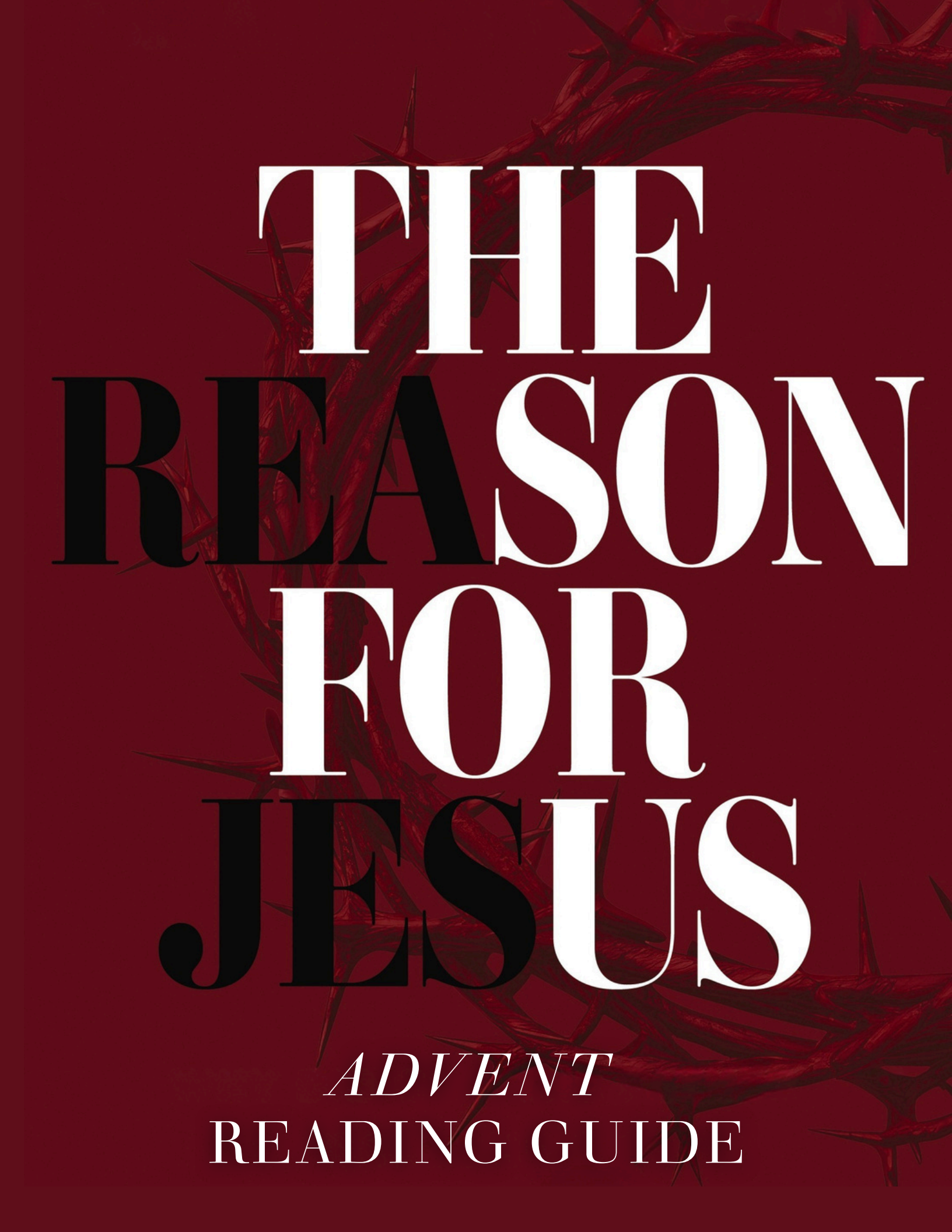


ADVENT

READING GUIDE

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, *Everlasting Father*, Prince of Peace.

ISAIAH 9:6

AN INVITATION FOR ADVENT

During Advent, we remember the long hope of God's people, celebrate the Son who came among us, and prepare our hearts for the King who will come again.

The Reason for Jesus asks a question at the heart of Christmas: *Why did Jesus come?* Across forty chapters, Bible teacher and master storyteller Charles Martin follows that question from creation to the Cross. This four-week guide follows the same Advent journey through the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love.

How to Use This Guide

READ | Complete the assigned ten chapters during the week. The three reading movements can help you divide the material into manageable portions.

