READING PLAN · 2026–27

Incarnation Advent Reading

Before Advent

Nov 22–Nov 28 · 7 days · The School of Faith, Introduction, Parts II–III

Advent

Nov 29–Dec 24 · 26 days · Incarnation, chapters 2–5

Christmastide

Dec 26–Jan 5 · 11 days · Incarnation, chapter 6

The daily reading follows the Synopsis in T.F. Torrance, *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*, edited by Robert T. Walker (InterVarsity Press, 2008), pp. xiv–xix. The pre-Advent reading follows T.F. Torrance's introduction to *The School of Faith: The Catechisms of the Reformed Church* (1959).

Before Advent

The School of Faith, Introduction, Parts II–III · Nov 22–Nov 28 · 7 days · about 14–18 minutes a day

DAY 1 OF 7 **Sun Nov 22** pp. xxi–xxix — about 18 min

- [ ] **II. The Method Of Instruction**
- [ ] **1. General Principles**
  - [ ] *(i) All knowing involves an adaptation of our capacities in accordance with the nature…*
  - [ ] *(ii) Bound up with this is the question of attitude.*
  - [ ] *(iii) It is an important step in any branch of scientific research to learn…*
  - [ ] *(iv) You cannot think unless you have something to think about.*
  - [ ] *(v) It belongs to the essence of good education to hold together the realm…*

DAY 2 OF 7 **Mon Nov 23** pp. xxix–xxxvi — about 15 min

  - [ ] *(vi) You cannot make anything unless you have the tools with which to form…*
  - [ ] *(vii) You cannot make much progress thinking on your own, in a vacuum.*
- [ ] **2. Particular Principles**
  - [ ] *(i) Jesus Christ is Himself the Truth.*
  - [ ] *(ii) Kierkegaard has also reminded us that in the Incarnation the Absolute Fact has…*
  - [ ] *(iii) True Christian instruction requires on the part of the learner or receiver a…*

DAY 3 OF 7 **Tue Nov 24** pp. xxxvi–xlii — about 15 min

  - [ ] *(iv) Instruction in Christian Truth involves reconciliation with the Truth.*
  - [ ] *(v) Christian instruction involves renewal on the part of the learner.*
  - [ ] *(vi) Christian instruction can only achieve its end through the demonstration of the Spirit,…*
  - [ ] *(vii) Christian instruction has to reckon with the fact that the Truth may put…*

DAY 4 OF 7 **Wed Nov 25** pp. xliii–xlix — about 14 min

- [ ] **III. The Nature Of Theology**
- [ ] **(1) When we examine the Reformed theology out of which these catechisms sprang we…**
  - [ ] *(a) There are two partners to this conversation, but just because the human partner…*

DAY 5 OF 7 **Thu Nov 26** pp. xlix–lv — about 14 min

  - [ ] *(b) Dialogical theology is subjected to another temptation, to detach the human conversation from…*
- [ ] **(2) Inherent in the nature of theology is a systematic interest, for it is…**
  - [ ] *(a) The Covenant which God in His grace has made with man calls man…*
  - [ ] *(b) The Covenant embraces not only man but the whole of creation, so that…*
  - [ ] *(i) The One Covenant of Grace.*

DAY 6 OF 7 **Fri Nov 27** pp. lv–lxii about 15 min

- [ ] *(ii) The Doctrine of Christ.*
  - [ ] (a) According to the Reformed Church the Roman Church had come to usurp the…
  - [ ] (b) This meant that the Reformed Church had to carry through a programme of…
  - [ ] (c) What kind of system did this involve for Reformed theology in its attempt…
  - [ ] (a) The Church is confronted with the mystery of Christ, and all its knowing…

DAY 7 OF 7 **Sat Nov 28** pp. lxii–lxix about 16 min

  - [ ] (b) The "logic" or "form" of Christ in its subjective deployment by theology to…

- [ ] **(3) It belongs to the nature of theology to be catholic, that is to…**
  - [ ] *(i) Theology must engage in historical studies just because it is historical dialogue with…*
  - [ ] *(ii) Theology must engage in ecumenical studies just because it is the dialogue of…*
  - [ ] *(iii) It is the combination of historical and ecumenical studies that is particularly valuable.*

Advent

Incarnation, chapters 2–5 · Nov 29–Dec 24 · 26 days · about 15–21 minutes a day

DAY 1 OF 26 **Sun Nov 29** pp. 37–42 about 18 min

- [ ] **Chapter Two: The Incarnation**
- [ ] **1 The incarnation and the old Israel**
  - [ ] *(a) The Old Testament background*
    - [ ] (i) Prelude to the theology of Heilsgeschichte or salvation history
    - [ ] (ii) Second prelude: God's personal intervention in the plight of humanity
    - [ ] (iii) The sacred history of Israel: theology of salvation history
      - [ ] (1) The election of Israel as the instrument of salvation

