



# A Paradox of Hope

advent guide 2020



# Welcome

If you've never followed a liturgical calendar, you might be wondering what Advent is. The word advent is defined as: "the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event." In Christian theology it's "the coming or second coming of Christ."

The Advent season is special. It's filled with hope and expectation. In this Advent season we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ as we remember His birth. We also look ahead to His second coming.

The season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. This year, it begins on Sunday, November 29. In this guide, we will explore the paradox of hope that is felt during this time.







## Gather:

We encourage you to gather as a family each Sunday evening (or whenever is convenient for you) during this Advent season. Make the time special by lighting a candle or playing some worship music.

## Read:

Read through the Scriptures and devotional provided for that week. Allow each family member to share their thoughts or ask questions.

## Pray:

End your time together with a prayer. You can read the one provided or make up your own.

## Have Fun:

Each week also has a fun family activity. You can do the activity right then or plan for it later in the week.

Overall, remember that there are no strict rules when it comes to this Advent guide. This is a resource to help you gather as a family so you can remember what this season is all about and look ahead with hopeful expectation of what's to come.



# the Suffering Servant King

November 29 – First Sunday of Advent

## Bible Reading: Philippians 2:3-11

**Devotional:** Advent, the arrival of the incarnate Jesus into the world. John 1:1 reminds us this Christmas season that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The fullness of the One who is God, serves humanity with everything He has to offer. And in fact, He has much to offer to a dark world. He is the light and life of humanity.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in Philippians 2, that we who walk in the likeness of Jesus are to take on Christ's humility. We are to do nothing out of selfish ambition. Instead we consider others as more important than ourselves. We do not look out for our own interests, but rather for the interests of others. This reminder sounds like how Jesus lived. He lived a paradoxical life in which He was both a servant and a king.

Perhaps in this season of Advent your focus has been on yourself and not on the One who emptied Himself. Today is the day to be reminded that we, too, can adopt the same attitude of Christ. Jesus, in His flesh, went to the cross to suffer so that our suffering could have purpose. No matter what you are faced with today, Jesus will not let that suffering go to waste. As we continue to confess that Jesus is Lord with our lives, He'll continue to get the glory in our suffering.

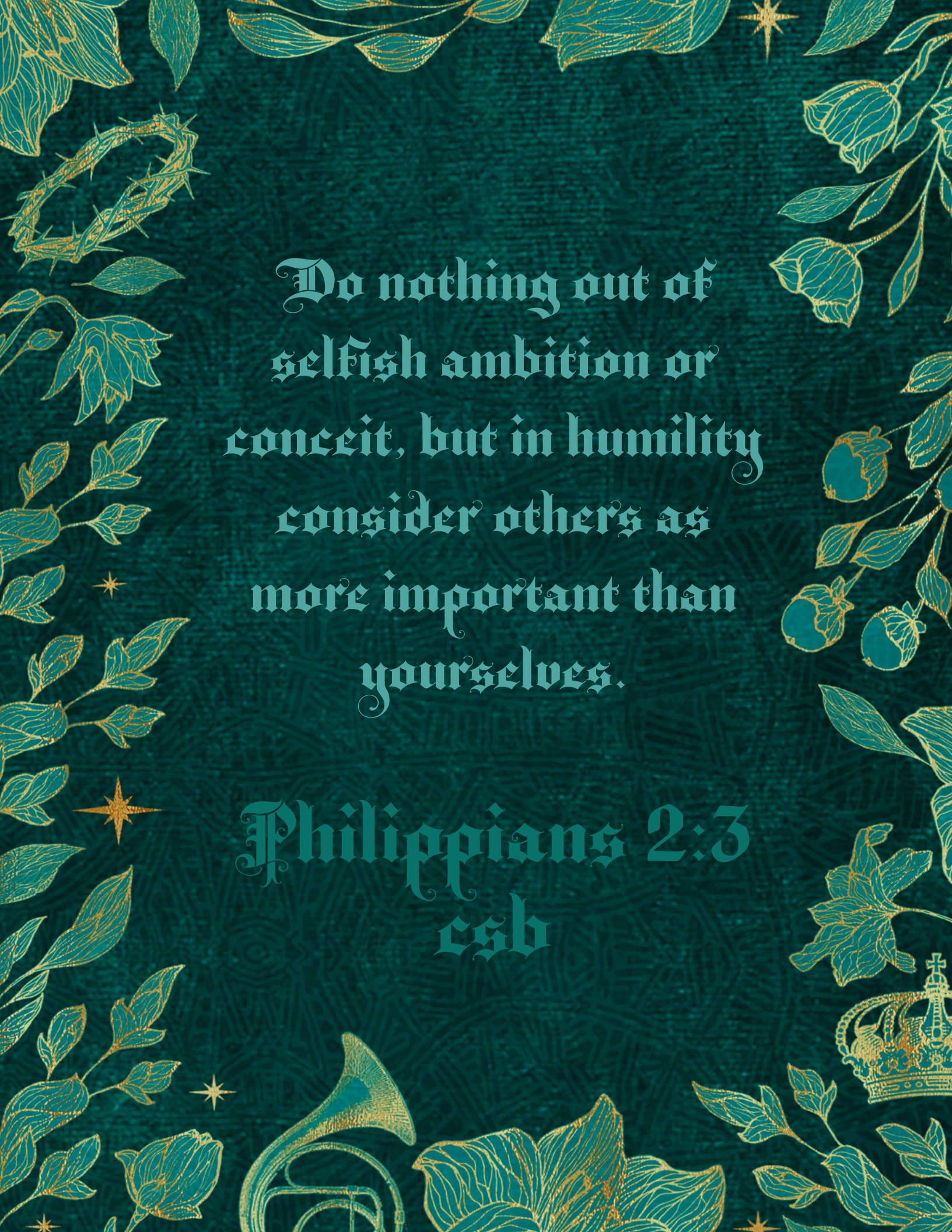
The suffering Servant-King invites us this advent season, to see Him, to know Him and to love Him. He reminds us that we are His beloved pushing back the darkness with the light and life that flows through our DNA.

