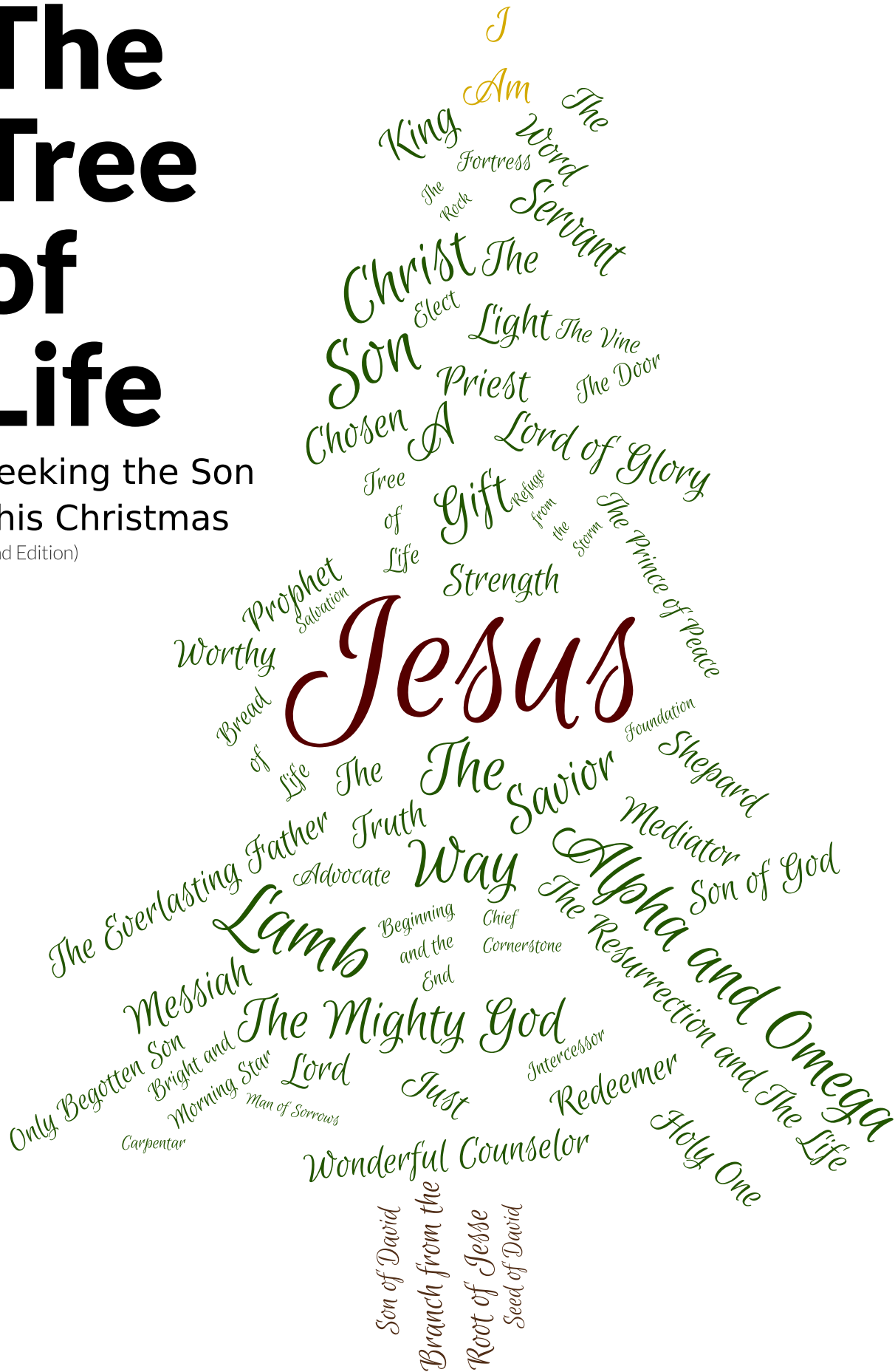


# The Tree of Life

Seeking the Son  
This Christmas  
(2nd Edition)



# Introduction

Jesus is the reason for the season.

How many times have we heard these words yet lost Jesus in the busyness of Christmastime? Shopping, parties, preparation, and even family gatherings can begin to crowd the Son out of His own birthday celebration.

The other aspects of the holiday season are not all bad. We personally love Christmastime and the joyful celebrations it brings. And the Jews of old were in fact commanded by God Himself to keep many feasts to remember God and what He had done for them. So we don't think God hates parties, or good food either.

