COMMONPLACE · A FREE SERMON-PREP GUIDE

Advent with the Puritans

Four Advent Sundays and Christmas Eve, opened by the Puritans and the writers they read. Every quotation is tied to the page it came from, so nothing in your pulpit is made up.

WEEK 1	Isaiah 9:6–7 · A Child Born, a Son Given	*November 29*
WEEK 2	Galatians 4:4–5 · When the Fulness of the Time Was Come	*December 6*
WEEK 3	John 1:14 · The Word Was Made Flesh	*December 13*
WEEK 4	Luke 2:8–14 · Glory to God in the Highest	*December 20*
CHRISTMAS EVE	Matthew 1:21–23 · God with Us	*December 24*

Calvin · Henry · Flavel · Sibbes · Ryle

Prepared by Chase Davis · Advent 2026

BEFORE YOU START

Nothing in your pulpit made up

Brother pastor,

Most of us have been burned at least once. You ask an AI tool what Owen or Sibbes said on a text, and it hands back a confident quotation with a plausible book title, and when you go looking for the page it isn't there. Sometimes the book isn't there either. You can't preach that, and you shouldn't have to spend your Thursday proving a chatbot wrong.

So this guide makes one promise and keeps it: every quotation in these pages appears word for word in the edition named, at the volume and page cited. Each one was checked against a public-domain scan of that printed page, and the table at the back gives you a link to the page so you can check it yourself before Sunday.

HOW TO READ THE CITATIONS

- Quotes are reproduced as printed, old spelling and all ("Counsellor," "splendour"). Where words are left out, you'll see an ellipsis (…). Nothing inside quotation marks is paraphrased.
- Page numbers belong to the specific edition named, for example the Calvin Translation Society volumes (Edinburgh, 1845–54) or Grosart's Sibbes (Nichol, 1863). A different printing will have different pages.
- Calvin is quoted from the 19th-century Calvin Translation Society English translations by William Pringle. In the John volume, Pringle renders the Logos as "the Speech" rather than "the Word."
- Calvin, Henry and Ryle aren't Puritans in the strict sense. They're here because the Puritans read Calvin and Henry inherited their pulpit, and because Ryle carried that tradition into the nineteenth century.

WHAT THIS IS, AND WHAT IT ISN'T

This is research, not a sermon to read aloud. For each service you get a short framing, a handful of verified quotations, an outline that follows how these men actually worked the text, and some angles for application. The outlines and applications are my suggestions, drawn from their structure. Only the material inside quotation marks is theirs.

The four Sundays of Advent 2026 begin November 29, and Christmas Eve falls on a Thursday. The texts run from promise to fulfillment: Isaiah 9:6–7, Galatians 4:4–5, John 1:14 and Luke 2:8–14, and then Matthew 1:21–23 for Christmas Eve.

Chase Davis

Lead Pastor, The Well Church, Boulder · Commonplace

WEEK 1 · ISAIAH 9:6–7

A Child Born, a Son Given

Sunday, November 29, 2026

> *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end... The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (KJV)*

FRAMING

Isaiah 8 ends in "trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish," and chapter 9 opens with "Nevertheless." That word is the first Sunday of Advent. Your people walk in with their own darkness: a diagnosis, an empty chair at the table, the news. Isaiah doesn't deny it. He points past it to a Child.

Calvin and Henry both refuse to treat the four names as decoration. Calvin insists the names tell us what Christ will be toward believers, and he turns each one into comfort for a specific fear. Henry sets the passage in two movements, the Child's humiliation and his exaltation, and then lingers over the character of his government. Between them you have a sermon that is both doctrinal and deeply pastoral.

WHAT THEY SAID

> "And indeed if Christ had not been God, it would have been unlawful to glory in him; for it is written, Cursed be he that trusteth in man."

John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), vol. 1, p. 310 [W1-2]

> "let us recall to our remembrance that Christ is called Wonderful, because he has inconceivable methods of assisting us, and because his power is far beyond what we are able to conceive. When we need counsel, let us remember that he is the Counsellor. When we need strength, let us remember that he is Mighty and Strong."

John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), vol. 1, p. 312 [W1-3]

> "We see that the mightiest governments of this world, as if they had been built on a slippery foundation, (Ps. lxxiii. 18,) are unexpectedly overturned and suddenly fall. ... This government alone is unchangeable and eternal."