**Family Action Step:** At TC we're collecting gifts and cards for Roll Out Hope! Make a card for the moms, dads, and guardians we are serving through Roll Out Hope and drop it off in our Roll Out Hope mailbox at Transformation Church. You can find out more about Roll Out Hope on our website.

**Prayer:** God, in the midst of our suffering, help us to remember there is purpose. You are the Suffering Servant-King who sees us, knows us, and loves us. You put on flesh through Your Son Jesus so that we could be made right with You. This Advent season help us to remember You are presently walking with us. God, through Your Spirit's power help us to serve others more than we serve ourselves. Amen.







Do nothing out of  
selfish ambition or  
conceit, but in humility  
consider others as  
more important than  
yourselves.

Philippians 2:3  
esb



# the Rejected King

December 6 – Second Sunday of Advent

## Bible Reading: Mark 15:6-15

**Devotional:** Everyone, in one way or another, has experienced the pain of rejection. The brokenness and sin of this world do not spare us from this painful reality. However, we serve a great high priest and king who empathizes with us because He too has experienced the pain of rejection. He understands how we feel because He's been there before.

In the Bible reading today we see Pilate at a festival where he used to release a prisoner of the people's choice. The crowd was presented with two options: release Barabbas or release Jesus. The chief priests stirred up the crowd so that they would call for the release of Barabbas, whose name means "son of the father." In tragic irony, Jesus, the true Son of the Father is rejected by his own people while the known criminal, and false son of the father, is accepted. The long-awaited messiah of Israel who came to fulfill God's covenant, was exchanged for one who was truly guilty and crucified by the very people He came to save.

