



Daughters  
of  
Light

An Advent Study

Heart of Mary Women's Fellowship

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# About This Study

Heart of Mary Women's Fellowship is filled with JOY to bring you this bible study for the Advent 2015 season.

*We hope that you'll dive in, grow in the Lord, and share with others what beauty God reveals to you through it. If you are doing this study independently, know that we at HOM are here for you & that you also have a LARGE community of women through our website and social media that are participating too! You are truly never alone!*

*If you are completing this study in a group setting - we are excited that you have found a local community to grow with, on top of our online sisterhood. Please use this study journal for your reference, resource, and more during your meetings and the personal time leading up to it.*

*Looking for a group? Please visit [www.heartofmarywf.com/groups](http://www.heartofmarywf.com/groups) to find a meet up near you.*

*Are you already in one but not listed on our website? Looking to start one? Please contact us for more information about our "HOM Ambassador" program. We have team members available specifically to help you grow a local group and lead other women through community, prayer, and devotion. Their support is available at all times. We also want to help you grow! We will advertise your group on our website & social media! And we have free resources for you as well. Please email us at [heartofmarywf@aol.com](mailto:heartofmarywf@aol.com)*

*Note: All written content has been reviewed by a Catholic spiritual director to cross check that all statements are align with the teachings and tenants of the Roman Catholic Church.*

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# Daughters of Light

Day 7 // Preparing for Christmas



Today's Scripture

Luke 3: 4-6

Matthew 25: 1-13

For all those that know me personally, and not just through the social media beat, they would know that the time from Thanksgiving to the Epiphany is my favorite time of year. The decorating, the baking cookies and pumpkin pies, the family time that is spent together, the atmosphere changes in that time to hustle and bustle to cherishing and making memories. Obviously, to one degree or another, this time of the year is a favorite for many people. But for me, the underlying thing that is my favorite is Advent-the preparation for the birth of our Lord.

Advent means coming, and during Advent we prepare for his coming. We aren't just preparing our homes, but we are preparing our hearts and our minds. But many times as we prepare for Christmas, we get caught up in the Christmas hype and Advent gets lost in the holiday craze. As Christmas arrives, we are burnt out from the present wrapping, the cookie baking, home decorating, and party going. So our preparing for Christmas day, was merely superficial and didn't prepare us for anything besides the parties and gifts, not the actual reason for the season.

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**Prepare for Him.**

Just take a step back and think about it, when we prepare for something; you take the time, you get yourself ready, you do whatever is necessary to anticipate the event. Then the event that you prepared for happens, but whatever you prepared for helped mold you and prepare you for the future. You may have made mistakes but you learned from them, you may have succeeded immensely but that time that you spent preparing taught you how to be here.

As we are preparing, we are called to be in the here and now, so that when Christmas is over, we don't just shut off what we were preparing for. Ultimately, our preparing is preparing us for something more. You see this preparation



is not just preparing us for these four weeks of Advent, but this preparation is preparing us for when the Lord is born into the hearts of the faithful on a daily basis outside of Advent.

So I challenge you today, take this Advent by storm and challenge yourself to be prepared for Him.

- Elizabeth Imms

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*my favorite verse*














# Daughters of *Light*

## Day 8// Preparing our Homes

Today's Scripture

Malachi 3: 1-6

It's funny to read the introduction to my last post and then to introduce this post; it seems very contradicting. Growing up, in an effort to help us prepare for Christmas and to fully embrace the Advent season we didn't decorate until days before Christmas. We didn't get our tree until the 20th (sometimes later), and didn't decorate it until the 22nd or 23rd. Sure we bought gifts, we wrapped them, but decorating our house, putting the nativity up all waited until days before Christmas day in order to help us keep our heads in an Advent mindset.

I have to say I am so grateful for this mindset, and as I have gotten older and have started to raise my own family it has allowed me to implement some of this into my own family.

I think one of the hardest things about Advent is how we prepare our homes for Advent. It is hard to see the connection between Advent and our homes. But in this I don't just mean the walls that hold up the building that shelters us, but I meant the home of your family, the home of your community, the home of your friendships.

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**Mary had to flip her whole life around to welcome Jesus into her life and into her home.**

As women, we are nurturers, we are the cleaners, we are the caretakers. As I have grown older and as each Advent rolls around I try to focus on Mary and her time carrying our dear Lord and how she prepared to welcome Him into her home, her life, her friendships, her everything. After all, that is what a home is, isn't it, our lives?

