

THE PROMISED KING

A Family Advent Journey



RIVERSTONE



Welcome to

THE PROMISED KING:

A Family Advent Journey

We're so glad you're holding this devotional in your hands. It is our Christmas gift to you from Riverstone Church—a community of people learning, day by day, how to trust Jesus, love one another, and live out the hope of the gospel. If you'd like to learn more about us, visit cometotheriver.org.

At Riverstone Church, our mission is simple: to help more people find and follow Jesus. We believe Jesus changes lives, brings hope into dark places, heals what's broken, and leads us into a joy that nothing in this world can shake.



Christmas is the perfect time to remember that the story of Jesus didn't begin in a manger. It began long before, in the promises God made through the prophets, the whispers of hope spoken through Scripture, and the longing of God's people for a Savior who would come to rescue them.

This devotional invites you and your family to slow down, take a breath, and enter into that story together. For twelve days, from December 15th to December 26th, you'll read about God's promises in the Old Testament and how each one points to Jesus. You'll imagine scenes, talk together as a family, and end each day with a simple prayer. Whether you've known Jesus for many years, or you're just beginning to explore who He is, our prayer is the same: **that you would experience the wonder of Christmas in a fresh and meaningful way.**



Christmas is more than lights, gifts, and traditions. It is the announcement that God has come near, that He stepped into our world, took on our humanity, and brought salvation with Him. It is the reminder that we are never forgotten, never alone, and always loved.

So as you open these pages, may you feel the hope, joy, and peace that only Jesus brings. May your home be filled with light.

And may your heart be filled with wonder again—the wonder that the Promised King has come, and He invites us to follow Him.

Merry Christmas from Riverstone Church.
We're grateful to walk this journey with you!



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THE PROMISED KING

December 15:

THE FIRST PROMISE OF HOPE

READ:

Genesis 3:15

*“He will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine hearing that even
though you messed up badly,
someone would come
one day to fix everything
that went wrong.



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REFLECT:

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, it looked like the end of their story — sin had entered the world.

But right there, in the middle of failure, God spoke a promise: a child would be born who would defeat evil forever. That's the very first hint of Jesus — the One who would be hurt but would win in the end. Whether you've known this story for years or are hearing it for the first time, this promise shows us who God really is: He doesn't give up on His people.



TALK:

God's story begins with hope.
How does it make you feel
to know that Jesus was part of
God's plan from the very start?

PRAY:

*Thank You, God, for loving us even
when we mess up. Thank You for
sending Jesus to rescue us. Help us
remember that You always keep
Your promises. Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 16:

A BLESSING FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

READ:

Genesis 12:2–3

*“All peoples on earth will
be blessed through you.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine being told that
through your family,
the whole world
would be blessed.



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REFLECT:

God made a big promise to Abraham—not just about land or family, but about blessing the entire world. How? Through Abraham’s descendant, Jesus. The good news about Jesus is meant for everyone, no matter where they live or what they’ve done. For families, this means God’s love isn’t just something we keep to ourselves—it’s something we share. Even kids can be part of God’s big blessing plan when they show kindness or tell others about Jesus.

TALK:

What's one way we could be a blessing to someone this week—maybe a neighbor, classmate, or friend?

PRAY:

Lord, thank You for blessing us so we can bless others. Help our family show Your love in our home and beyond. Amen.



THE PROMISED KING

December 17:

THE TRUE KING
WILL COME

READ:

2 Samuel 7:12–13

“When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

IMAGINE:

Imagine being told that one of your children would grow up to be a king whose kingdom would never end.



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REFLECT:

God promised King David that one of his descendants would rule forever. For hundreds of years, Israel waited and wondered who this forever-king would be. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, that promise came true — He was the King who would reign not just in Israel, but in every heart that welcomes Him. For new believers, this reminds us that Jesus is more than a good teacher — He's the true King. For families, it's an invitation to let Him be King of our homes, our choices, and our hearts.