So in the middle of our feasts and celebrating, let's remember God and what He has done for us, the reason we say we are celebrating. Let's not lose sight of the Tree of Life amidst all of the other holiday decorations. Let's not omit the Bread of Life from our holiday dinners. Let's not forget The Way when we are traveling to relative homes or The Door when entering friends houses. (See John 6:35; 10:9; 14:6; 15:5.)

When we intentionally seek the Son, we begin to see Him everywhere. God can see our desire to grow closer to Him and will reveal Himself to us throughout history and creation.

*The Tree of Life: Seeking the Son This Christmas* is designed to be a tool to help us draw close to Christ this Christmas. This Jesse Tree style book is designed to trace the roots of Christ through the history of the Bible and explains how we are each supposed to live as branches of the Vine, intimately attached to the Tree of Life, our life source. (See John 15:4-5.)

Each day this December, we will learn a little more about this great Tree of Life through a series of important biblical tales about amazing things God has done and mighty men and women of God. Each tale has a symbol to go along with it to help us better remember these important history lessons.

## How to Use This Book

This book is divided into thirty-one sections each with a scripture reading, thoughts on how the reading relates to Christ, discussion questions, and suggested hymns and activities. We tried to include a variety of levels for the questions and activities so that this book would be applicable for a wide range of ages. A manger is used to indicate easier questions and activities and a crown is used to indicate harder ones. We designed each section to be for an individual day, but, of course, you can go as fast or slow as you like.

We have also included scripture references throughout our thoughts on each reading, so you can look at a topic more in depth if you choose.

Also, you can use as much or as little of the book as you want, whatever draws your heart toward God. And if all you use is the scripture references as a jumping off point to read out

of your own Bible and have your own reflection or discussion that is great too. After all, only the Word is infallible, and we are far from it.

Thank you for taking time to read these words and for seeking the Son this Christmas season.

## Printable Resources

We have also created a variety of printable resources to go along with this short book. You can use these to supplement the readings and other activities if you like.

- **Ornaments to accompany each day's reading:**  
Each ornament is original artwork created especially for this book. A symbol to remember these important historical tales and how they relate directly to Jesus. Perhaps you would like to hang each day's symbol up as a decoration and reminder of this amazing journey from creation to Bethlehem and beyond. An evergreen tree is often used as a picture of the tree of life at Christmastime. When all looks dead around it the evergreen tree is still green and lively, pointing up to heaven as a reminder to look to our creator and redeemer. Perhaps you wish to hang these symbols on a traditional evergreen Christmas tree, or a pot of sticks, a cut out paper tree, a garland, or even just a refrigerator. Or perhaps you will just read God's words and ponder all these things in your heart as Mary did. (Luke 2:19)
- **Texture rich coloring page ornaments:**  
Let your child create their very own set of keepsake ornaments by coloring each day's symbols for themselves. Older children can write or trace the verse or reference on the back of the ornament as well if desired. Perhaps, especially for very young children, you want to forgo the other activities and just allow them to color an ornament each day while you read.
- **Decorative printables:**  
These are designed to remind us of the Son this Christmas. You can print these out and display them around your house if you wish.
- **Holiday cards:**  
The half page printables can also be used as holiday cards.

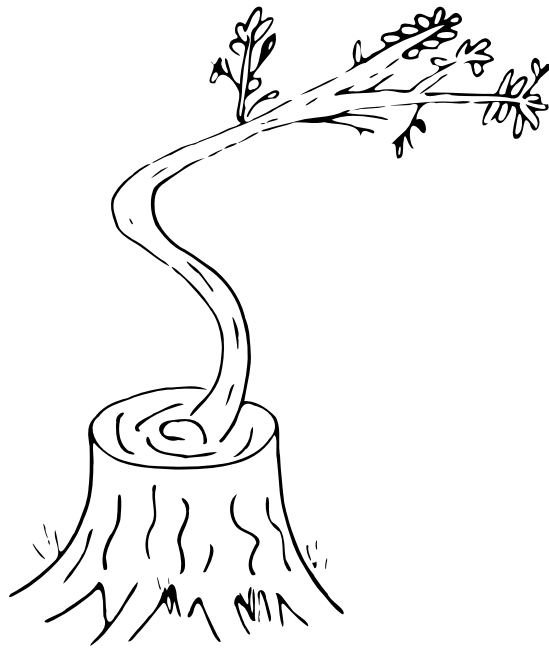
However you choose to use this book, we hope it will help you draw close to the Tree of Life this holiday season.

