

THE JESSE TREE



An Advent Activity

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THE PREVIEW.**

WELCOME!

We are so excited to share "The Jesse Tree" with your family this Advent season!

What is a Jesse Tree? I'm so glad you asked!

The Jesse Tree is an ancient tradition for the weeks leading up to Christmas. It's been spotted in images that are over 1,000 years old!

Since then, believers from various backgrounds have used the Jesse Tree to reflect on Jesus. From December 1 to Christmas Day, believers reflect on a different member of Jesus' family tree. Since Jesus comes from "the line of Jesse", we call it the Jesse tree. The point of the Jesse tree is to remind us of God's family line and where Jesus fits into it!

Ultimately, the Jesse Tree reminds us that we all have a place in God's family tree.

What do Jesse Trees have to do with kids?

It's such a fun way to count down to Christmas, and it keeps kids centered on Jesus during the Christmas season. Using the Jesse Tree reminds kids that God's plan to send Jesus wasn't an accident or a random thought - it's been in place since the beginning.

HOW TO USE

Inside this package, you will find:

- A devotional guide (which you're holding). It includes a daily Bible passage that corresponds with the character from the "Jesse Tree" that day. You can read the whole passage, or use a favorite children's Bible.
- The devotional guide also includes weekly suggestions - like a worship song & discussion question, if you want to go the extra mile.
- A "Jesse Tree" printout to place on your fridge
- "Ornaments" for each day to add to the tree!

Let kids find the ornament that corresponds with each day's Bible reading and stick it on your family's Jesse Tree! Maybe you want to take it a step further and use a real "tree branch!" It's up to you.

**THIS PAGE
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JESSE TREE

GUIDE

December 1: God made the world!

Bible Reading: Genesis 1 (World)

December 2: Adam & Eve sinned!

Bible Reading: Genesis 3:1-17 (Apple Tree)

December 3: God rescues Noah!

Bible Reading: Genesis 9:1-16 (Rainbow)

December 4: Abraham - God's friend!

Bible Reading: Genesis 12:1-9 (Tent)

December 5: Abraham & Isaac!

Bible Reading: Genesis 22:1-19 (Ram)

December 6: Jacob sees a ladder!

Bible Reading: Genesis 28:10-22 (Ladder)

December 7: Joseph gets a special coat!

Bible Reading: Genesis 37:1-10 (Coat)

**THIS PAGE
EXCLUDED FROM
THE PREVIEW.**

December 19: Mary gets a message!
Bible Reading: Luke 1:26-48 (Flower)

December 20: An angel talks to Joseph!
Bible Reading: Matthew 1:19-25 (Hammer)

December 21: Zechariah gets a message!
Bible Reading: Luke 1:57-66 (Stone Tablet)

December 22: Shepherds hear from God!
Bible Reading: Luke 2:8-20 (Shepherds)

December 23: Wisemen get Good News!
Bible Reading: Matthew 2:1-12 (Star)

December 24: Jesus is born!
Bible Reading: Luke 2:1-8 (Manger)

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS!**

WEEKLY IDEAS

WEEK 1: JESSE TREE INTRO

TALK:

- Have you ever heard of a Jesse tree?
- It's a name for Jesus' family tree. Do you know anything about our family tree?
- Why should we talk about the people in Jesus' family tree?

LISTEN:

- **The Ballad of Matthew's Begats** by Andrew Peterson
- **Come Thou Long Expected Jesus** by Chris Tomlin

DO:

- Run a contest all week with your family to see who can find the coolest tree in your neighborhood!

A LITTLE NOTE

Talking about family trees may not be a positive or straightforward conversation for your family. That's okay because Jesus' family tree wasn't either. If you think this conversation is going to be a tough one (especially for older kids), take some time to listen to the song Family Tree by Matthew West together, and chat about why Jesus brings hope to our messy family trees!

WEEKLY IDEAS

WEEK 2: OLD TESTAMENT HEROES

TALK:

- We are reading a lot about people who lived a long, long time ago! What do you think we can learn about Jesus in their stories?
- What is your favorite story we've read so far?
- What do you think these people would have thought if they knew Jesus would be part of their family?

LISTEN:

- **Jesus Messiah** by Chris Tomlin
- **O Come, O Come Emmanuel** by Bethel Kids

DO:

- Just for fun this week, craft a Christmas ornament to go on your real Christmas tree! It can look however you want. If you're not the crafty type (and you have a little extra to spend!), go to the Dollar Store or a similar place, and let everyone choose an ornament to buy!

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THE PREVIEW.**