TALK:

What do you think it means
to make Jesus the King
of our family?

PRAY:

*Jesus, You are the
true King forever.
Help us follow You
in our home, at school,
and everywhere we go.
Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 18:

THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

READ:

Isaiah 9:2, 6

*“The people walking in
darkness have seen a great light...
For to us a child is born.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine being lost in
the dark and suddenly,
a bright light shines
to show the way home.



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REFLECT:

Isaiah told God's people that a Child would be born who would bring light to a dark world.

That light is Jesus, who shines hope into our fears and sadness.

For anyone new to faith, this means that even when life feels confusing, Jesus can guide you. For families, it's a reminder that we can reflect His light by loving each other well—kindness, forgiveness, and patience make the world brighter.



TALK:

Where do we see “light”
in our home? How can we
share Jesus’ light with
others this week?

PRAY:

*Thank You, God, for loving us
even when we mess up.*

*Thank You for sending
Jesus to rescue us.*

*Help us remember that You
always keep Your promises.*

Amen.



THE PROMISED KING

December 19:

THE BRANCH FROM JESSE'S TREE

READ:

Isaiah 11:1–2

*“A shoot will come up from
the stump of Jesse;
from his roots
a Branch will bear fruit.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine looking at
a dead tree stump, and suddenly,
seeing a green shoot pushing
through the wood.



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REFLECT:

God's people had lost hope!

Their kingdom had fallen,

and they wondered if

God's plan was over.

**But Isaiah said life would
grow again from David's family.**

A new King filled with

God's Spirit would rise.

**Jesus is that Branch,
full of wisdom and life.**

**When things feel broken,
Jesus brings growth again.**

**Families can take comfort
knowing that God can make
new life come from hard places.**

TALK:

Where have we seen
God bring something good
out of something hard?

PRAY:

*Lord, thank You that You
bring new life where
we least expect it.
Help us trust that
You are always
working for good.
Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 20:

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

READ:

Ezekiel 34:23

*“I will place over them
one shepherd... my servant David,
and he will tend them.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine someone
who knows every
sheep by name—
and goes looking
when one gets lost.



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REFLECT:

God promised to send a Shepherd who would love and care for His people. Jesus called Himself that Good Shepherd—the One who lays down His life for His sheep. Whether you're new to faith or have followed Jesus for years, this truth brings comfort: you are known, loved, and safe in His care. Families can rest in this too—God doesn't forget anyone in His flock.