NOTICE | Mark words, questions, and images that reveal the Father, the Son, your identity, or the way home.

REFLECT | Use the questions for personal journaling, conversation with a friend, or small group discussion.

PRAY | End each week with the suggested prayer, then continue in your own words.

A Note on Pace

Each week includes ten short chapters. You may read one or two chapters each day, use the three reading movements as longer sessions, or adjust the pace to fit your Advent rhythm. The goal is not speed or completion for its own sake, but an attentive encounter with Jesus and the Father He came to reveal.

Before You Begin

Write your answer before reading further: *What do you currently believe is the reason for Jesus?*

WEEK ONE | HOPE

The Father We Were Made to Know

Chapters 1 - 10

Key Scriptures: Luke 2:41-50; John 14:8-11; Genesis 1-2; 1 John 1:1-4

Advent begins with waiting. For generations, God's people lived in darkness, holding on to the promise that a Savior would come. Then Jesus entered the world—the promised Son sent from the Father to make the Father known and bring His children home.

These opening chapters take us back to the beginning, where humanity was created in God's image and made for fellowship with Him. They also invite us to look ahead with hope. The God who fulfilled His promise by sending Jesus is still faithful to every promise He has made. Our hope is not wishful thinking. It is confidence in the character of the Father and in the Son who came to bring His children home.

Reading Path

MOVEMENT	READING
Wait for the Promised Son	**Read chapters 1-2.** Notice the thread of the Father running through Jesus' life. As you encounter Jesus as the Son of the Father, consider the generations who waited for His arrival—and what His coming reveals about God's faithfulness.
Listen for the Hope He Brings	**Read chapters 3-7.** Notice Jesus' invitations to surrender, trust, receive the Father's love, and remain with Him. Consider how His words speak hope into fear, spiritual poverty, and uncertainty.
Remember Who Made You	**Read chapters 8-10.** Return to creation and remember who God made you to be. Reflect on how your identity as God's image-bearer gives you hope in a world marked by darkness and brokenness.

WEEK ONE | HOPE

Personal Reflection

- Advent remembers the long wait for the promised Savior. Where in your life are you currently waiting for God to act?
- What does the coming of Jesus reveal about God's faithfulness to His promises?
- How do Jesus' words and actions in these chapters bring hope to people living with fear, uncertainty, or spiritual need?
- Where are fear or anxiety competing with your trust in the Father? How might remembering Christ's first coming strengthen your hope as you wait?
- How has disappointment shaped what you expect from God? What truth from these chapters invites you to hope again?
- What changes when you remember that you were created in God's image, blessed by Him, and made for fellowship with Him?
- Our hope rests in who God is rather than what circumstances suggest. Which aspect of the Father's character do you need to anchor yourself to this week?
- As Advent begins, what are you asking Jesus to reveal, restore, or make new in you?

Prayer for the Week

Father, teach me to see You as Jesus reveals You. Quiet every voice that contradicts Your Word, and anchor my hope in who You are and who You say I am. Help me follow Your Son with an open and willing heart. Amen.

WEEK TWO | PEACE

The Prince of Peace Comes Near

Chapters 11- 20

Key Scriptures: Genesis 3; Isaiah 9:6–7; Philippians 2:5–11; Romans 7:24–25; John 14:6

Advent announces peace to a world fractured by sin. From the moment humanity questioned God's goodness, peace gave way to pride, shame, fear, hiding, and separation. We could not repair what had been broken or find our own way back to God.

Yet the story did not end in the garden. God came looking for His children, and throughout Scripture, He continued revealing His plan to rescue them. At Christmas, that promised rescue took on flesh. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, entered our conflict to reconcile us to the Father. Advent peace is more than a quiet feeling or the absence of trouble. It is the assurance that God has come near and made a way home.

Reading Path

MOVEMENT	READING
Recognize Our Need for Peace	**Read chapters 11–13.** Identify the enemy's strategy, the lure of pride, and the conflict that shattered humanity's peace with God.
Come Out of Hiding	**Read chapters 14–17.** Consider the fall, the coverings we create for ourselves, and the separation we cannot overcome on our own. Notice how God continues to pursue His children.
Watch for the Promised Rescue	**Read chapters 18–20.** As you wrestle with judgment, salvation, and the one path to God, look for the early signs of the rescue that will be fulfilled in Jesus, the One who comes to cover our shame and bring us home.