John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), vol. 1, p. 313 [W1-4]

> "Christ's being born and given to us, is the great foundation of our hopes, and fountain of our joys, in times of greatest grief and fear."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, ed. George Burder and Joseph Hughes (Philadelphia: Ed. Barrington & Geo. D. Haswell, first American edition; archive.org dates the scan 1828), vol. 4, p. 57 [W1-6]

> "the kingdom of Christ is a growing kingdom, and will come to perfection at last."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, ed. George Burder and Joseph Hughes (Philadelphia: Ed. Barrington & Geo. D. Haswell, first American edition; archive.org dates the scan 1828), vol. 4, p. 58 [W1-7]

HOW THEY HANDLED THE TEXT

Calvin, Isaiah, vol. 1, pp. 309–313. He reads the titles as describing Christ's power and work toward believers rather than his hidden essence. He insists that "mighty God" is a proper divine name, links it to Immanuel in Isaiah 7:14, and then applies each title in turn to the believer's fears. He reads verse 7 as a kingdom that endures in time and in quality.

Henry, Exposition, vol. 4, pp. 57–58. He sees Christ first in his humiliation (a Child born, a Son given) and then in his exaltation, which covers both his dignity (the four names) and his dominion (the government on his shoulder). He then lists the marks of that government: it increases, it is peaceable, rightful, administered with equity and everlasting, and God himself has undertaken to bring it about.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

1. *The Gift (v. 6a).* "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Henry's humiliation: the mighty God comes as a child, and he comes to us.
2. *The Names (v. 6b).* Calvin's key: these titles describe what Christ is toward his people. Take them one at a time: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
3. *The Government (v. 7a).* Henry's marks of the kingdom: it is increasing, peaceable, rightful and everlasting. Set it beside Calvin's "slippery foundation" of earthly powers.
4. *The Guarantee (v. 7b).* "The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." The kingdom's future rests on God's resolve, not ours.

APPLICATION

- Follow Calvin's own application. Name the fears your people carry into December and set one title of Christ against each one.
- For the grieving: Henry says Christ's birth is the foundation of our hopes "in times of greatest grief and fear." Advent is for people who find Christmas hard.
- For the anxious news-reader: governments rise and fall, and this one doesn't. Calvin's contrast between earthly kingdoms and Christ's lets you say that without turning it into a political speech.
- For the weary church: Henry calls it "a growing kingdom." Small churches need to hear that the increase of his government doesn't depend on this year's numbers.

When the Fulness of the Time Was Come

Sunday, December 6, 2026

> *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (KJV)*

FRAMING

If Advent is about waiting, Galatians 4:4 is about God's timing. Paul packs the whole of Christmas into two verses: when, who, how, and why. The Son is sent at the right time, born of a woman, placed under the law, and all of it for redemption and adoption.

Calvin works through the text phrase by phrase, and almost every phrase gives him a doctrine: providence, the eternal Son, his true humanity, his substitution. Flavel preaches the same verses in *The Fountain of Life* as the fruit of Christ's work: the debt paid and the inheritance purchased. Together they move the congregation from the manger to the family table of God.

WHAT THEY SAID

> "That season is the most fit, and that mode of acting is the most proper, which the providence of God directs."

John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), p. 118 [W2-1]

> "The Son, who was sent, must have existed before he was sent; and this proves his eternal Godhead."

John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), p. 118 [W2-2]

> "A man who was free, by constituting himself a surety, redeems a slave: by putting on himself the chains, he takes them off from the other."

John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), pp. 118–119 [W2-3]

> "the one was found out for the comfort of them that had no children; the other for the comfort of them that had no father."

John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon XV, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 188 [W2-4]

> "That a poor beggar should be made an heir, yea, an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ!"

John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon XV, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 192 [W2-6]

HOW THEY HANDLED THE TEXT

Calvin, Galatians, pp. 118–119. He takes the verses phrase by phrase. On the fulness of time, God's providence fixes the fit season, and that should restrain our curiosity. "Sent forth" proves the Son's eternal Godhead, and "made of a woman" proves he took our nature. "Under the law" means he was subjected to the law in our room, as a surety. He reads adoption here as actual possession rather than mere promise.

