

# Lent Meditations 2020



*Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life.  
We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."  
John 6:68-69*

# Day 1

Ash Wednesday, 26 Feb

## Seeking Jesus

*Bible Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*

*Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven."*

Jesus had just taught about God's righteous standard in the first part of His famous Sermon on the Mount. Now He tells His disciples and the multitudes who had gathered to be especially careful not to perform righteous deeds simply to be seen and applauded.

"When you do something for someone else, don't call attention to yourself." When you pray, "Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace." And when you fast, it is to practice discipline "to better concentrate on God." Act normal outwardly so you don't draw attention to yourself. "Don't hoard treasure down here... The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being."



*Do you feel like you have been praying a lot, serving a lot, and experiencing a lot of blessings in your life? Ask God to search your heart and motives.*

Almsgiving is to bless, not to obtain praise;  
Prayer is a plea, not a parade;  
Fasting is a discipline, not a performance;  
Wealth is an attitude, not a collection of things.



*Lord Jesus, please forgive the hypocrisy that sneaks into my life. Teach me, Lord, to die to self, and to live with You and for You. Amen.*



# Day 2

Thursday, 27 Feb

## Proclaiming Jesus

*Bible Reading: Luke 9:18-25*

*He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"  
Peter answered, "The Messiah of God."*

While others acknowledged the authority of Jesus, though merely as a Messenger and Announcer of the coming Messiah, His disciples proclaimed that He was The Message and The Messiah. What a world of difference.

The mission of the Lord Jesus was to go beyond the suffering and rejection, on to death on the cross, but most importantly, to be raised triumphant as Lord of all.

The challenge the risen Lord Jesus offers to everyone is to die to self, following His example, and to die to self for Christ's sake.

Proclaiming Him as the rightful Lord of our lives is good and right. The Lord Jesus wishes to bring His believers to another level of discipleship, one that goes beyond proclaiming doctrinal truths to a deep conviction that can withstand the severe testing of faith that would come because of our belief in Him. He wants us to grow from being proclaimers to demonstrators of the power of the resurrection.



*By faith,  
proclaim*

*Jesus as Lord of  
your life—the One  
who has come, has  
died, and has risen  
again, victorious  
over sin and death.*



*Lord Jesus, I choose to follow You, denying my selfish rights. I choose to  
give my life to loving You and serving You all the days of my life. Amen.*



# Reflecting Jesus

*Bible Reading: Matthew 9:10-17*

*As Jesus sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples.*

Eating with tax collectors and sinners should be common for a person of faith; for although faith is easier in a closet, it is more rewarding, though harder, when appreciated by sinners.

Christian mercy is an outward demonstration of private devotional love, and Christian sacrifice is a demonstration of devotional love done in private, unseen, unannounced.

A person of faith instinctively seeks to do good, yet this same person does good as a second nature, not for public acknowledgement and proclamation.

New and old wineskins are good examples of how to contain and share the wine of spiritual renewal.

The innate desire to stick to old familiar things, even the things that stumble or hobble us, is replaced with a new outlook and new determination when the Lord changes our heart.

Spiritual disciplines without joyful celebration bring about rigid fragile religion, but spiritual disciplines with joyful new life will last.



*Take steps of obedience to go to those in need, to serve them, and shine upon them the light of the love of God.*



*Keep me, Lord, from being overly comfortable with the form of religion while forgetting the power of sacrificial faith. Grant me the joyful celebration of new life, that others might yearn for the same. Amen.*

Day

3

Friday, 28 Feb

Day  
**4**

Saturday, 29 Feb

## Following Jesus

*Bible Reading: Luke 5:27-32*

*Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up, left everything, and followed him.*

Following Jesus involves leaving everything we consider precious at the feet of Jesus. It means following after His example in loving the world. It means we are constantly aware of our shortcomings and sins, acknowledging them and repenting of all our sins—easy-to-give-up sins as well as clingy ones that we allow to linger on in our lives.

Faith requires obedience more than opulence, discipleship more than accumulation of things. Faith deals with spiritual needs that are unacknowledged or unresolved.