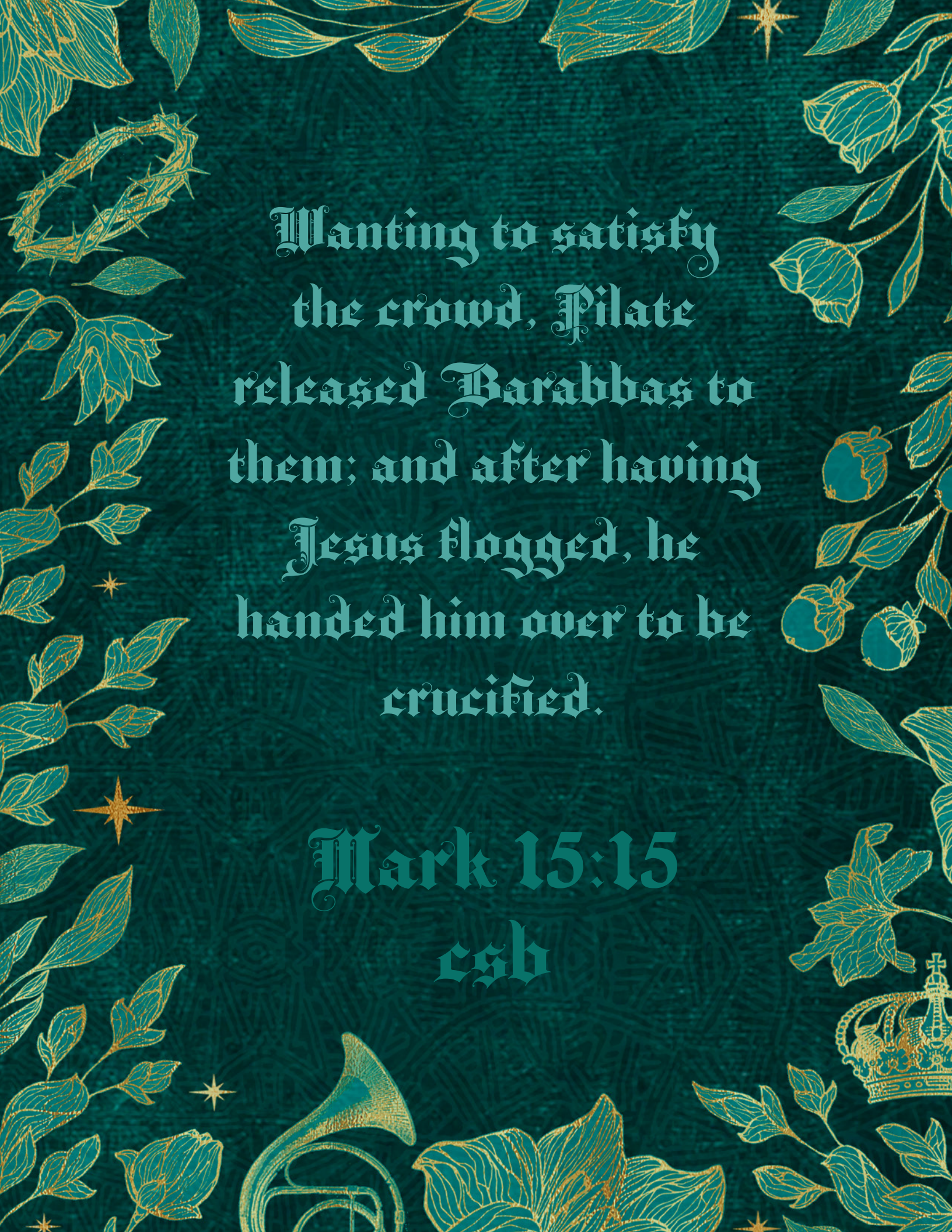
Yet, in this gospel-paradox, we can find beauty in Christ's rejection because it results in our acceptance as sons and daughters in the family of God. Like Barabbas, we do not deserve to be set free. Nevertheless, in Jesus' humiliation, rejection, unjust execution, and resurrection we find the forgiveness of sins and freedom from the tyranny of sin, death, and evil. This week, let's rest in the reality that Jesus came into the world to be broken and resurrected for our healing, restoration, and acceptance into His multiethnic, multigenerational family.

**Family Action Step:** There are many people in our society who are often forgotten, and they can feel that they have been rejected. This week let's show some love to those who live in assisted living facilities. Get a puzzle and a posterboard at the store. Decorate the poster with Christmas messages and drawings. Drop off the poster and puzzle this week at an assisted living facility in your community.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, You are our righteous and compassionate King. Through Your rejection, we become The Father's beloved sons and daughters. Through Your death, we find the forgiveness of sins. Through Your resurrection, You free us from the tyranny of sin, death, and evil. Holy Spirit, allow the beauty of this gospel-paradox to root itself in our hearts as we remember the goodness and faithfulness of God. And as we remember, empower us to be conduits of Your hope, healing, and justice to those whom our society has rejected and disinherited.







Wanting to satisfy  
the crowd, Pilate  
released Barabbas to  
them; and after having  
Jesus flogged, he  
handed him over to be  
crucified.

Mark 15:15  
csb



# the Friendly King

December 13 – Third Sunday of Advent

## Bible Reading: Luke 5:27-32

**Devotional:** During His earthly ministry, Jesus encountered a tax collector named Levi. In biblical times, tax collectors were considered traitors because they were Jewish yet worked for the Roman government. Tax collectors were especially hated by the Pharisees (a group of religious elites) because they didn't follow Jewish law. Tax collectors were often thieves as they took more than required.