Flavel, The Fountain of Life, Sermon XV, Works vol. 1, pp. 188–192. He treats the text as giving a double fruit of Christ's death: the payment of our debt (redemption) and the purchase of our inheritance (adoption). He compares civil adoption with divine adoption, then asks what Christ paid, what he purchased and for whom. He divides the inheritance into temporal, spiritual and eternal good things.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

1. *The Timing:* "when the fulness of the time was come." God's providence chose the season (Calvin).
2. *The Sending:* "God sent forth his Son." The one who is sent existed before he was sent.
3. *The Birth:* "made of a woman, made under the law." He took our nature and our obligation, as a surety putting on the chains.
4. *The Purpose:* "to redeem… that we might receive the adoption of sons." Following Flavel, the debt is paid and the inheritance purchased.

APPLICATION

- For those tired of waiting, whether for a prodigal, a pregnancy or a diagnosis, Calvin's point about God's fit season speaks to the long Decembers.
- Flavel's contrast between civil and divine adoption, one "for the comfort of them that had no children" and the other "for the comfort of them that had no father," is a gift to anyone who comes to Christmas with a hard family story.
- Assurance: adoption is a present standing, not a hope deferred. Call believers to live as heirs this week.
- Generosity: "a poor beggar… made an heir" can reshape how a congregation gives in December.

WEEK 3 · JOHN 1:14

The Word Was Made Flesh

Sunday, December 13, 2026

> *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (KJV)*

FRAMING

John 1:14 is the doctrinal center of Christmas, and it's easy to preach it badly. You can be so careful that it comes out as cold Chalcedonian vocabulary, or so warm that it turns into sentiment about a baby. The older writers manage to be precise and adoring at once.

Flavel opens his sermon on this verse by explaining why the Mediator had to be both God and man. Calvin presses on the word "flesh" to show how far down the Son came, and he guards against the two classic errors of dividing the person or mixing the natures. Ryle brings it to the pew: because the Word became flesh, Christ can feel with us, show us how to live, and honor the bodies we live in.

WHAT THEY SAID

> "He intended to show to what a mean and despicable condition the Son of God, on our account, descended from the height of his heavenly glory."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), vol. 1, p. 45 [W3-1]

> "Hence it follows that the majesty of God was not annihilated, though it was surrounded by flesh; it was indeed concealed under the low condition of the flesh, but so as to cause its splendour to be seen."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), vol. 1, p. 47 [W3-3]

> "He that undertakes to satisfy God, by obedience for man's sin, must himself be God; and he that performs such a perfect obedience, by doing, and suffering all that the law required, in our room, must be man."
>
> John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon V, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 72 [W3-4]

> "A mystery, by which apprehension is dazzled, invention astonished, and all expression swallowed up."
>
> John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon V, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 74 [W3-5]

> "He is almighty because He is God, and yet He can feel with us, because He is man."
>
> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. John* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1879), vol. 1, p. 27 [W3-6]

HOW THEY HANDLED THE TEXT

Flavel, The Fountain of Life, Sermon V, Works vol. 1, pp. 72–75. He opens the verse as an assertion in three parts: the person assuming (the Word), the nature assumed (flesh, meaning a true body and soul) and the assumption itself ("was made," meaning he took our nature, not that God changed into flesh). He then shows the assertion

confirmed in “dwelt among us” and “we beheld his glory,” states the doctrine, and promises to open the nature, effects and ends of the union.

Calvin, John, vol. 1, pp. 44–47. He says “flesh” expresses the Son's descent more forcibly than “man.” He uses the verse against both Nestorius and Eutyches: one person, two distinct natures. “Dwelt” comes from the word for tabernacles, and the glory was concealed under flesh yet seen by those whose eyes the Spirit opened.

Ryle, Expository Thoughts: John, vol. 1, pp. 26–28. He sets out the union of two perfect and distinct natures in one person, then closes with three comforts: Christ can sympathize, Christ is our pattern, and our bodies have a real dignity.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

1. *Who came:* “the Word.” The eternal Son, who never stopped being what he was (Calvin, Flavel).
2. *How low he came:* “was made flesh.” Calvin on the force of “flesh,” and Flavel on why the Mediator had to be man.
3. *How near he came:* “dwelt among us.” He pitched his tent among us.
4. *What they saw:* “we beheld his glory… full of grace and truth.” Glory veiled in flesh, yet visible to faith (Calvin).
5. *What it means for us:* Ryle's three comforts of sympathy, pattern and dignity.

APPLICATION

- Let the mystery be a mystery. Flavel is happy to stand in awe, and our people need permission to worship what they can't fully explain.
- For the sick and the aging, Ryle on the body: the Son of God “was not ashamed to take” a human body. Bodies aren't throwaway packaging.
- For the lonely: he can feel with us because he is man, and he can help because he is God.
- Guard the doctrine plainly. A sentence or two on why it matters that Christ is one person with two natures, without the technical vocabulary, will protect your people from the errors Calvin names.