# Day 1

## Tree of Jesse

### Isaiah 11:1–2

<sup>1</sup>And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: <sup>2</sup>And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.



**A** new life springing forth from something dead. A Tree of Life for all who wish to receive. What a glorious, heavenly mystery.

Shortly after God created the first man and woman, they sinned by eating from the forbidden tree, and death entered into the world. Since we are all descendents of Adam and Eve, we are all cursed with this same curse: death.

But before the world began, God knew people would sin, and He had a plan to save them with a Tree of Life. Jesus Christ is that Tree of Life, the true vine. In John 15:5, Jesus says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” Out of His death on a tree, all who believe in Him can have life eternal with Him in heaven. Apart from Him, there is only death.

Out of the root of Jesse, Christ came. The first verse of Matthew’s gospel recounts the lineage of Christ: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” David is the son of Jesse and is often described as a man after God’s own heart.

Jesus is the Branch of Jesse’s stem prophesied by Isaiah. Jesus is both true God and true man and is wonderfully present all throughout history. From the very beginning of creation, we can trace the roots of Christ. Throughout all of history, we can learn about great men of God, including those in Christ’s earthly line. By tracing the roots of Christ through the Old Testament, our hearts can become more like God’s heart this Christmas season.

Through these historical tales we will also find truths about how we are to live, abiding in the Tree of Life and drawing sustenance from Him alone. (John 15:5)

While we are seeking the Son this season, may others see more of Him in us as well.

## Questions:



Who will spring forth through the roots of Jesse?



Why is it important to learn about our roots?

How can learning about our roots help shape our lives as we abide in the tree of life?

## Suggested Hymns:

The Old Rugged Cross (page 67)

Behold, a Branch is Growing (page 68)

## Suggested Activities:



Set up whatever you are choosing to use for your Jesse tree. Or simply draw a picture of a tree growing from old roots.



Call a beloved family member (or friend) and connect with your roots, sharing the love of God and of the season.

# Day 2

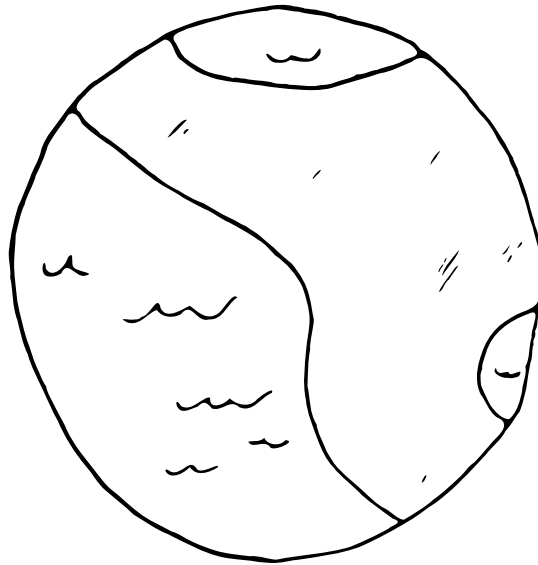
## The Word

### Genesis 1:1, 26–31

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

<sup>26</sup>And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. <sup>28</sup>And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

<sup>29</sup>And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. <sup>30</sup>And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. <sup>31</sup>And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.



**N**othing. Endless nothing, except for God who always was and always will be. Incomprehensible to us, both the nothingness and the infiniteness of God. And then for His ultimate glory, He created everything in six short days with just His Word.

The Apostle John tells us more about this amazing event in his gospel:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)

Jesus is the Word. Christ is God and present with God from before time began, and by this magnificent Word, God created. All things were made by the Word, and without Him nothing was made. From the very beginning of the time, Jesus is present and working. By Him everything was made in the universe including the garden of Eden, Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life.

God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are so far above our thoughts, they are sometimes incomprehensible to us. Yet before He created anything, He knew everything that ever would happen in the world.

He knew all of Jesus' ancestors, how the Word would be made flesh, His birth in a humble stable, and His death on a tree to save the world.

## Questions:



Who is the Word?

How has the Word been working since the beginning of time?



How can reading the Word impact your life?

How is the Word working in your life today?

## Suggested Hymns:

This is My Father's World (page 69)

Angels from the Realms of Glory (page 70)

## Suggested Activities:



Paint glass ornaments blue and green to look like a globe.

Learn John 3:16 or John 1:1-3 as a memory verse for the season.



Get out a globe, map, or Google Earth and pray over a specific part or all of the world that the Word created.