DAY 2 OF 26 **Mon Nov 30** pp. 43–49 about 20 min

      - [ ] (2) The birth of Jesus out of the womb of Israel: the incarnation
  - [ ] *(b) The New Testament perspective - the Christian doctrine of Israel*
    - [ ] (i) One movement of salvation
    - [ ] (ii) The pre-movement of the incarnation
    - [ ] (iii) Prophet, priest and king
    - [ ] (iv) The agony of Israel and the faithfulness of God
    - [ ] (v) Intensification of the covenant: the suffering servant
    - [ ] (vi) Intensification of the contradiction

DAY 3 OF 26 **Tue Dec 1** pp. 49–54 about 17 min

    - [ ] (vii) Ultimate rejection, ultimate union
    - [ ] (viii) Particularisation and universalisation
    - [ ] (ix) The election and rejection of one for all
    - [ ] (x) Reaffirmation through judgement and rejection

DAY 4 OF 26 **Wed Dec 2** pp. 54–59 about 17 min

    - [ ] (xi) The rejection of Israel as the reconciling of the world
    - [ ] (xii) Salvation through Israel's rejection and restoration
- [ ] **2 The incarnation and the new Israel**
- [ ] **Christ the Word made flesh, the Son made servant**
  - [ ] *(a) The Word made flesh*
    - [ ] (i) The meaning of 'word', dabar

DAY 5 OF 26 **Thu Dec 3** pp. 60–65 about 17 min

- [ ] The meaning of 'word' in the gospel of John
- [ ] (ii) The meaning of 'flesh'
  - [ ] The assumption of fallen flesh
  - [ ] The sanctification of fallen flesh

DAY 6 OF 26 **Fri Dec 4** pp. 65–70 about 17 min

- [ ] (iii) The meaning of 'became'
  - [ ] A unique becoming in which God now also exists as true man in one person
- [ ] *(b) The Son become servant*
  - [ ] (i) The motif of the servant-son

DAY 7 OF 26 **Sat Dec 5** pp. 70–76 about 21 min

- [ ] (ii) The motif of the ben-bayith, 'the son of the house'
- [ ] (iii) The motif of Adam, the son of God
  - [ ] The new Adam who undoes the sin of the first Adam
  - [ ] Philippians 2: the classic passage on the servant Son
  - [ ] The self-humbling of the Son to become servant, obedient unto death

DAY 8 OF 26 **Sun Dec 6** pp. 76–82 about 20 min

- [ ] *(c) The descent and ascent of the Son*
  - [ ] (i) A movement of revelation
  - [ ] (ii) A movement of reconciliation
  - [ ] (iii) Salvation through the whole course of Christ's obedience
    - [ ] (1) The active obedience of Jesus
    - [ ] (2) The passive obedience of Jesus
    - [ ] (3) The importance of both the passive and active righteousness of Christ
    - [ ] (4) The union of God and man in the life of the Son

DAY 9 OF 26 **Mon Dec 7** pp. 83–89 about 19 min

- [ ] **Outline of the doctrine of the person of Christ**
  - [ ] *(1) The mystery of true God and man in one person*
  - [ ] *(2) The mystery of Christ only capable of negative definition*
  - [ ] *(3) The inseparability of anhypostasia and enhypostasia*
  - [ ] *(4) The hypostatic union to be understood dynamically and soteriologically*
  - [ ] *(5) Reconstruction of the classical doctrine of Christ*
- [ ] **Chapter Three: The once and for all union of God and man in Christ: his birth into our humanity**
- [ ] **1 The biblical witness to the virgin birth**
  - [ ] *(a) The synoptic Gospels*

DAY 10 OF 26 **Tue Dec 8** pp. 89–94 about 16 min

- [ ] *(b) John - the Gospel and the Johannine writings*
- [ ] *(c) St Paul*
- [ ] **2 The doctrine of the virgin birth**

DAY 11 OF 26 **Wed Dec 9** pp. 94–99 about 17 min

- [ ] *(a) Preliminary observations*
  - [ ] (i) The virgin birth not a theory of explanation
  - [ ] (ii) The virgin birth not to be separated from the whole mystery of Christ
  - [ ] (iii) The virgin birth not to be separated from the resurrection
  - [ ] (iv) The virgin birth and empty tomb as pointers to the mystery of Christ
- [ ] *(b) The positive teaching of the virgin birth*
  - [ ] (i) The reality of the humanity of Jesus
  - [ ] (ii) Disqualification of human capabilities

