

# ADVENT CONSPIRACY



## Worship Fully/Spend Less/Give More/Love All

### Session 1 of 4: Worship Fully

We all want our Christmas to be a lot of things. Full of joy. Memories. Happiness. Above all, we want it to be about Jesus. What we don't want is stress. Or debt. Or feeling like we "missed the moment". Advent Conspiracy is designed to help us all slow down and experience a Christmas worth remembering. But doing this means doing things a little differently.

Session 1 Introduction:

You can't SPEND LESS, GIVE MORE, or LOVE ALL, unless you first know how to WORSHIP FULLY.

Christmas marks the moment where God's promise was fulfilled and love took form, tiny fingers and all. It is a moment that deserves our full attention and praise. We put Worship Fully as Advent Conspiracy's first tenet because we believe the level of our involvement at Christmas is based entirely on how much we are celebrating Christ's birth. He deserves celebration; one that is creative, loud and directs every heart His way.

*[Appoint a group member to lead each of the following sections: Adore (Worship), Love, Grow, Serve, Go.]*

#### **Adore (1 of 2) -- 5 minutes**

Leader: We look forward – to seeing a new star appear in the sky, prompting those far off to draw near to you.

All: Lord Jesus, draw us to you.

Leader: We look forward - to the familiar stable scenes, their mangers standing empty, waiting to receive you.

All: Lord Jesus, come to us anew.

Leader: We look forward – to hearing again the angels singing "Glory to God and Peace to all the earth".

All: Lord Jesus, let us take up their song.

Leader: We look forward – to seeing shepherds and kings alike, poor and humble, noble and wealthy, all bowing before you.

All: Lord Jesus, unite us in worship.

Leader: We look forward - to remembering a humble girl, with an ordinary background, chosen to bring your hope into the world.

All: Lord Jesus, bring new hope through us.

Leader: We look forward – to a child, wrapped in linen, lying in a manger, weak and helpless, small and completely reliant on others.

All: Lord Jesus, teach us to depend on you.

Leader: We look forward - to seeing, hearing and knowing afresh how you - infinite and incomprehensible God - freely entered your creation, becoming humble and tangible so that we might freely enter your presence.

All: Lord Jesus, we look, we wonder, and we worship. Amen!

Adapted from "We Look Forward Advent Liturgy" written by Kieran Metcalfe/engageworship.org

## Love -- 10 minutes

Where, when, and/or how do you feel you most worship fully? Another way to look at it, how would you personally define worshipping fully?

## Grow -- 45 minutes

We will be applying the "Picture It" method of Bible meditation as we read **Luke 2:8-20**. Read the story twice (maybe from a 2nd translation) if that helps everyone get more immersed in the story.

"Picture It" – Bible Meditation Study:

- Try to picture the biblical scene in your mind. See yourself as one of the active participants. Ask yourself, "How would I feel if I were involved in this situation? What would I say? What would I do?" Then see yourself as a different character in the story and ask yourself the same questions again.
- Next, ask yourself, "With whom in the story do I identify most, and how does their situation apply to my life right now? What is God trying to say to me? What does he want me to do?"
- Which of the people in the story do you most identify with?
- Be the shepherds: What would you have felt knowing that the angels could have visited another group of people? What do you imagine worshipping fully look liked for the shepherds?
- Be Mary: What would you have been treasuring in your heart? (See also Luke 1:46-55.) What do you imagine worshipping fully look liked for Mary?
- Be Joseph: What would have been going through your mind upon the shepherds' visit and their return? What do you imagine worshipping fully look liked for Joseph?
- Be all (from v. 18): You just heard an amazing story from some seemingly, unlikely fellows. What do you do with the news you have heard though not personally witnessed?
- What do you imagine worshipping fully look liked for these hearers of the shepherds' story?

## Adore (2 of 2) 5 minutes

1. Light a single candle and place in the middle of the room where you are meeting.
2. With attention on the candle, read John 8:12 (MSG) - "Jesus once again addressed them: 'I am the world's Light. No one who follows me stumbles around in the darkness. I provide plenty of light to live in.'"
3. "Shine, Jesus, Shine!" – Have someone play "Shine, Jesus, Shine!" while the group sings the song; or using a group member's smart phone, laptop, or tablet, cue up the following video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xs94DkpJYg> and sing along with it.

Lord, the Light of Your Love is shining,  
In the midst of the darkness shining,  
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,  
Set us free by the truth You now bring us,  
Shine on me. Shine on me.

Shine, Jesus shine,  
Fill this land with the Father's glory.  
Blaze, Spirit blaze,  
Set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river flow,  
Flood the nations with grace and mercy.  
Send forth Your word,  
Lord and let there be light.

Lord I come to Your awesome presence,  
From the shadows into Your radiance.  
By the blood I may enter Your brightness,  
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.  
Shine on me. Shine on me.

As we gaze on Your kindly brightness.  
So our faces display Your likeness.

Ever changing from glory to glory,  
Mirrored here may our lives tell Your story.  
Shine on me. Shine on me.

**Go -- 10 minutes**

- In what ways does Christ use His disciples to point people to Him, the world's Light?
- In response to Jesus' great love for you, in which way of showing the Light of Jesus are you most moved and/or convicted to act upon?

**Love -- 5 minutes**

- Summing things up, what have we learned about tonight (today) with regards to worshiping God fully?
- Reviewing the last sentence of the introduction (p. 1), how will you go out and celebrate Christ's birth in a way that is creative, loud, and directs every heart His way?

**Serve – 10 minutes**

Take a few minutes of silence to write down a personal action step in worshiping God fully on a sheet of paper. Place this sheet in a cap or bowl. After all are done, pick a sheet from the cap or bowl. Together as a group, each person is to pray aloud or silently the action step received.

Galatians 5:13b – “Serve one another in love.”