. We can share His peace with others by praying for them, telling them about Him, and loving them the way the Prince of Peace loves us. We can invite them to "come and see" the peace Jesus gives us in our lives no matter how we feel or what is going on around us.



Memorize

Isaiah 9:6

*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.*



Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, Thank You for being our Prince of Peace. Help us to see who needs your peace and give us the courage to invite them to “come and see” you. Forgive us when we look to things besides you for our peace. Remind us that you have control over our fears and worries. In Your Name, Amen.

More Activity Ideas!

1. Make a Snow Globe (“Calm Down Jar”) for someone you love.
2. Do a coloring activity with younger children where you play different kinds of music and have them color what they are hearing. Be sure to play more frenzied music and gentler music then have the child describe his/her picture and how s/he was feeling as the different kinds of music were playing.
3. Just like shaking snow globes, a blender is another visual reminder of how things can feel chaotic in our lives. Seeing these ingredients swirl into a yummy drink is another great reminder of how God works all things together for good. Make frozen drinks with equal parts ice, juice concentrate and ice cream in a blender and talk about what your child learned about Jesus being the Prince of Peace as you enjoy the beverage together

Bonus Activity

Come and See



Teaching Goal

To understand God wants us to be creative in inviting others to Come and See Him in the New Year



Scriptures

John 1:43-46 - *The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.*

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Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”



Materials

- Index cards (3-4 per person)
- Crayons/markers/colored pencils
- Scissors

NOTE: Words written in **BOLD** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.



Discussion

The Bible tells us a story about a man named **Philip** and how he showed his love for **Jesus** and his love for a friend. **Let's read that story together and see what we can learn.** Invite a family member to read *John 1:43-46*.

Soon after Philip chose to follow Jesus, he found his friend, Nathanael. What did Philip tell Nathanael about Jesus? Listen for answers. *We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.*

Choose the words that best describe how Nathanael reacted to Philip's information.

1. Doubtful (skeptical)
2. Disbelieving
3. Immediate belief

When Nathanael didn't believe Philip's words, what did Philip say to Nathanael? Listen to answers. *Come and see.*

Often when something amazing happens, it doesn't matter how hard you try to describe what it looks or feels like, you must simply invite people to see it for themselves. Imagine you arrive at your favorite park on the day when lady bugs have hatched and they are everywhere, on trees and grass and playground equipment. Or imagine going with your family to see the tallest Christmas tree, filled with lights and it is shimmering in the falling snow. There is no way for someone to understand how amazing those experiences actually are unless they see it with their own eyes. Our descriptions cannot accurately express what it is like, so we invite the person we are telling to "come and see" it for himself.

This year you will have opportunities to tell people the truth about Jesus and who He is in your life. You have to be paying attention to who God has placed in your life and what is happening in their life. God may show you a classmate you know needs Jesus. You may find out a friend has never been to church before. Maybe a neighbor is sick and needs your encouragement. When things like this happen, pray and trust God to help you have conversations that can lead to you inviting those people to "come and see" Jesus and what He has done and wants to do in their lives like He has done in your life.



Activity

Hand each family member 3-4 index cards.

On each of your index cards, I want you to write a name (or draw a picture) of someone you know who doesn't have a

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relationship with Jesus, yet. Do the activity along with your children and help them think of people to write/draw on their papers, if needed.

When your child is done writing/drawing say, **Our hope is to introduce each of these people to Jesus. We want to find ways to ask them to “come and see” who He really is and His love for each of them.**

Turn all your index cards face down and mix them all up like a deck of cards.

We are going to pick one card at a time and write one possible way we could tell each person about Jesus’ love for them and invite them to “come and see” what Jesus has done and who He is. Brainstorm ideas as you take turns picking a card.

Some connection ideas:

1. Invite them to church, Sunday school or an outreach program.
2. Invite them to your house for a movie and snacks. Choose one of your favorite movies that has a biblical message (Check out *PluggedIn.com* for ideas.).
3. Give them the gift of a Bible or devotional book.
4. Ask them if they’d like you to pray about anything for them.
5. Write them a card so they know you are praying for them. Share a specific Bible verse.

When you are done writing the connection ideas on the back of each of the name/picture card, place the cards somewhere you will see them regularly and be reminded to intentionally check in with each person throughout the rest of the year.



Application

Isaiah 52:7 says,

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good

tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'

This is one of the Scripture passages that the song, "Go Tell it on the Mountain" is based on. It's a Christmas song, but it is also a reminder to GO tell people about Jesus and invite them to "come and see" Him all throughout the year.

Listen to a recording of "Go Tell it on the Mountain" and sing it together.

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

1 While shepherds kept their
watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the
heavens
there shone a holy light.
[Refrain]

2 The shepherds feared and
trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.
[Refrain]

3 Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.



Memorize

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'



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Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, Thank You for this great reminder to be like Philip and invite others to “Come and See” who You are and what you are doing. Please give us courage to obey You when you give us opportunities to show and tell others about You. In Your Name, Amen.

More Activity Ideas!