DAY 12 OF 26 **Thu Dec 10** pp. 99–104 about 17 min

- [ ] (iii) A recreation out of the old creation
- [ ] (iv) The setting aside of human autonomy
- [ ] (v) The virgin birth the pattern of grace, the model for faith
- [ ] (vi) Demonstration of the virgin birth only through the Spirit
- [ ] (vii) Necessity and importance of the virgin birth

DAY 13 OF 26 **Fri Dec 11** pp. 105–109 about 17 min

- [ ] **Chapter Four: The continuous union in the historical life and obedience of Jesus**
- [ ] **1 The one and the many - the mediator**
- [ ] *(a) The union of God and man in the person of Christ*
  - [ ] The unity of the person and work of Christ
  - [ ] It is Christ in his person who reveals, atones and reconciles
- [ ] *(b) The election of Christ - the one for the many*

DAY 14 OF 26 **Sat Dec 12** pp. 110–115 about 18 min

- [ ] Election and judgement
- [ ] *(c) Substitution - Christ in our place*
  - [ ] The judge and the judged
- [ ] **2 The life and faithfulness of the Son towards the Father**

DAY 15 OF 26 **Sun Dec 13** pp. 115–121 about 19 min

- [ ] The Son's faithful restoration of the image of God in alienated humanity
- [ ] *(a) Jesus' life of utter dependence upon the Father in prayer*
  - [ ] (i) The fulfilling and sealing of the covenant through the redemptive prayer of Jesus
  - [ ] (ii) The attack by the powers of evil on the bond of prayer between Jesus and the Father
  - [ ] (iii) Christ's human prayer is the innermost heart of his atoning obedience to the Father and of his conversion of humanity to God
    - [ ] Jesus draws us into his own prayer

DAY 16 OF 26 **Mon Dec 14** pp. 121–126 about 16 min

- [ ] *(b) Jesus' life of obedience in his Father's house*
  - [ ] (i) From birth to death the Son's whole life of redeeming obedience
  - [ ] (ii) The last Adam undoing the disobedience of the first Adam
    - [ ] The baptism into repentance - the temptation not to be man
  - [ ] (iii) Jesus as man is the perfect believer, receiving the Spirit in his humanity for us all

---

DAY 17 OF 26 **Tue Dec 15** pp. 126–131 about 18 min

- [ ] *(c) Jesus' life of perfect faithfulness to the divine word, and perfect reflection of the divine glory*
  - [ ] Jesus' whole human life reposes in the Father and is the very revelation of the Father
  - [ ] The majesty and authority of God in Jesus
- [ ] **3 The life and faithfulness of the Son toward man**
- [ ] *(a) Jesus the shepherd of the sheep*
  - [ ] (i) The shepherd-kingship of Yahweh and the promise of the messianic shepherd

---

DAY 18 OF 26 **Wed Dec 16** pp. 132–138 about 20 min

- [ ] (ii) The compassion of God in Jesus
  - [ ] The sympathy of the shepherd priest
  - [ ] The cost and anguish of Jesus' compassion
- [ ] (iii) The role of the Spirit in the compassionate ministry of Jesus
  - [ ] The Spirit echoes the intercession of Christ
  - [ ] Perfecting and completion of Christ's incarnational solidarity with sinners

---

DAY 19 OF 26 **Thu Dec 17** pp. 138–143 about 17 min

- [ ] *(b) Jesus the king of the kingdom*
  - [ ] (i) The cataclysmic impact of the royal freedom and authority of Jesus
    - [ ] The birth of the king - the upheaval created by the sign that is spoken against
  - [ ] (ii) The uncovering of man and the unveiling of the human heart

---

DAY 20 OF 26 **Fri Dec 18** pp. 143–149 about 17 min

- [ ] Romans 1.16 - 3.20: revelation of righteousness and judgement to Jew and Gentile
- [ ] Hebrews 4.12-16: the word of God that exposes all the thoughts of the heart
- [ ] The high priest who uncovers and bears our sin, and answers for us to the Father
- [ ] (iii) Christ's ministry as shepherd and king leads straight to the cross

---

DAY 21 OF 26 **Sat Dec 19** pp. 149–154 about 19 min

- [ ] The violence of the kingdom
- [ ] The meekness of Jesus, his gospel of grace and vicarious suffering, is the most powerful deed the world has ever known
- [ ] The agony of Jesus in bringing the truth to bear on humanity
- [ ] (iv) Final judgement and salvation
- [ ] The nearer the cross came, the more Jesus pressed the people to decision