WEEK 4 · LUKE 2:8–14

Glory to God in the Highest

Sunday, December 20, 2026

> *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night... And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (KJV)*

FRAMING

The last Sunday before Christmas, and the text everyone knows. The challenge is freshness. Sibbes is the man for it. His treatise *The Angels' Acclamations* (first printed in 1638 in *Light from Heaven*, according to Grosart's note) spends more than twenty pages on these few verses, and he has a pastor's eye for ordinary people.

Calvin adds the questions your people are already asking. Why shepherds? Why at night? Why does the angel say "to you"? Use Calvin for the announcement in verses 8–12 and Sibbes for the anthem in verses 13–14.

WHAT THEY SAID

> "There was never such a thing from the beginning of the world, nor never shall be in this world: for God to take man's nature on him; for heaven and earth to join together; for the Creator to become a creature."
>
> Richard Sibbes, *The Angels' Acclamations*, in *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), vol. 6, p. 317 [W4-1]

> "Heaven took notice of him when earth regarded him not."
>
> Richard Sibbes, *The Angels' Acclamations*, in *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), vol. 6, p. 320 [W4-3]

> "We cannot glorify God till we have some knowledge of our peace with him in Christ."
>
> Richard Sibbes, *The Angels' Acclamations*, in *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), vol. 6, p. 337 [W4-5]

> "The commencement of solid joy is, to perceive the fatherly love of God toward us, which alone gives tranquillity to our minds."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 115 [W4-6]

> "it would have given no great delight to hear that the Author of salvation was born, unless each person believed that for himself he was born."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 117 [W4-7]

HOW THEY HANDLED THE TEXT

Sibbes, The Angels' Acclamations, Works vol. 6, pp. 317–337. He divides the passage into the apparition and the celebration. On the apparition: the angels came to poor shepherds, in the middle of their work and at night, and they came as a "heavenly host," which he opens as number, order, consent, employment and strength. On the

celebration: glory to God, peace on earth and good will toward men, in that order. God's good will is the ground, peace follows from it, and glory is the end.

Calvin, Harmony of the Evangelists, vol. 1, pp. 112–117. He asks why Christ was revealed to a few humble witnesses at night. He says fear humbles the hearts of men but they also need consolation. Solid joy begins with knowing God's fatherly love, and the angel's "to you" is emphatic because each person must believe that Christ was born for him.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

1. *The Audience (vv. 8–9):* shepherds, in their callings, by night. God comes to the ordinary and the overlooked (Sibbes, Calvin).
2. *The Announcement (vv. 10–12):* "Fear not… great joy… unto you is born." Joy grounded in God's fatherly love and received personally (Calvin).
3. *The Anthem (vv. 13–14):* following Sibbes, read it from the bottom up. God's good will is the ground, peace with God is the fruit, and glory to God is the end.

APPLICATION

- Sibbes points out that the angels came to the shepherds in the middle of their work and at night. Speak to the nurse on the night shift and the farmer in the cold.
- Personal appropriation: Calvin's "to you." Christmas Sunday is a fitting time to press the gospel on each hearer by name.
- Order your praise. Sibbes says we cannot glorify God until we know our peace with him, so invite the unconverted to peace before you ask them to sing glory.
- Heaven noticed what earth ignored. Encourage the unnoticed saints in your congregation.

CHRISTMAS EVE · MATTHEW 1:21–23

God with Us

Thursday, December 24, 2026

> *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (KJV)*

FRAMING

Christmas Eve brings the widest room of the year: members, family in from out of town, and the neighbor who comes once a year. The sermon is short and the candles are waiting. Matthew gives you a text that fits the night, because heaven names the child twice. One name tells what he came to do, and the other tells who he is.

Ryle puts it in a sentence: one name "describes His office; the other His nature." Calvin presses both. The name Jesus assumes that the people he saves are lost without him, and it shows how he saves them, by pardon and by his Spirit. The name Emmanuel means more than God helping from a distance. In Christ, God is actually present with his people and joins them to himself.