WEEK TWO | PEACE

Personal Reflection

- Where do you see the world's longing for peace most clearly during this Advent season?
- What does humanity's hiding in Genesis 3 reveal about the kind of peace we lost and the peace we truly need?
- Where do you recognize the enemy's pattern of questioning God's goodness, His Word, or your identity?
- What "fig leaves" do you use to cover shame or create a sense of security—control, performance, blame, avoidance, or something else?
- Advent reminds us that God came near rather than waiting for us to find our own way back. How does that truth reshape your understanding of peace?
- Where are you still trying to earn peace with God instead of receiving the reconciliation Jesus came to provide?
- What would repentance look like this week, not as returning to shame, but as returning to the Father who is already seeking you?
- Is there a conflict, fear, burden, or area of unrest you need to surrender to the Prince of Peace?
- How can you embody the peace of Christ in one relationship or situation as you prepare to celebrate His coming?

Prayer for the Week

Father, I cannot cover, rescue, or restore myself. Bring me out of hiding. Expose every lie I have believed about You, and lead me in the way of repentance and peace. Thank You for coming to seek me and for making a way home through Jesus. Amen.

WEEK THREE | JOY

Good News of Great Joy

Chapters 21–30

Key Scriptures: Luke 2:8–14; John 3:1–21; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:1–10; Luke 11:1–4

On the first Christmas night, an angel announced "good news of great joy" because a Savior had been born. Advent joy begins with that announcement: God has acted to rescue His people. The Son of God entered our darkness and came near to those who could never save themselves.

These chapters lead us into the heart of that good news. God's love is demonstrated, deliverance is provided, new birth is offered, and access to the Father is opened through the Son. This joy is deeper than seasonal happiness and stronger than changing circumstances. It is the astonished gratitude of people who know salvation cannot be earned but has been freely given. We rejoice because the promised Savior has come, and through Him, we can become children of God.

Reading Path

MOVEMENT	READING
Receive the Good News	**Read chapters 21–23.** Consider the character of the God who moves toward sinners in love. Like the shepherds hearing the angel's announcement, pause to wonder at what God has done.
Rejoice in the Savior	**Read chapters 24–27.** Trace the movement from helplessness to deliverance, new birth, faith, and salvation. Remember that the child born in Bethlehem came to accomplish the rescue you could never achieve.
Live in the Joy of His Coming	**Read chapters 28–30.** Reflect on grace, prayer to the Father, the one path home, and Jesus as the revelation of God. Consider how receiving this gift changes the way you live and worship.

WEEK THREE | JOY

Personal Reflection

- The angel described Jesus' birth as "good news of great joy." What makes the coming of Jesus such joyful news for you personally?

- What do these chapters reveal about the difference between earning God's love and receiving the gift He has already given?

- Where are you tempted to minimize your need for a Savior—or believe you are beyond His rescue?

- How does remembering that Jesus entered the world for helpless and undeserving people deepen your experience of Advent joy?

- What does new birth mean for the identity, loyalties, or patterns you are carrying into this Christmas season?

- Which gift of salvation brings you the greatest joy right now: forgiveness, freedom, belonging, new life, access to the Father, or something else? Why?

- How might your prayers change if you approached God as a beloved child speaking with a good Father?

- The shepherds responded to the good news by glorifying God and telling others what they had seen. How can joy become worship and witness in your life this week?

- Who needs to encounter the joy of God's grace through your words, presence, hospitality, or generosity this Advent?

Prayer for the Week

Father, thank You for doing what I could never do for myself. I receive Your grace with gratitude. Renew in me the joy of salvation, teach me to pray as Your child, and let the good news of Jesus overflow through my life. Amen.

WEEK FOUR | LOVE

Love Came Down

Chapters 31–40

Key Scriptures: John 3:16; John 15–17; Romans 8:15–17; Galatians 4:4–7; 1 John 3:16

Advent culminates in love. It's not a distant or abstract love, but the love of God taking on flesh and dwelling among us. At Christmas, the Father did not merely send a message of love. He sent His Son. Jesus entered our world to reveal the Father, lay down His life for us, and bring us home as beloved children.

In these final chapters, Jesus chooses, calls, cleanses, befriends, and teaches His disciples to abide. He promises the Helper and prays that His people will know the love with which the Father loves the Son. This is the wonder at the heart of Christmas: God so loved that He gave. Jesus came not only to rescue us from judgment but to bring us into the Father's family, where we can call Him "*Abba*." We prepare to celebrate Christ's birth by receiving that love and allowing it to flow through us to others.