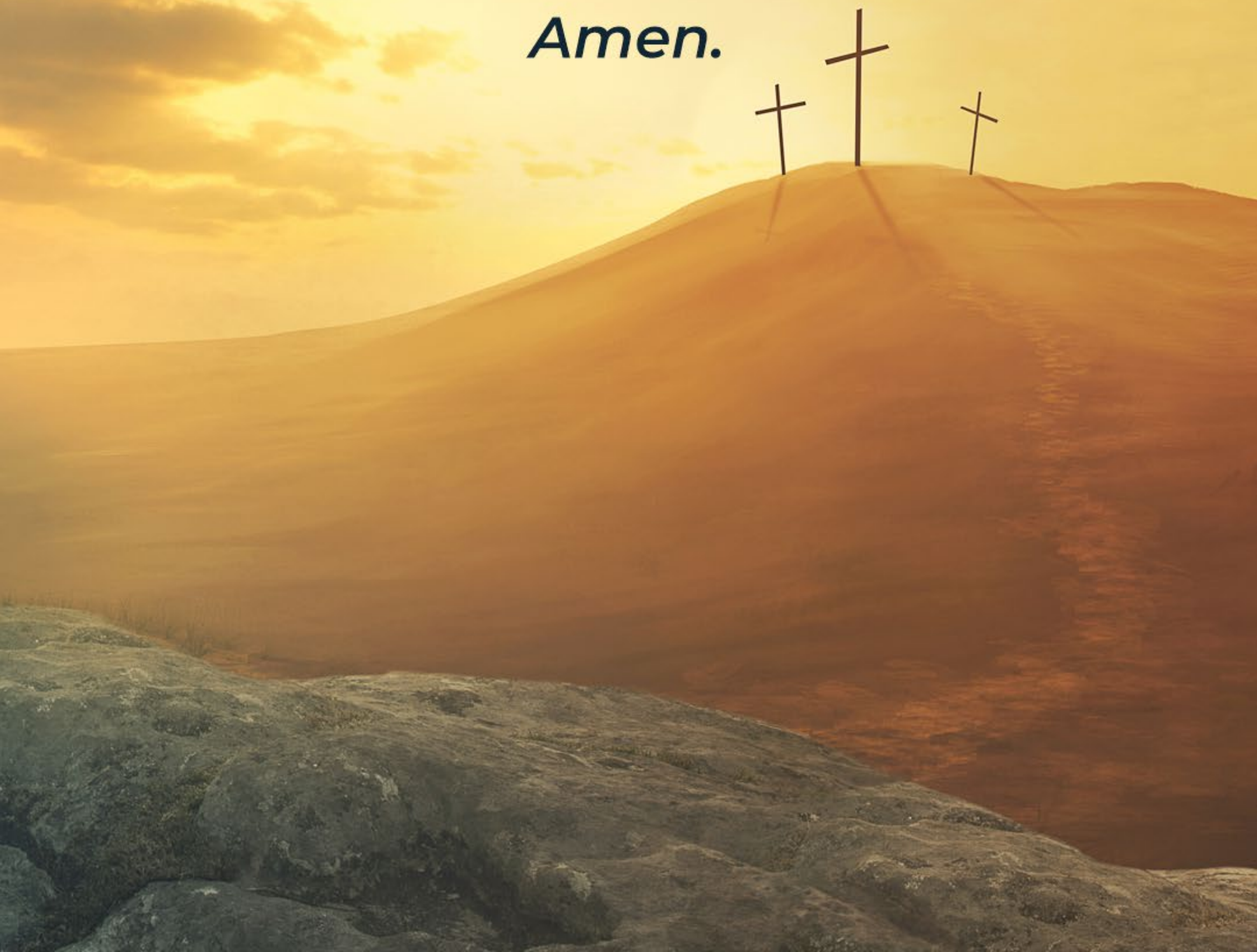
TALK:

How can we remind
each other this week
that Jesus cares for us?

PRAY:

*Jesus, thank You for
being our Good Shepherd.
Help us listen for Your voice and
follow wherever You lead.*

Amen.



THE PROMISED KING

December 21:

THE PROMISE OF PEACE

READ:

Micah 5:2, 4–5

*“But you, Bethlehem...
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel...
and he will be our peace.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine living in a small,
ordinary town and hearing that
something world-changing would
happen right where you live.



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REFLECT:

Micah told God's people that a great ruler would come from tiny Bethlehem. Everyone expected power to come from big cities or mighty armies. But God chose some place small and quiet.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, that prophecy came true. He didn't come to bring war or wealth, but peace. Families can take comfort that God often does His biggest work in the most ordinary places, even around our own kitchen tables.



TALK:

How can we be
peacemakers like Jesus,
at home, school, or work?

PRAY:

*Jesus, thank You for bringing peace
where there's fighting or fear. Help
our family be peacemakers who
point others to You. Amen.*

THE PROMISED KING

December 22:

A MESSENGER PREPARES THE WAY

READ:

Malachi 3:1

*“I will send my messenger,
who will prepare
the way before me.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine you're about to meet a king
and someone goes ahead to get
everything ready for his arrival.



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REFLECT:

Before Jesus began His ministry,
God sent John the Baptist
to prepare the way.

John told people to turn from sin
and get ready for the Savior.

God still prepares hearts today,
sometimes through family
conversations, worship, or even
quiet moments of reflection.