WHAT THEY SAID

> "The first truth taught us by these words is, that those whom Christ is sent to save are in themselves lost."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 98 [CE-1]

> "For out of Christ we are alienated from him; but through Christ we are not only received into his favour, but are made one with him."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 105 [CE-2]

> "For whenever we contemplate the one person of Christ as God-man, we ought to hold it for certain that, if we are united to Christ by faith, we possess God."
>
> John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 106 [CE-3]

> "One is Jesus: the other Emmanuel. One describes His office; the other His nature."
>
> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter, 1857), vol. 1, p. 6 [CE-4]

> "From sorrow, cross, and conflict they are not saved. But they are saved from sin for evermore."
>
> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter, 1857), vol. 1, p. 6 [CE-5]

> "The Son of God is content to call Himself Saviour."
>
> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter, 1857), vol. 1, p. 7 [CE-6]

HOW THEY HANDLED THE TEXT

Calvin, Harmony of the Evangelists, vol. 1, pp. 98–106. He takes "Jesus" as a name given by the Father that tells why the Son came. "He shall save his people from their sins" teaches first that those he saves are lost in themselves, and then how he saves: a free pardon through his atonement, and freedom from sin's tyranny by his Spirit. He then spends several pages defending Matthew's use of Isaiah 7:14. On Immanuel, he says God was present to Israel by shadows and symbols, but in Christ he is actually present, and a true Mediator had to unite both natures in one person.

Ryle, Expository Thoughts: Matthew, vol. 1, pp. 5–8. He begins with the mystery of the incarnation and the virgin birth, and counsels believing it rather than speculating about it. He then sets the two names side by side. Jesus saves his people from the guilt, the dominion, the presence and at last the consequences of sin. Emmanuel calls us to keep both natures in view: his divinity as the foundation of our faith, and his humanity as our comfort in suffering.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

1. *His name is Jesus (v. 21a).* Heaven chose the name, and it means Saviour. Ryle: the Son of God could have taken a grander title, and chose this one.
2. *He saves from sin (v. 21b).* The name assumes we are lost (Calvin). He saves by pardon and by his Spirit, and he saves from sin, not from every sorrow (Ryle).
3. *His name is Emmanuel (vv. 22–23).* The sign once offered to Ahaz is fulfilled. God is with us in person now, not by shadows (Calvin).
4. *What it means tonight.* United to Christ by faith, "we possess God" (Calvin). His divinity is the foundation of our faith, and his humanity is our comfort (Ryle).

APPLICATION

- For the once-a-year guest: Calvin's point that the name Jesus assumes we are lost lets you name the need plainly and kindly. Then give them the name.
- For the hurting: Ryle is honest that Christ's people are not saved "from sorrow, cross, and conflict." You can say that with the empty chair in view, and then say what he does save us from.
- Keep it simple. Two names, office and nature, give you an outline a child can repeat on the drive home.
- Close with the candles: "God with us" is not a feeling about the season but a person, and he can be received tonight.

GO FURTHER

Go further with Commonplace

I built Commonplace because I wanted this kind of research, with real quotes and real pages, without spending my whole week on it. It's an AI research tool over more than 1,200 public-domain Reformed and Puritan works, including Calvin's commentaries, Matthew Henry, Flavel, Sibbes, Watson, Brooks, Charnock, Perkins and more. Ask a question in plain English and the answer comes back with page-level citations, so you can check the source before it goes anywhere near your pulpit. (Latin works in the library are translated with AI, and they're labelled that way.)

Some searches to try with these texts:

- What did the Puritans say about “Everlasting Father” in Isaiah 9:6?
- How did Reformed writers apply adoption from Galatians 4:5?
- Where do Owen or Goodwin treat the incarnation in John 1:14?
- Puritan sermons on the shepherds in Luke 2
- What did the Puritans make of the name Emmanuel in Matthew 1:23?

A free account gives you 3 AI searches a month, and you don't need a card to sign up. If you want unlimited searching, Studium is $19 a month or $149 a year, with a 14-day trial. The trial asks for a card.

Start free: 3 AI searches a month, no card
commonplace.study/?ref=advent-guide

Chase Davis

Lead Pastor, The Well Church, Boulder · host, Full Proof Theology · author, Offensive Christianity

CHECK IT YOURSELF

Sources and page links

Each quotation was compared word for word with a public-domain scan of the edition named (archive.org), and the printed page number was confirmed from the running header on the scanned page. One candidate quotation, from Henry on Isaiah 9:6, was left out because the scan was too damaged at that point to confirm every word.