Jesus invited Levi to leave his past behind and join Jesus on His mission. Levi sold his possessions and traded his past for living water. Levi asked Jesus to attend a banquet at his house, the invitation list full of tax collectors and outcasts. The Pharisees believed it was unacceptable for Jesus to dine with such disgraceful individuals. Ignoring their protestations, Jesus told the Pharisees that His mission is to be a friend to sinners and offer them a better way to live.


Friends, this is such good news. Jesus invites people who have repeatedly missed the mark, like you and me, to live on mission with Him. Despite our shortcomings, Jesus willingly calls us His friends. The King of Kings, who sits at the right hand of God the Father, looks at our sin and rebellion, extends His hand, and says, "Follow me." We exchange our unrighteousness for His righteousness. Because Jesus was a friend to us despite our brokenness, we are called to be a friend to those who have not tasted life with Jesus.

**Family Action Step:** Have you received any Christmas cards in the mail? This week pick out a Christmas card and pray for the person or family displayed. Then write them a note letting them know you prayed for them and wishing them a Merry Christmas. You can even draw them a picture! Mail the note this week so they get it in time for Christmas.

**Prayer:** Jesus, we praise You because You are the King of Kings. We are grateful that You enter into our mess and invite us to follow You. We don't deserve Your love, but You ask us to be Your friends. Help us to be a friend to others the way You are a friend to us. Through Your Spirit's power, help us to embody Your mission. In Your name, amen.







Jesus replied to them,  
“It is not those who  
are healthy who need  
a doctor, but those  
who are sick. I have  
not come to call the  
righteous, but sinners  
to repentance.”

Luke 5:31-32

csb



# the Rule-Breaking King

December 20 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

## Bible Reading: John 4:4-42

**Devotional:** The story of the Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus at the well is significant. Jesus was a Jewish man, a rabbi. Typically, Jewish men had no dealings with women or Samaritans because they were considered less than. Furthermore, this woman did not have a good reputation. She had been taken advantage of by the various men in her life and shunned by her community. That's why the woman was at the well alone during the hottest part of the day. She carried so much shame with her.

The Samaritan woman went to the well because she was thirsty and needed water to drink. Jesus, however, saw the greater need she had for living water. He knew that she needed restoration and healing. He knew that she needed love and acceptance. He knew He could give her all that she was looking for, if she would only open her eyes and see. Jesus was willing to break all the social rules of the day to let this woman know of the love, life, and hope found in Him.

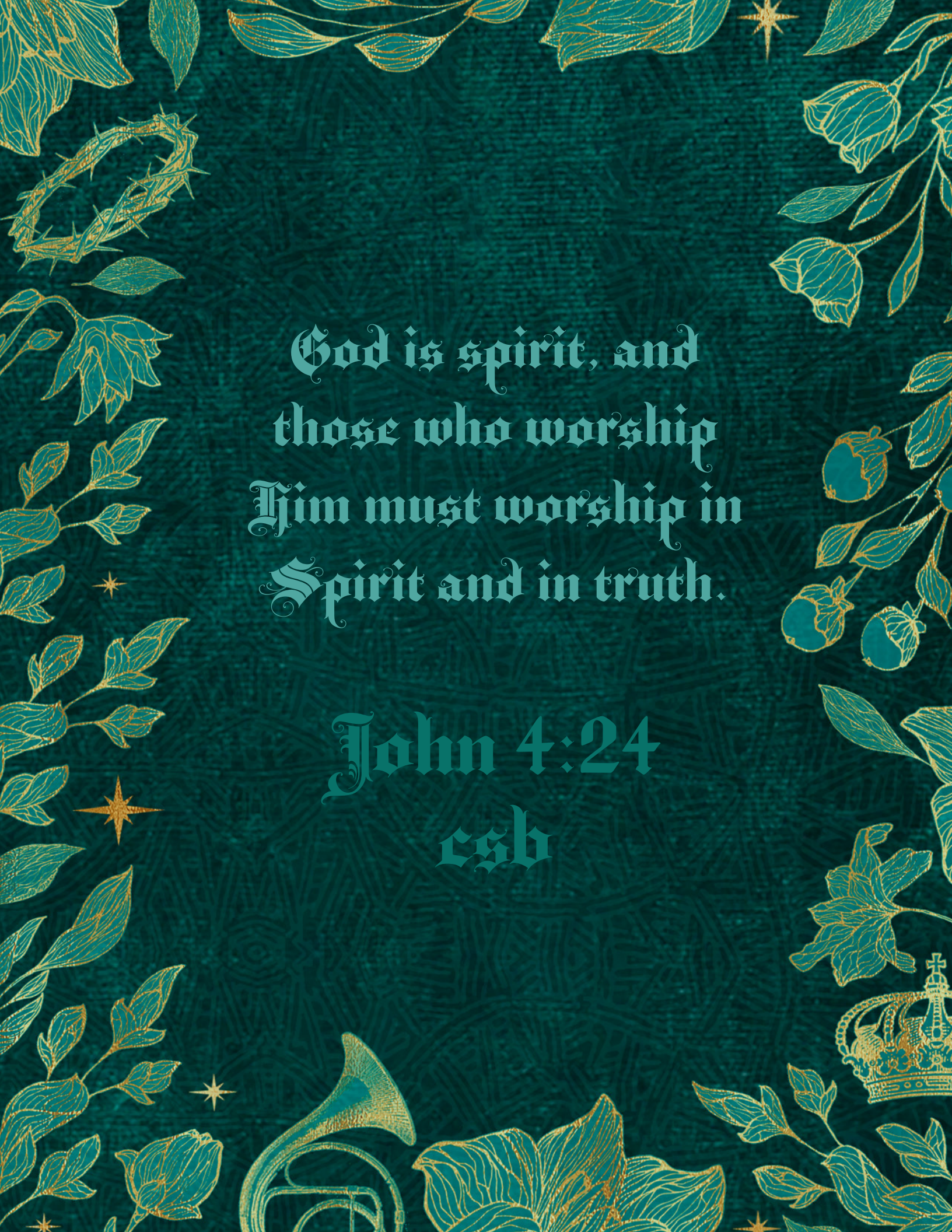
Are you in need of living water? Are you coming to Jesus for the living water your soul thirsts for? The apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 2:14-16 that Jesus has united all people, Jews and Gentiles. Jesus has reconciled us to Himself and to each other. We no longer have to go to a well lugging our heavy and empty water jugs. Jesus has provided hope to us in the form of living water and a multiethnic family in which to live on mission for Him. Go to Him.