Reading Path

MOVEMENT	READING
Abide in His Love	**Read chapters 31–33.** Consider discipleship, fruitfulness, the promised Helper, and the new life Jesus gives. Reflect on what it means that the Savior born for you also chose and befriended you.
Receive the Father's Gift	**Read chapters 34–37.** Linger over Jesus' prayer in John 17 and the love shared between the Father and the Son. Consider how Christ's coming invites you into that love through obedience, unity, and holiness.
Come Home as a Beloved Child	**Read chapters 38–40.** Receive the invitation to call God "*Abba*" and live as His adopted child. As Christmas approaches, remember that the child in the manger came to place your hand in the Father's.

WEEK FOUR | LOVE

Personal Reflection

- Christmas declares that God did not love humanity from a distance—He came near. Where do you most need to receive the nearness of His love?
- What does the Father's willingness to send His Son reveal about the depth and cost of His love for you?
- What is the difference between knowing about the Father's love and abiding in it? Where do you see that difference in your life?
- What might the Father be pruning so that your life can reflect His love and bear lasting fruit?
- Jesus connects love with obedience. What specific act of obedience is love asking of you during this Advent season?
- What does it mean to you that the Father invites you to receive the love He has for His Son and to call Him *Abba*?
- How does understanding Christmas as an invitation into the Father's family deepen its meaning for you?
- Return to the book's central question: What is the reason for Jesus? How would you answer it now in light of the Father's love?
- God's love came near in Jesus. Who needs you to embody that same love through forgiveness, generosity, hospitality, or presence this Christmas?
- As Christmas approaches, where is the Father inviting you to take His hand and live more fully as His beloved child?

Prayer for the Week

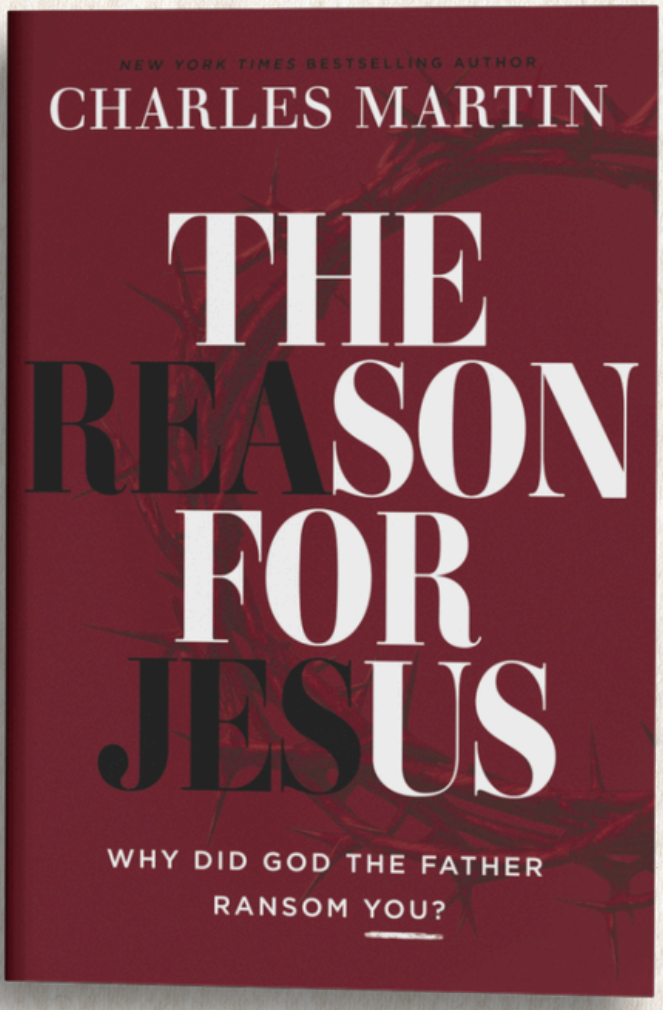
Abba, Father, thank You for sending Your Son to bring me home. Teach me to abide in Your love, obey Your voice, and walk by Your Spirit. I receive my place as Your child. May my life reflect the love and glory of Jesus. Amen.

NEW FROM BESTSELLING AUTHOR

CHARLES MARTIN

In *The Reason for Jesus*, Charles Martin traces the story of Scripture to reveal the Father's plan to rescue you, bring you home, and invite you to live as a beloved child of God.

Continue your journey through all forty chapters and discover the Father who has been pursuing you from the beginning.



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