W1-2 "And indeed if Christ had..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), vol. 1, p. 310
archive.org/details/commentaryonboo01calv/page/310/mode/1up

W1-3 "let us recall to our..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), vol. 1, p. 312
archive.org/details/commentaryonboo01calv/page/312/mode/1up

W1-4 "We see that the mightiest..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), vol. 1, p. 313
archive.org/details/commentaryonboo01calv/page/313/mode/1up

W1-6 "Christ's being born and given..."
Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, ed. George Burder and Joseph Hughes (Philadelphia: Ed. Barrington & Geo. D. Haswell, first American edition; archive.org dates the scan 1828), vol. 4, p. 57
archive.org/details/expositionofoldn04henr/page/57/mode/1up

W1-7 "the kingdom of Christ is..."
Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, ed. George Burder and Joseph Hughes (Philadelphia: Ed. Barrington & Geo. D. Haswell, first American edition; archive.org dates the scan 1828), vol. 4, p. 58
archive.org/details/expositionofoldn04henr/page/58/mode/1up

W2-1 "That season is the most..."
John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), p. 118
archive.org/details/commentariesonga00calvuoft/page/118/mode/1up

W2-2 "The Son, who was sent,..."
John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), p. 118
archive.org/details/commentariesonga00calvuoft/page/118/mode/1up

W2-3 "A man who was free,..."
John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1854), pp. 118–119
archive.org/details/commentariesonga00calvuoft/page/118/mode/1up
archive.org/details/commentariesonga00calvuoft/page/119/mode/1up

W2-4 "the one was found out..."
John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon XV, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 188
archive.org/details/wholeworkstowhic01flavuoft/page/188/mode/1up

W2-6 "That a poor beggar should..."
John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon XV, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 192
archive.org/details/wholeworkstowhic01flavuoft/page/192/mode/1up

W3-1 "He intended to show to..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), vol. 1, p. 45
archive.org/details/commentaryongosp01calvuoft/page/45/mode/1up

W3-3 "Hence it follows that the..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), vol. 1, p. 47
archive.org/details/commentaryongosp01calvuoft/page/47/mode/1up

W3-4 "He that undertakes to satisfy..."
John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon V, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 72
archive.org/details/wholeworkstowhic01flavuoft/page/72/mode/1up

W3-5 "A mystery, by which apprehension..."
John Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened*, Sermon V, in *The Whole Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820), vol. 1, p. 74
archive.org/details/wholeworkstowhic01flavuoft/page/74/mode/1up

W3-6 "He is almighty because He..."
J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. John* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1879), vol. 1, p. 27
archive.org/details/expositorythough05ryle/page/27/mode/1up

W4-1 "There was never such a..."
Richard Sibbes, *The Angels' Acclamations*, in *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), vol. 6, p. 317
archive.org/details/completeworksofr06sibbuoft/page/317/mode/1up

W4-3 "Heaven took notice of him..."
Richard Sibbes, *The Angels' Acclamations*, in *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), vol. 6, p. 320
archive.org/details/completeworksofr06sibbuoft/page/320/mode/1up

W4-5 "We cannot glorify God till..."
Richard Sibbes, *The Angels' Acclamations*, in *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. A. B. Grosart (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), vol. 6, p. 337
archive.org/details/completeworksofr06sibbuoft/page/337/mode/1up

W4-6 "The commencement of solid joy..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 115
archive.org/details/harmonyrevelatio01calvuoft/page/n163/mode/1up

W4-7 "it would have given no..."
John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 117
archive.org/details/harmonyrevelatio01calvuoft/page/n165/mode/1up

CE-1	"The first truth taught us..." John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 98 archive.org/details/harmonyrevelatio01calvuoft/page/n146/mode/1up
CE-2	"For out of Christ we..." John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 105 archive.org/details/harmonyrevelatio01calvuoft/page/n153/mode/1up
CE-3	"For whenever we contemplate the..." John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), vol. 1, p. 106 archive.org/details/harmonyrevelatio01calvuoft/page/n154/mode/1up
CE-4	"One is Jesus: the other..." J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter, 1857), vol. 1, p. 6 archive.org/details/expositorythough01ryle/page/n23/mode/1up
CE-5	"From sorrow, cross, and conflict..." J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter, 1857), vol. 1, p. 6 archive.org/details/expositorythough01ryle/page/n23/mode/1up
CE-6	"The Son of God is..." J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter, 1857), vol. 1, p. 7 archive.org/details/expositorythough01ryle/page/n24/mode/1up