Mary had to flip her whole life around to welcome Jesus into her life and into her home. She definitely wasn't planning to get pregnant out of wedlock and



raise the Savior of the world, yet she very willingly said, "yes."

You see her yes allowed her to prepare for her Son to be born. Her yes allowed her to prepare her home. How are we preparing to welcome the Lord into our homes? Into our friendships? Into our relationships? Are we all getting caught up with the decorating, the gift wrapping and the cookie decorating? Are we caught up in the holiday craze that our yes will only last to Christmas day?

Our "yes" has to be more than a yes just for the advent season. But a yes for everything we do. When we say "yes" this Advent season, 'yes' to allowing the Lord to grow in us this Advent season as we prepare to welcome him. Just as Mary said Yes, we are called to let the Lord grow in our homes, in our friendships and relationships, and our lives. We need to allow him to grow in us and prepare that space in our lives for his coming.

So are your homes ready for the Lord? Or are they completely taken over by the holiday craze. Don't get me wrong, I am one of the first people to decorate my homes and start preparing for Christmas in October-but Christmas is more than the gifts and Christmas lights. I fully intend this Christmas season to let the Lord grow in my home, in my relationship with my husband and children, and in my friendships so that my home is ready for the birth of Christ.

- Elizabeth Imms

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# Daughters of Light

## Day 9 // Preparing our Hearts

Today's Scripture

Matthew 3: 1-12

4: 17

Isaiah 30: 15

So yesterday may have left you with a little questioning of how else we can prepare for the birth of our Lord, and how we can fully 'prepare' during Advent. Week two is about preparation, but I think the major part of Advent is ensuring that we prepare our hearts for the birth of our Lord so that we can fully welcome Him into our homes and our hearts.

How are we supposed to fully prepare for the birth of our Lord if we aren't willing to give ourselves fully to him, if we aren't willing to open ourselves up fully and wait in hope for the Lord. How are we supposed to prepare for him to come, if we are only willing to give 50%?

If we aren't willing to welcome in the Lord to our heart, then how can we open up our homes and welcome Him into our relationships, friendships or our lives? We can't- so our preparing would be all for none then. Advent is the beginning of the Church's liturgical year, we aren't just preparing for the birth of Christ, but it is preparation for the whole year.

As we look to the Gospel of Matthew, we hear John the Baptist call us to repentance and preparation. He is calling us to be prepared and aware as we invite Christ into our hearts, but not only as we wait for His birth, but as we await the final judgement as well.

Repentance- not a word we often see during Advent. It is not a repentant season like Lent is. This season is a preparation and waiting in hope season. But in order to prepare for something, we often need to repent in order to have a clean slate.



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**“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”**

How can we be ready and prepared when we haven't cleaned ourselves up? Think about it, when you are preparing for a party in your home, you don't just start preparing all of the food before cleaning the house, do you? Usually we clean up and put everything away before we start *preparing* the food. But it is **all** part of preparation.

**How are we supposed to prepare for Him to come if we are only willing to give 50%?**

**“This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.”**

- Elizabeth Imms

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# Daughters of Light

## Day 10 // The Light in the Darkness

Today's Scripture

Matthew 4: 16

John 1: 5

1 John 1: 7

Growing up in Southern California, I don't quite remember Daylight Savings Time affecting me as much as it does here in Pennsylvania. When Daylight Savings Time is coming closer a few things happen- the days start becoming shorter, the leaves start to fall, and it gets colder. I never really knew the meaning of 'the four seasons' because for the most part it was beautiful and warm 95% of the time, and that other 5% everyone was miserable. But, I now experience Autumn or Fall. A beautiful season, and dare I say one of my absolute favorites! The trees begin to change to vibrant bold colors and then shed their leaves as winter approaches with each day.

This time of year, beautifully corresponds with Advent as well. The thing I want you to focus on though is not the trees changing colors and losing their leaves, but I want you to keep in mind Daylight Savings Time. As the days get darker, we wait anxiously for the light.

In Advent, the darker days send us searching for the Light.

**"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."**

**"And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness does not overcome it."**

You see our preparation, is for the Light of the World. The preparation we do then leads us to the light, which is Christ which then allows us to bring that light to our homes as well.



**But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from all sin.**

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**As the days get darker, we wait anxiously for the light.**

During this season it is so easy to lose track of the light we are preparing and waiting in hope for. It is easy for us to get caught up in the holiday craze, the decorating, the gift buying and wrapping, and the baking. But Advent is such an important season of our faith for us to really embrace and prepare for the year of our Catholic faith.

