

OH, COME ON...
IT'S ADVENT!

Daily Devotions
for Teens & Young Adults

SIGN IN

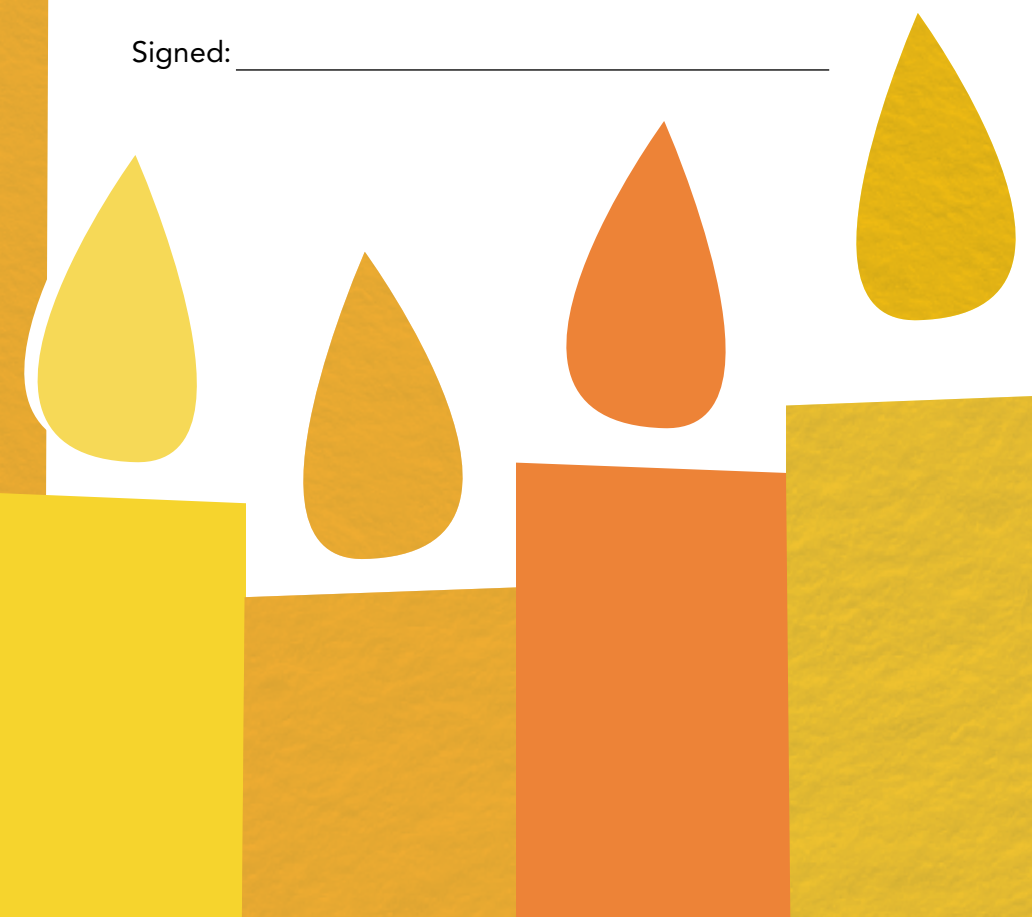
Oh, Come On ... Just Do It!

Before we get to work unpacking what's ahead of us this season, make a commitment. Sign up in the space below.

I'm digging into Advent starting on _____, 20____.

Guide me, Lord Jesus, as I wait for you!

Signed: _____



ABOUT THESE ANTIPHONS

Oh, Come On ... Read It!

The first thing you need to know about the “O” Antiphons of Advent is that they are OLD. I’m talking *really* old, here. How old, you ask? Not sure. Definitely younger than the pyramids, but older than any living relative.

Secondly, they usually aren’t discussed in this venue. Which is to say, not many people have written about them in a private, little “just-between-you-and-me” booklet for teens before. That’s because they’re normally “performed” (for lack of a better term) PUBLICLY ... in CHURCH.

Which leads us to thirdly (and this is important): they have a PURPOSE. I know that sounds contradictory ... because I know that some of the stuff that’s done in church doesn’t appear to have a purpose. But the truth is, almost EVERYTHING we do in church has a purpose (or used to, at least). Unfortunately, sometimes the purpose gets forgotten ... or, more often, goes unexplained.