**Family Action Step:** It's the last week of Advent and we have one more Christmas card mission for you. This week make Christmas cards for our frontline healthcare workers. Draw pictures and make the cards as colorful as possible! Choose a hospital or clinic in your community where you can drop the cards off to brighten up their holiday season as they work hard to keep people safe and healthy.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, when You look at us, You don't see our mistakes or the labels others have given us. You see beneath the surface into our hearts. Thank you for providing living water for us. Thank you for giving us Your multiethnic family, the Church, to walk with. Thank you for providing Your Son, Jesus, to unite us. Thank you for sending Your Spirit to guide us. Help us to love You and to love others during this season and always as we wait for Jesus to return. In Your Holy name we pray, amen.







God is spirit, and  
those who worship  
Him must worship in  
Spirit and in truth.

John 4:24  
csb



# Paradox of Hope

December 25 – Christmas Day

The word hope can be summed up in Scripture as trustful expectation, not based on the things of the world, but in the hope of the world, Christ Jesus Himself.

As we settle our souls to gaze upon the greatest gift of all today, may we be reminded that hope Himself died to give us salvation, redemption, and a new family. May we wait on the Lord with great expectancy and wonder as we hold tight to the promise of King Jesus. It's a paradox, the hope we hold on to in a world that seems so hopeless. It's a signpost for the loving-kindness of God the Father. Even when all seems lost, on a holy night, a baby was sent as the Savior of the world.