If you're new to faith,
this is your invitation to make
room for Jesus in your heart.
If you've followed Him for years,
it's a reminder to clear away
distractions and focus
on Him again.

TALK:

What can we “make room” for
in our hearts this Christmas—
and what might we need
to clear away?

PRAY:

*Lord, prepare our hearts for You.
Help us listen, repent, and be ready
to follow wherever You lead.
Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 23:

THE PROMISE OF GOD WITH US

READ:

Isaiah 7:14

*“The virgin will conceive
and give birth to a son,
and will call him Immanuel.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine hearing that
God Himself was coming
to live right among His people.



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REFLECT:

Isaiah's prophecy is one of the most beautiful in all of Scripture. "Immanuel" means God with us. Jesus' birth shows us that God doesn't stay far away. He's not distant. He comes close, steps into our world, and walks with us through various seasons of life. For families, this means Jesus is with us in every moment: when we laugh, when we argue, when we pray. For those exploring faith, this is the heart of Christmas: God came near, not to judge, but to save.



TALK:

Where do we see
“God with us” in our
home or community?

PRAY:

*Immanuel, thank You for
coming close to us.
Help us notice Your presence
in our lives each day.
Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 24:

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE

READ:

Luke 2:25–32

*“My eyes have seen
your salvation...
a light for revelation
to the Gentiles.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine waiting your
whole life for something
and finally seeing it come true.



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REFLECT:

Simeon waited faithfully
for the day God's
promise would arrive.

When he finally saw
baby Jesus in the temple,
he knew this was The One,
the light for the whole world.

Advent teaches us to
wait with hope, even when
God's timing feels slow.
For families, this night is
a reminder that waiting
is part of faith. Whether you're
waiting for an answer,
a healing, or a fresh start,
Jesus is always worth the wait.



TALK:

What's something our family
is waiting for right now?
How can we trust God
as we wait?

PRAY:

*Lord, teach us to wait
with hope like Simeon did.
We know You always
keep Your promises.
Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 25:

THE PROMISED KING IS BORN!

READ:

Luke 2:10–11

*“I bring you good news that will
cause great joy for all the people.*

*Today in the town of David
a Savior has been born to you;
he is the Messiah, the Lord.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine being a shepherd
in the quiet night and
suddenly seeing angels lighting up
the sky with good news!



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REFLECT:

The waiting is over.

The promise has come!

Jesus—the Savior, Messiah,
and Lord—is born.

God's rescue plan is no longer
a whisper of prophecy,
but a cry in a manger.

For kids, this is the moment
to celebrate that God's Son
came for you. For parents,
it's a reminder that the
heart of Christmas isn't the gifts,
but the Giver. For seekers and
long-time believers alike,
this is our reason for joy:
God came down to save us.

TALK:

What's one way we can celebrate Jesus together today?

PRAY:

*Jesus, You are our greatest gift.
Thank You for coming to save us
and bring joy to the world.
We celebrate You today!
Amen.*



THE PROMISED KING

December 26:

FOLLOWING THE PROMISED KING

READ:

Matthew 2:1–2, 10–11

*“We saw his star when it rose
and have come to worship him...
They bowed down
and worshiped him.”*

IMAGINE:

Imagine seeing a bright star in
the sky—and deciding to follow it,
no matter how far it leads.



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REFLECT:

The wise men saw the sign and went searching for Jesus. They didn't know where it would take them, but they followed the light until they found the King. That's what it means to be a Christian—to keep following Jesus, step by step, day by day. Whether you've believed for a long time or are just beginning, you're invited to keep going on this journey. For families, it's a chance to say together, "We want to follow Jesus this year—as a family, in faith, and in love."

