

Daily Advent prayers – Week One

At Advent, we turn our hearts and minds towards the light that broke into the world's darkness. The light that has changed everything. We are invited to encounter that light and then asked to be that light ourselves, in a world that so desperately needs it.
Sourced from the Evangelical Alliance – written by Fred and Caroline Drummond.

Day 1 (2 Dec)

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light."

Isaiah 9:2a

Reflect

Let's begin our advent journey thinking about those who are living in darkness. They may be on the other side of the world from us, or right next door. There are many reasons for walking in darkness - fear, loneliness, oppression, depression, poverty or violence are just a few. God sees those in darkness and becomes light for them.

Prayer

Lord, we name before you those we know who are going through times of darkness. We think of them and ask, gracious God, that you may bring them light, hope, love and direction. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 2 (3 Dec)

"On those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned."

Isaiah 9:2b

Reflect

The writer and director Woody Allen wrote: "It's not that I am afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens". But we are there. Dying is a certainty of living. We cannot escape it. Many face either the fear of death or the numbing pain of bereavement. In the midst of such a reality of darkness there is the promise of God that the light will shine. "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me." The promise is for the light of the presence of God to be with those going through the valley of darkness.

Prayer

Lord, have mercy on all those who are living in the place of the shadow of death. Those in that valley coping with terminal illness or those who have lost loved ones. God, who is light, bring strength, hope and comfort today. Amen.

Day 3 (4 Dec)

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6

Reflect

The son who was to be born was the one who would give council. He has both wisdom and compassion. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is called a counsellor. He is one who gives sound advice, who is close enough to the situation to understand what needs to be done. Many people live in the darkness of confusion, weighed down by the decisions that they need to make. In God we have one who is the supreme counsellor. He is able to bring light and direction into even the most confusing of situations. It may be that during this Advent you are facing a difficult decision and are not sure what direction to take. Ask the Wonderful Counsellor for light and direction.

Prayer

Wonderful Counsellor, we ask for your guidance at this time. Help us to take the right paths and the correct decisions. Lord be our guide. And even when we take a wrong turning, help us to trust that you are with us, healing, restoring and forgiving. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 4 (5 Dec)

"Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing it and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever."

Isaiah 9:7

Reflect

There are approximately 200 independent sovereign states in the world. There are lots of forms of government. There are places that are

being governed badly. People are living in fear, others are dying of starvation, many face persecution. There is darkness upon many lands. In the promises of the coming of Jesus we are given a picture of one who governs with justice and righteousness. Jesus is the one who alone can bring peace. He is the prince of peace. Take time to think of one place in the world where people are suffering.

Prayer

Lord, have mercy, bring order out of chaos, protect the vulnerable, strengthen the weak and give voice to the voiceless. Let your peace come to us, God, and let righteousness and justice flow like a river. Amen.

Day 5 (6 Dec)

"God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all."

1 John 1:5b

Reflect

This morning I cleaned a pair of shoes. I don't know how I did it but I seemed to get more on my hands and on my shirt cuff than I did on the shoes. There were marks all over me. Tainted by polish. There is darkness around us. We see the symptoms of it everywhere. Innocent people suffering, systems breaking down, hopelessness and fear gripping people in a choke hold of desperation. It is easy for us to be tainted by it all. To become either hardened or apathetic. We can be tainted by cynicism or we can cross the road and not get involved. In God there is no darkness. God is light that is pure. There is no taint of anything on God - no darkness. Even the darkest situations and circumstances can be penetrated by Him. Light has come.

Prayer

Lord God, help me to reflect upon my own life. Show me the areas of darkness in me. (Silence) Where I have become hardened to the plight of others or where I have lost the will to do good, Lord help me. Bring your light and your forgiveness and help me today to walk in your light. Allow me to see that in the darkest places it is possible for the light to shine brightest. Amen.

Day 6 (7 Dec)

"I am the light of the world."

John 8:12

Reflect

in all his ways. He is holy and he is gracious. There is no one like him. The wonder is that Jesus, God's perfect light, loves you. Jesus calls you to get closer to him, closer to the light. Is the light dim because you are so far from him? Do you need to draw nearer to Jesus?

Prayer

Lord, I thank you for your love. Forgive me for the times when I wander away from you. Rather than basking in the warmth and brightness of you I see you dimly at a distance. Lord, help me to draw closer today, to seek you and to worship you and know again your affection for me. Amen.

Day 7 (8 Dec)

"Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12b

Reflect

We follow lots of things in life: advice, fashion trends, other people. However, there is only one type of following that comes with a promise as wonderful as the one in this text. Jesus, who is the light of the world, promises that we won't walk in darkness when we follow him. He lights the path for us when we are close to him. Light and following go together. How closely are we following? Are we leaving everything and following Jesus wherever he leads?

Prayer

Lord, help me just to follow you. Sometimes I want to know every possible turn in the road, measure every risk. Help me to have the trust just to follow so that I am not stumbling about in the darkness. Give me courage God to answer your call and follow you anywhere at any time.