So are you ready to prepare for the light? Are you ready to let the Light of Christ shine through you?

Even though our days are getting shorter, and the light in the sky is very limited, don't let that damper your days, but let it serve as a reminder that the Light of Christ is coming and it is our chance and time to prepare for that Light.

- Elizabeth Imms

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Today's Scripture

Psalm 119: 105

Isaiah 40: 1-5

Malachi 3: 1-6

I have said it in a previous post, but I am going to say it again - I love when we see foreshadowing in the Bible and in our faith. It truly is God's little ways that give us hope for the future as if he is giving us blueprints to follow.

When we are talking about preparation during Advent, preparing our hearts, preparing our homes and the Light that we are preparing for- we are not just talking about preparing for Christ's coming at Christmas. We are also preparing our hearts, homes, and lives for the Lord's second coming.

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## Will I be ready for His second coming?

**“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.”**

And as we read the Old Testament there are many times that we are called to prepare for the Lord, before He was in the picture. But God was trying to prepare His people's hearts and homes for the coming of his Son. It is also a call unto us, to prepare our hearts and homes this Christmas to welcome the Lord in, but to also prepare our hearts and homes for his second coming as well. To make sure that we are always ready and vigilant for the Lord.

**“A voice proclaims:**

**In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD!**

**Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!**

**Every valley shall be lifted up, every mountain and hill made low;**

**The rugged land shall be a plain, the rough country, a broad valley.**



**Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."**

We need to move all of the mountains in our life and get out of the valleys so that we can see the glory and Light of the Lord when he comes at Christmas. So start digging to fill up those valleys, and start climbing to lower those mountains.

**"Now I am sending my messenger — he will prepare the way before me;  
And the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple;  
The messenger of the covenant whom you desire — see, he is coming! says the LORD of hosts.  
But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand firm when he appears?  
For he will be like a refiner's fire, like fullers' lye."**

So I leave you with this verse from Malachi, I love it because it serves as a reminder for me that I need to be refined for the Lord and by the Lord for his coming. Because if I fail to prepare my heart and home for the Lord will I be able to endure His coming? Will I be ready for His second coming then?

- Elizabeth Imms

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# *study questions:*

**Q: What can you do to refine yourself during this Advent season?**

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**Q: Have you done everything you can to be prepared not just for the birth of our Lord, but for the days leading up to His second coming? Or when He comes, are you going to be left unprepared? Why or why not? What should you/could you be doing differently?**

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# Daughters of Light

## Day 12// Prepare Him Room

Photo by Cailin Valente

Today's Scripture

Psalm 27: 13-14

119: 105

James 5: 7-8

Proverbs 3: 5-6

**“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.”**

Waiting is inevitable in our lives. We wait for the mailman to come, we wait for dinner to finish cooking, we wait in traffic, or we are waiting at the doctor's office. We are constantly waiting for something in our lives. Advent is another period in our lives where we are waiting, and week two specifically calls us on to prepare for the coming of our Lord. But instead of being impatient and annoyed that it is just another part of our lives that we have to wait - we should be waiting in joyful anticipation or joyful hope.

Goodness gracious! As said before this isn't a season where we are called to consistently repent as we are in Lent. But, we should be calling ourselves on to wait in joyful hope.

I recently just had our second child, Sebastian. You spend nine months anticipating the arrival of the baby, scared of the pain that can come with delivery and excited to see all of the unique features of this human being. Growing up, I knew I wanted children, so these two times I have been pregnant, have been such a blessing. They have been long awaited- and the outcome I have received from them has been more than worth the wait.

When we are asked to wait for something, usually the longer we have to wait the greater the outcome. Think about it, as scary as the second coming of the Lord can be, think about how amazing that is going to be?! Reunited with those that we love, finally being with Jesus, the saints and his mama Mary? The long wait will be well worth it.

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**Have you prepared  
room for Him yet?**



So even before Jesus in the times of B.C. those people never got to meet Christ, but they waited with the promise of forever and the promise of the Light. They prepared for his coming and accepted what the Lord gave them.

**"I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!"**

**"Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand."**

See, make room in your hearts- establish a firm foundation and prepare him room for he is coming.

Just as you may be preparing for houseguests, make sure that you have prepared for the ultimate houseguest. Have you prepared him room yet?

- Elizabeth Imms

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