1. Hang one name/picture card in a prominent place until there has been an intentional connection with that person and then hang up the card of the next person.
2. Give each other a pedicure or a foot massage to remind each of you of the beauty of feet who go and tell others about Jesus.
3. We are all missionaries to the people who don't know Jesus who are in our lives - our job is to invite them to Come and See Jesus. But God calls some people to be missionaries to people and places around the world. If your family or your church supports a missionary, take time each day this week to pray for them. If you are unsure where to start, we suggest Weave Family. You can find their resources at weavefamily.org.

Daily Responsive Prayers

Week One: Wonderful Counselor

Parent: **Jesus, You are Our Wonderful Counselor.**

Child: **Please guide us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are wise and loving.**

Child: **Please guide us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, Thank You that You have good planned for us.**

Child: **Please guide us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are wonderful and inspire us to do good, as You are good.**

Child: **Please guide us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are trustworthy and faithful.**

Child: **Please guide us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are Wonderful Counselor.**

Child: **Please guide us, Jesus.**

Week Two: Mighty God

Parent: **Jesus, You are Mighty Counselor.**

Child: **Please give us Your strength, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are our strong tower.**

Child: **Please give us Your strength, Jesus.**

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Parent: **Jesus, You are the all-powerful Creator.**

Child: **Please give us Your strength, Jesus.**

Parent: **Christ Jesus, I can do all things through, YOU who give me strength.**

Child: **Please give us Your strength, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, when I am afraid, You give me strength to push through my fears.**

Child: **Please give us Your strength, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are Mighty God.**

Child: **Please give us Your strength, Jesus.**

Week Three: Everlasting Father

Parent: **Jesus, You are Everlasting Father.**

Child: **Thank You for being with us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You do not grow tired and weary.**

Child: **Thank You for being with us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You do not change like shifting shadows.**

Child: **Thank You for being with us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are Immanuel, God with us.**

Child: **Thank You for being with us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You have always been, will always be and are with us now.**

Child: **Thank You for being with us, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are Everlasting Father.**

Child: **Thank You for being with us, Jesus.**

Week Four: Prince of Peace

Parent: **Jesus, You are Prince of Peace.**

Child: **Thank You for Your peace, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, when I pray, You give me peace beyond my understanding.**

Child: **Thank You for Your peace, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You have overcome the world.**

Child: **Thank You for Your peace, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You do not give as the world gives.**

Child: **Thank You for Your peace, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, Your peace is stronger than my feelings and circumstances.**

Child: **Thank You for Your peace, Jesus.**

Parent: **Jesus, You are Prince of Peace.**

Child: **Thank You for Your peace, Jesus.**

Author Bios

Beth Meverden has been working in student and children's ministry for over 20 years. She is delighted to be one of the regular blog writers for FamTime.com. She is a contributing activities writer for The Life of Christ curriculum and Seeing the Savior Family Time Training activity book. Beth is the activities writer for Awaiting the Arrival and Come and See advent family activities books. She loves any chance to empower parents as the primary spiritual trainers of their children through writing and training opportunities.

Devotional Authors

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Robb Dunham enjoys making Jesus irresistible for children, parents and grandparents. He has over 4 decades of experience reinforcing family and children's ministry leaders and teams through being a pastoral staff member, consultant and seminar leader. His desire is to partner with parents, grandparents and Kid Min leaders in the all-important task of passing our faith on to the most impressionable people around – the new generation. You can reach Robb at: r.dunham61@gmail.com.

Sherri Martinelli – Life has been an exciting adventure for Sherri as she stepped out of her comfort zone and joined God in what He is doing around her. She counts it a privilege and joy to serve Him, and looks expectantly for what He wants to show her and how He wants to use her each day. Sherri's speaking, dramas, and parent coaching are a reflection of how God can use anyone, even a sixty-something, stay-at-home, non-Biblical scholar, mom for His

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Suzanne Phillips is a storyteller with a desire for connection, a teacher with a heart for life transformation, and a visionary with a commitment to the family and discipleship. A radical conversion to Christianity followed by a three-year season of loss launched Suzanne on a pursuit of Truth. The revelation that Truth is a person rather than an idea initiated a new-found freedom and a desire to share the hope of that freedom with anyone who would listen. You can learn more about Suzanne and the ministry of Ignite the Family at ignitethefamily.org.



Come and see The newborn King



In the Biblical account of the birth of Jesus, we see the importance of coming to Jesus and seeing Him for oneself. The shepherds immediately responded to the message of the angels in Luke 2:11-15 by going to SEE the baby Jesus. The wisemen had to COME and SEE the one born King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2).

As a family, there is great joy and hope in coming to know Jesus and seeing His names in the prophecy from Isaiah 9:6. Spending time in God's Word brings peace to our homes and a focus on the true meaning of Christmas.

Each week includes: a Family Time activity, a parent devotional, additional activity ideas, and daily responsive readings. Together you'll learn about our **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace**. Each week is a chance to come to God's Word and see more awesome attributes of God.



You can keep Family Time going all year long! Visit us at Famtime.com for more resources and activity ideas.



FAMILY TIME TRAINING has been serving families for over 20 years. Our mission is to train and equip parents and grandparents to pass the faith to the next generation in the home. You can follow us on social media or learn more by visiting www.famtime.com.