---

DAY 22 OF 26 **Sun Dec 20** pp. 155–160 about 17 min

- [ ] Jesus' deliberate forcing of events to the climax on the cross and the hour of atonement
- [ ] (v) The building up of the messianic community and the creation of the church
- [ ] The three stages in the formation of the disciples
- [ ] The reconstitution of the disciples in the power of the resurrection and of the Spirit

---

DAY 23 OF 26 **Mon Dec 21** pp. 161–166 about 16 min

- [ ] **Chapter Five: The mystery of Christ: the mystery of the union of God and man in the person of Christ**
- [ ] The mystery of Christ's person unfolded only at the end of his mission
- [ ] John's apocalyptic vision of the glory of Christ
- [ ] Paul's understanding of the mystery of Christ that goes back to eternity
- [ ] **1 The mystery of Christ: mysterion, prothesis, koinonia**
- [ ] The mystery of the union in Christ, purposed, set forth and creating communion

---

DAY 24 OF 26 **Tue Dec 22** pp. 166–171 about 15 min

- [ ] *(a) The mystery of Christ - mysterion, the union of God and man*
- [ ] The mystery of Christ and his kingdom revealed to the disciples
- [ ] The unfolding of the mystery in the apostolic kerygma and the growth of the church
- [ ] *(b) The mystery of Christ - prothesis, the election of Christ*
- [ ] The eternal purpose is set forth in communion that reaches beyond the barriers

---

DAY 25 OF 26 **Wed Dec 23** pp. 171–176 about 15 min

- [ ] *(c) The mystery of Christ - koinonia, the communion of Christ*
  - [ ] Koinonia as participation in the mystery, and fellowship in the mystery
  - [ ] The mystery is inserted as koinonia into the midst of our knowledge and our being
  - [ ] A summary of mysterion, prothesis and koinonia
- [ ] **2 The mystery of Christ and the holy Trinity**
  - [ ] *(a) The 'pre-existence' of Christ*

DAY 26 OF 26 **Thu Dec 24** pp. 176–180 about 17 min

  - [ ] What Jesus is toward us he is antecedently and eternally in himself, in God
  - [ ] The person of Jesus is eternal, not his humanity
  - [ ] *(b) The eternal election of Jesus Christ*
    - [ ] Election is the eternal purpose of God that is identical with Jesus
    - [ ] Eternal election becomes temporal event confronting people in Jesus

---

Christmastide

Incarnation, chapter 6 · Dec 26–Jan 5 · 11 days · about 11–18 minutes a day

Fri Dec 25 · Christmas Day · No reading

DAY 1 OF 11 **Sat Dec 26** pp. 181–184 about 11 min

- [ ] **Chapter Six: The hypostatic union**
  - [ ] The need to integrate the being and work of Christ, patristic and reformed theology
  - [ ] Hypostatic union and atoning reconciliation cannot be properly expounded apart from each other

DAY 2 OF 11 **Sun Dec 27** pp. 184–189 about 16 min

- [ ] **1 The humanity and the deity of Christ**
  - [ ] *(a) The humanity of Christ*
    - [ ] (i) Christ's humanity is the guarantee of the coming of God
    - [ ] (ii) The humanity of Christ essential for revelation
    - [ ] (iii) The humanity of Christ essential for reconciliation
  - [ ] *(b) The deity of Christ*
    - [ ] (i) Christ's deity is the guarantee that salvation is the work of God
    - [ ] (ii) The deity of Christ essential for revelation

DAY 3 OF 11 **Mon Dec 28** pp. 189–193 about 15 min

    - [ ] (iii) The deity of Christ essential for salvation
- [ ] **2 The hypostatic union in revelation and reconciliation**
  - [ ] The divine and human natures and acts are truly and completely united in one person
  - [ ] The deity and humanity of Christ have no revealing or saving significance for us apart from their hypostatic union in him
  - [ ] *(a) The hypostatic union of God and man in one person is the heart of revelation, and its full substance*
    - [ ] The incarnation of the Word in human form and language
    - [ ] The hypostatic union of God and human language is the basis of revelation
    - [ ] Analogy and the hypostatic union

DAY 4 OF 11 **Tue Dec 29** pp. 194–197 about 13 min

  - [ ] *(b) The hypostatic union of God and man in one person is the heart of reconciliation and its full substance*
    - [ ] In the humanity of Jesus, God veils himself to save us and draw us to faith
    - [ ] The hypostatic union, worked out in atonement, is the objective heart of reconciliation
    - [ ] The one action of the God-man, of God as man, is fulfilled in atoning reconciliation
    - [ ] The hypostatic union is the mainstay of the doctrine of atoning reconciliation
  - [ ] *(c) Outline of the main stages in the development of the doctrine of Christ and of the hypostatic union*

