

Scripture Passage: Luke 2:8-20

Memory Verse: Luke 2:14

Theme Song: Glory to God in the Highest

Big Idea: Jesus came so we could have peace.

ADVENT: WEEK 4

Advent, the celebration of Christ's coming, begins four Sundays before Christmas and concludes on Christmas. The five-part Family Advent Kit consists of four weekly devotionals plus a fifth devotional to be used on Christmas. If you celebrate Advent as a family, consider creating an Advent wreath. An Advent wreath holds four candles and a fifth candle, called the Christ Candle, is placed in the middle. One candle is lit each week, with the Christ Candle lit last of all, on Christmas Day. Before you begin each time of family worship, light the appropriate candle(s) on the Advent wreath to remind your family that you are celebrating the arrival of the Messiah, Jesus.

READ

Read Luke 2:8-20 aloud to your family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

Luke 2:8-20

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned,

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glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

SING

Play “Glory to God in the Highest” from the *Doorpost Songs: Unto Us* album and sing together. Think about how you can model worship for your family as you sing together. If needed, print copies of the lyric sheet for your family.

MEMORIZE

Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestions below or choose your own. Use the long version for older children and the short version for preschoolers.

Long Version (Luke 2:14)

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.

Short Version (Luke 2:14)

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace.

LEARN

Read the Big Idea and short devotional aloud to your family. If you have time, use the discussion questions at the end of the devotional.

What’s the Big Idea?

Jesus came so we could have peace.

Family Devotional

What is peace? Is peace simply when people are *not* fighting? Well, that’s part of it. But it’s not the whole picture. After all, you might still be angry with your brother or sister or friend even if you’re not fighting them. That doesn’t sound very much like peace.

Peace is more than just “not fighting.” It’s returning to a right relationship, being on the same side, working together and enjoying each other. In our scripture passage today, when the angels sang to the shepherds about peace on earth, this is the kind of peace they were talking about.

But who is this kind of peace between? Who needs to be at peace?

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Well, there are two answers. The first answer is that there can now be peace between God and people. You see, people have made bad choices, the times we see God's way but choose to go the other way. This separates us from God, because God is perfect. (He doesn't ever sin.) He loves us very much, but he *does not* love sin.

But Jesus came to take the punishment for our sin. When Jesus died on the cross, all of God's anger at sin was directed at him instead of us. When we believe in Jesus and choose to follow him, he makes peace between us and God. We are back to a right relationship, we're on the same side again, working together and enjoying each other.

Jesus also gives us the model for making peace between people. Instead of fighting – which doesn't solve our problems, but just makes new problems! – Jesus shows us how we can ask for forgiveness for what we've done wrong and give forgiveness to someone else who has hurt us. Giving and receiving forgiveness is the way to make peace between two people.

During Advent, we celebrate that Jesus came to make peace between us and God. We couldn't do it ourselves, but Jesus received God's anger at sin instead of us. And he also gave us a way to make peace between people by giving and receiving forgiveness. And that's why, on the night Jesus was born, the angels sang about peace on earth.

TALK

Talk about what you have learned as a family. Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. What is peace?
2. Why are people separated from God? How can there be peace between God and people?
3. How can we make peace between two people?
4. Is there anyone – maybe a family member or friend – to whom you need to give forgiveness? Is there anyone you need to ask for forgiveness?



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PRAY

Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank God that Jesus came so that there could be peace on earth.
- Thank God that Jesus made a way for there to be peace between God and people.
- Pray that God will help us to be peacemakers in every relationship.
- Pray that God will help us to give forgiveness, even when it's hard, and receive forgiveness when we need it.