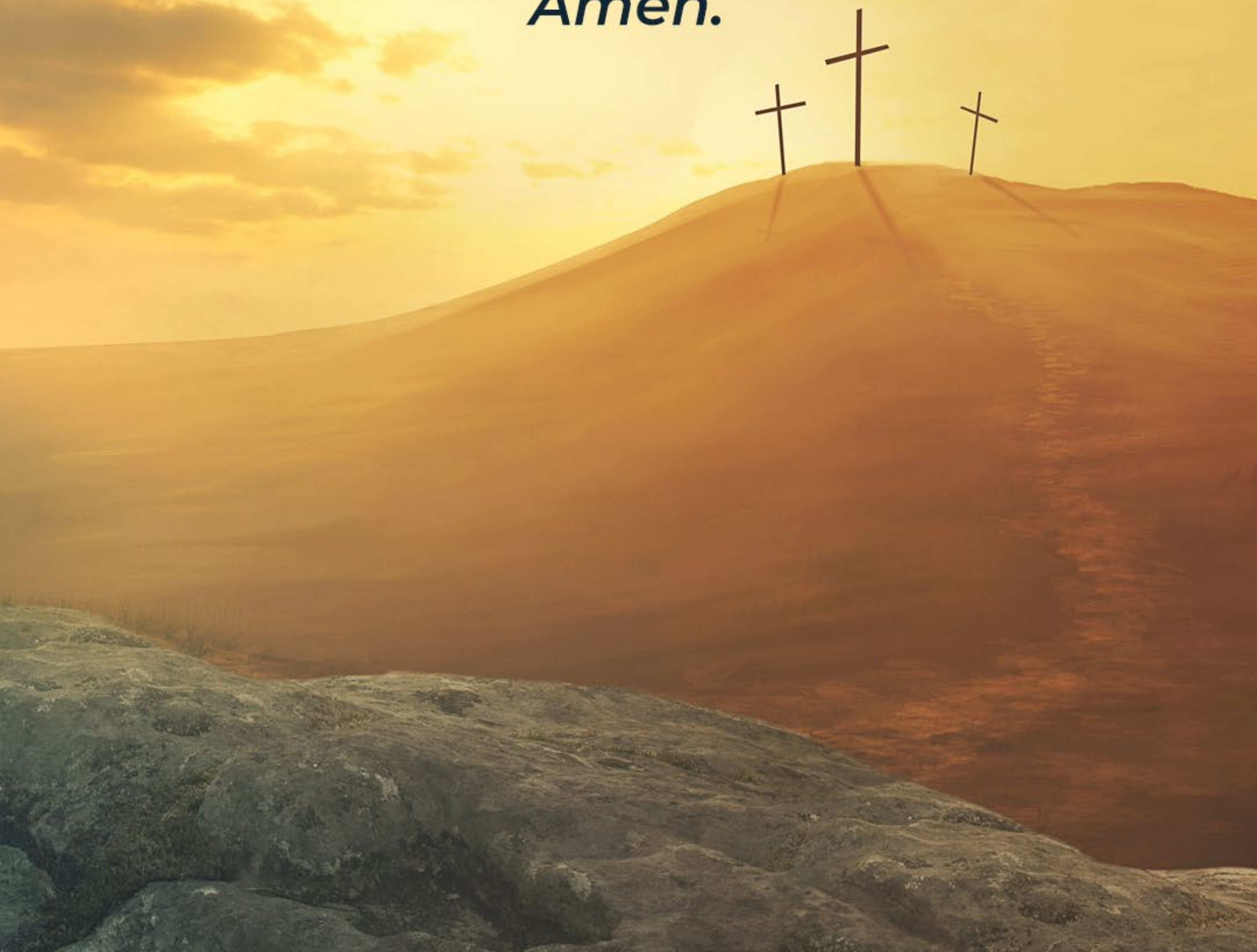


TALK:

What's one way our family
can follow Jesus together
in the new year?

PRAY:

*Jesus, You are our King.
Like the wise men, we want to
seek You, worship You, and
follow You wherever You lead.
Help us live for You in all we do.
Amen.*





*Merry
Christmas
from*



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