Which is why this little booklet exists: to unpack those old Advent Antiphons. And, along the way, to rediscover their purpose.

In a nutshell (just to bait the hook), their purpose is this: to point out just exactly who we’re waiting for this season. And, since Advent is all about waiting for someone, I think you’ll agree that’s a pretty important purpose.

*The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Psalm 138:8*

WHO ARE WE WAITING FOR?

Hint: It's More Than a Baby

The question seems straightforward enough. So, why in the world do we need SEVEN (did I mention there were seven?) "O" Antiphons to answer it? I mean ... it's ADVENT right? Aren't we just waiting for a baby?

Well ... not really. The answer, put in its most direct form, is this: We're waiting for GOD.

Did that blow your mind? No? Well, it SHOULD have!

We're talking about GOD here! The GREAT God, ALMIGHTY, who created EVERYTHING out of NOTHING by just SAYING A WORD! The God who always was, is and always will be. Eternal!

The fact is, the finite human mind simply can't wrap itself around thoughts about the infinite God and do them any real justice. God is too big. We're too small. We just can't GET IT.

That's why there are seven "O" Antiphons. Each one attacks the "who are we waiting for" question from a different angle. Each one, when added to the others, provides a more complete picture of the WHO that we are awaiting this season.

The "O" Antiphons are images of God, prepackaged in bite-size, finite-mind bundles (thank God!).

*Before ... you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:2*

Tuesday of the First Week

IMAGES FOR GOD

A Fun, Fun Activity

Why SEVEN Antiphons? Because someone had the presence of mind to stop at seven before things got out of hand. Truth is, there are MANY more images of God that help us get a handle on the un-handle-able. Images like SHEPHERD and WARRIOR, CREATOR and PILLAR OF FIRE.

Can you think of more? What images does the Bible use to help us understand the infinite God? Draw some below.



*He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." Mark 8:29*

Wednesday of the First Week

OH, COME, EMMANUEL

But Really, ... It's a Baby

I realize it's far too early in our fragile, young, writer/reader relationship to expose a big, fat, hairy lie I told you two days ago, but ... it IS a baby we're waiting for.

And, in my defense, I never claimed we weren't waiting for a baby. I just implied that we were waiting for MORE THAN a baby. And we are. LOTS more.

But a baby is at the heart of the whole thing. Baby waiting is what kicked off all of the rest of the Advent waiting.

All the baby waiting started way back in the Old Testament with the prophet Isaiah. He's the one who first pointed our attention toward a special little baby. Sent from God to be born of a young woman. That baby was supposed to be a sign to God's people of HOPE ... of SALVATION from peril.

And the baby's name? EMMANUEL! Sound familiar? The name means "God is with us."

It's a name that was later applied to another baby—THE Baby we await this and every Advent. Little baby "God's Here" is coming. He's the center of ALL our waiting ... and the final focal point of our Advent Antiphons. Keep him in mind.

And keep this in mind too: Even during our Advent waiting, God is ALREADY with you.

*Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign.
Isaiah 7:14*



Not Just Someone Who's Wise

The first ancient "O" Antiphon goes like this:

**O Wisdom, come!
You govern all creation
with your strong and tender care.
O holy Word of God:
Come; teach us; make us wise.**

Can you begin to grasp this? The One we're waiting for isn't simply wise (like your favorite teacher ... or the relative everyone in your family goes to for advice). No ... he IS WISDOM! This is THE One! The One who invented GRAVITY, after all ... and LIGHT ... and the great mystery of LIFE itself.

Pretty impressive!

And sort of scary too. If this One is so wise ... well ... I may feel awfully dumb in his presence. Not only that. This awesome force of pure wisdom is going to be able to see through any of my lies ... my (gulp) sins.

It might be wise to clean up my act, right?

That's why repentance (turning away from sin) is a part of our yearly Advent routine.

*And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding ... Isaiah 11:2*

OH, COME ON ...
IT'S ADVENT!

As December rolls around again, it may be tempting to think, "Advent? Oh, come on! Haven't we done that already?"

Let's freshen up the observance of Advent this year with ... the ancient "O" Antiphons: those time-tested, but not too traditional, titles given to the One whom we are anticipating this season.

The daily reflections in this booklet for teens and college-aged students shed new engaging light on the old tradition of Advent expectation.

"Come on! It's Advent!"

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