

Christmas Dinner Candlelight Reading and Conversation Starter

Reader 1: Is 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and the government shall rest upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called wonderful counselor, mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace.

Reader 2: Candle 1: The Promise (Wonderful Counselor)
John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Reader 3: Candle Two: The Plan (Mighty God)
Matt 1: 21-23 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, [1] because he will save his people from their sins."
22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" [2] --which means, "God with us."

Reader 4: Candle 3: The Proclamation: Everlasting Father
Luke 2: 10-14: But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

Reader 5: Candle 4: The Praise: Prince of Peace
Matt 2:1, 11: Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived ... After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and (4) worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Luke 1:37: And the angel said to Mary: "For nothing will be impossible with God."

Center Candle: (Host) Welcome to the Christmas table, let us pray: Light then pray for the meal.
Conversation over meal (choose one):

- (1) Which name of God have you seen most active in your life last year, or appreciate most about God in the last year: Wonderful counselor, prince of peace, ever lasting father, mighty God?
- (2) Which name of God will you cling to as you look toward the coming year?

EXTRA IDEA: Give a Christmas blessing. Honor each individual at your table by lighting a candle at your table, then saying a blessing and prayer over each person. A Blessing is just a statement of well wishes that speaks the truth in a kind and loving way to help a person reach their God given potential. You might decide to link the blessing to one of the names of God in Is 9:6. Example: Zach, this year we have seen God be the Prince of peace in your life. We are proud of you as we have watched you hang on to your faith through some tough circumstances, so now we pray ... (For more on blessing, see John Trent and Gary Smalley's book, *The Blessing*. For other creative ideas on helping children and teens catch a vision for their lives and reach their potential: *10 Best Decisions a Parent Can Make* (by the Farrels) and *Got Teens?* by Pam Farrel and Jill Savage.