DAY 5 OF 11 **Wed Dec 30** pp. 198–202 about 13 min

- [ ] **3 The Patristic doctrine of Christ**
  - [ ] *(a) The differing strands in Patristic theology*
    - [ ] (i) Defence of the deity and humanity of Christ
      - [ ] The full humanity of Christ the ultimate danger point
    - [ ] (ii) The council of Chalcedon
      - [ ] The difficulty behind the Chalcedonian concept of 'human nature' and 'divine nature'

DAY 6 OF 11 **Thu Dec 31** pp. 202–207 about 16 min

    - [ ] (iii) The meaning of 'nature' and physis
      - [ ] 'Physis' refers to the nature of things in their being - the parallel with 'aletheia', truth
      - [ ] The use of 'physis' in the Greek fathers - 'aletheia', 'ousia' and 'hypostasis'
    - [ ] (iv) The nature of Jesus' humanity - fallen humanity redeemed and perfected
      - [ ] The Chalcedonian hypostatic union must be stated dynamically in terms of the twin assumption and sanctification of fallen human nature by Jesus
  - [ ] *(b) The significance of the Chalcedonian 'hypostatic union'*
    - [ ] (i) The hypostatic union an act of grace
    - [ ] (ii) The twofold movement of condescension and elevation

DAY 7 OF 11 **Fri Jan 1** pp. 207–212 about 17 min

    - [ ] (iii) The uniqueness of the hypostatic union
    - [ ] (iv) The integrity of both natures - correction of Alexandrian extremes
    - [ ] (v) The union of both natures - correction of Antiochene extremes
    - [ ] (vi) Communicatio idiomatum - the communication of properties
      - [ ] The properties special to the divine or human nature may be predicated of the other through their sharing in the one person of Christ
    - [ ] (vii) The weakness of the logos christology
  - [ ] *(c) Factors helping to safeguard the humanity of Jesus*
    - [ ] (i) The condemnation of Apollinarius
    - [ ] (ii) The condemnation of Eutyches
    - [ ] (iii) Leontius of Byzantium - the 'enhypostatic' humanity of Jesus
    - [ ] (iv) The condemnation of the Monothelites

DAY 8 OF 11 **Sat Jan 2** pp. 213–218 about 15 min

- [ ] **4 The Reformation doctrine of Christ**
    - [ ] Return from medieval to Patristic theology and the living God of the bible
  - [ ] *(a) The different emphases in Lutheran and Reformed theology*
    - [ ] The Lutheran stress on the union of divine and human, and the Reformed stress on the Son as God and man
    - [ ] The hypostatic union interpreted more dynamically in terms of the whole life of Jesus
  - [ ] *(b) The problem of the 'extra-Calvinisticum'*
    - [ ] Greek 'container' conceptions of space

DAY 9 OF 11 **Sun Jan 3** pp. 218–223 about 15 min

- [ ] The Patristic conception of space as 'relational'
- [ ] The difficulties of the Lutheran concept of space
- [ ] The truth behind both the Lutheran and Reformed positions

- [ ] *(c) The communion of natures - communio naturarum*
  - [ ] Divergence between Lutheran and Reformed teaching on the nature of the communion

---

DAY 10 OF 11 **Mon Jan 4** pp. 223–228 about 16 min

- [ ] *(d) The communication of properties - communicatio idiomatum*
  - [ ] (i) The Lutheran doctrine of communicatio idiomatum
    - [ ] The danger of deifying the humanity of Christ
  - [ ] (ii) The Reformed doctrine of communicatio naturarum
    - [ ] The problem of the 'immutability' and 'impassibility' of God
    - [ ] The biblical view of God freely humbling himself to become a creature

---

DAY 11 OF 11 **Tue Jan 5** pp. 228–234 about 18 min

- [ ] *(e) The doctrine of anhypostasis and enhypostasis*
  - [ ] (i) The humanity of Jesus has no independent reality
  - [ ] (ii) The humanity of Jesus has full reality in the person of the Son
  - [ ] (iii) Anhypostasis and enhypostasis taken together
    - [ ] (1) Jesus was at once man, and a man
    - [ ] (2) The anhypostatic union and solidarity of Christ with all humanity, and the enhypostatic encounter with people in personal relation
    - [ ] (3) The anhypostatic assumption of fallen humanity, and the enhypostatic purity of Jesus and personal responsibility for sinners
  - [ ] A note on the use of theological terms such as 'anhypostasia' and 'enhypostasia'