**"Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger." Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!"**

**Luke 2:11-14 esb**

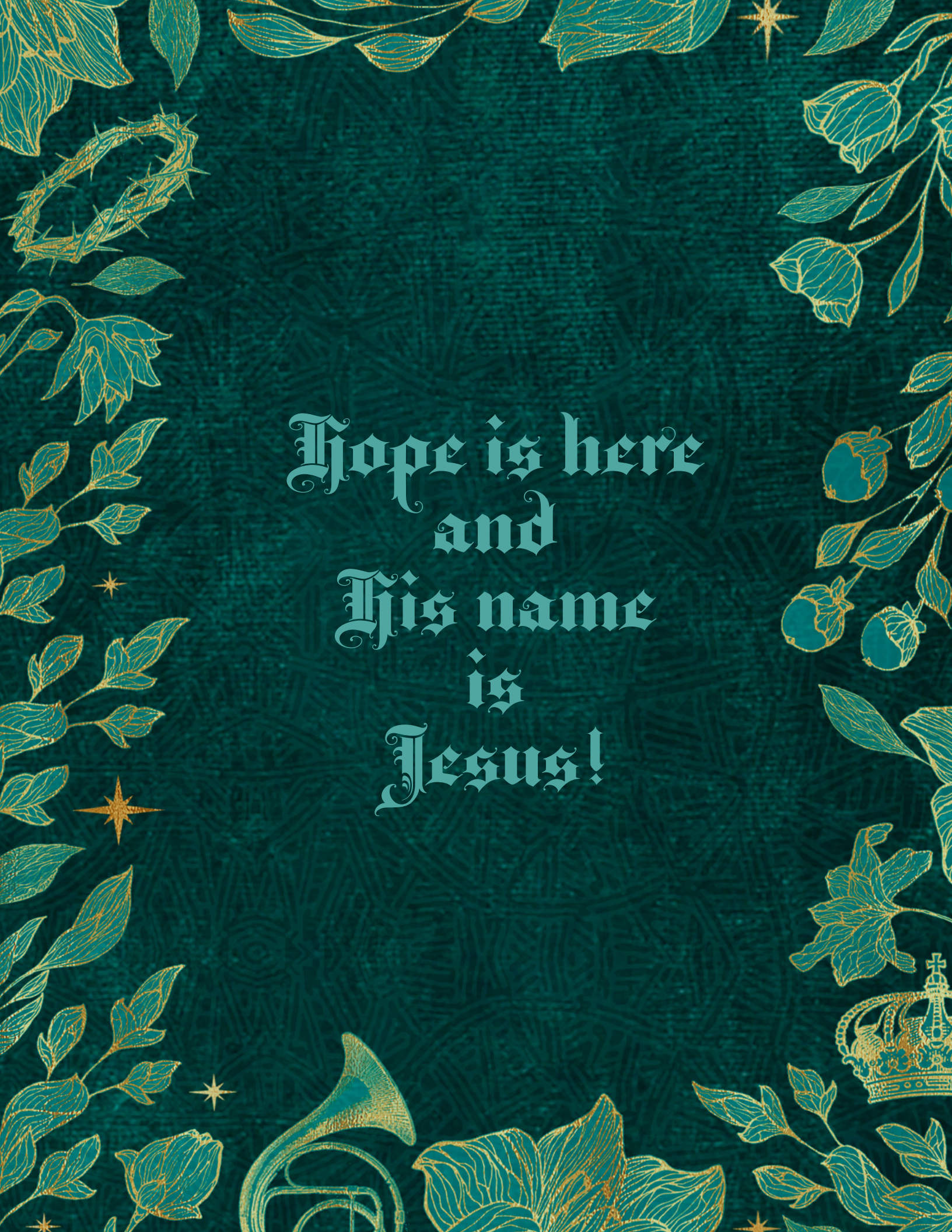
Hope made a way for us to know Him and be known by Him. Slowing down and gazing upwards reminds our hearts and minds that our faith is not in the seen but the unseen. Hope that brings about a new multiethnic family, inviting us to be hope dealers and wounded healers, what a paradox that is. To know hope even in our hurt.

May we love like hope has met us. May we tell about hope, because it has reconciled us. May we rejoice about hope because it is ours to have. May we have eyes to see hope Himself, in the things of the world that seem hopeless. May we go from doubting to trustful expectation because Emmanuel, God with us, is with us today.





Hope is here  
and  
His name  
is  
Jesus!





# Kids Advent CALENDAR

In this calendar you will learn the story of Jesus from the Old Testament leading up to His birth. The story of Scripture has always been the story of Jesus coming to save us. Journey with us through these Bible verses each day as we look forward to the birth of our Savior.

1.

Luke  
1:28, 30-31



2.

Isaiah  
7:14



3.

Isaiah  
9:6



4.

Genesis  
12:3



5.

John  
3:16



6.

John  
1:14



7.

John  
1:3



8.

John  
14:6



9.

1 Timothy  
2:5-6



10.

Hebrews  
4:14-15



11.

John  
8:12



12.

John  
6:35



13.

John  
4:13-14



14.

John  
15:5



15.

Galatians  
5:22



16.

John  
10:11



17.

John  
10:27-30



18.

Luke  
3:21-22



19.

John  
1:29



20.

John  
10:10



21.

Revelation  
15:3



22.

Psalms  
150:1-2



23.

Matthew  
2:1-2



24.

Matthew  
2:9-11



25.

Luke  
1:10-11