The beautiful thing about faith is that healing happens even before we know it—healing from diseases of the soul as well as of the body. But the healed one knows clearly he is healed, and his life shows the difference through his experience of renewed life, faith, and zeal.

May the joy of a healed life fill your daily experience.



*Is there something the Lord is impressing upon your heart to leave in order that you may follow Him in faithful obedience?*



*Lord Jesus, in all Your goodness, You have shown me love and forgiveness for all my sins. Thank You for a new life granted to me. I choose You as my inheritance, and will learn to follow Your footsteps of faithfulness and concern for people alienated from God's love. Amen.*

A hand holding sand against a desert background. The hand is in the lower foreground, holding a mound of sand. The sand is falling from the hand, creating a vertical trail. The background is a vast, rolling desert landscape with sand dunes under a clear sky. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

1st Sunday in Lent, 1 Mar

# Led Into The Wilderness

*Bible Reading: Matthew 4:1-11*

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness  
to be tempted by the devil.*



Day  
**5**

Monday, 2 Mar

## Serving Jesus

*Bible Reading: Matthew 25:31-46*

*"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."*

Serving the Lord Jesus is made evident not by mere private worship, but often by going out to feed the hungry, quenching the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned. How easy it is to say we love Jesus; how strenuous it is to go beyond words of faith and on to actions of sacrificial love. Neglect of the needs of society is neglect of one's faith. The beautiful thing about serving in the Lord's name is the anonymity of it and the joy of being free from hankering after earthly praise and reward. Our reward is assured in the Lord and it starts with unbridled joy and fulfilment.



*Demonstrate your love for Jesus by serving others and caring for the underprivileged and downtrodden. Avail yourself today through a sacrificial act of kindness.*



*Lord, in Your loving, You served; in Your caring, You laid down Your life that others might live. Grant me wisdom and strength to do these all the days of my life. Amen.*

# Your Heavenly Father Knows...

*Bible Reading: Matthew 6:7-15*

*"Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."*

We are truly privileged children of our Father. He knows our every need. He sees us, hears us and is ever present, watching and guiding. He gives us prayer to connect with Him, to open our hearts to Him and to listen. Whilst we all know the importance of prayer, the experience of not knowing how to pray is a common struggle among believers. "Lord, teach us to pray." So our Lord gave us what has become known through the centuries as the Lord's Prayer.

In its simplicity, it demonstrates so richly the life of faith, trust and hope for every Christian. Our heavenly Father is holy and we are made holy through the blood of His Son. By abiding in Him, we surrender our wills to Him in full obedience. Herein lies our human struggle—the fear of losing control of our human desires, and that inevitable tension between mortal gratification and righteous surrender.

But our Father knows our human frailty. Each new day is a fulfilled promise of His steadfast love and mercies, constantly poured out to provide for our needs. Environmental challenges across the globe today, hungry children and personal greed point to our failure in good stewardship. As we look at the Lord's Prayer today, turn your eyes upon Jesus. He teaches us to pray. Call on Him, find Him anew in your heart today. Listen, trust and obey.



*Make prayer a daily essential. Nourish your soul.*

*Let God reveal Himself through His Word as you speak to Him in prayer.*



*Father God, great is Your faithfulness.*

*Thank You that in Christ, we learn true surrender and obedience; that in Christ, we can come to You in daily communion through prayer. Amen.*

Day

6

Tuesday, 3 Mar

# Day 7

Wednesday, 4 Mar

## A Closer Walk With The God Of Surprises


*Bible Reading: Luke 11:29-32*

*"For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites,  
so also will the Son of Man be to this generation."*

After all the miracles, the growing crowds that followed Jesus across the land still didn't get it. They questioned the authenticity of Jesus' ministry. Where is this power of healing coming from? Surely it cannot be from God! Hence the rebuke from our Lord calling the people around Him a wicked generation! Always seeking for a sign and failing to recognise God's saving grace in Jesus, the promised Messiah.

No sign, except for the sign of Jonah. We know the Jonah story of three days and nights in a fish, a parallel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Son of Man is the sign for this generation. Jesus was shifting the focus away from the reliance on human wisdom towards the divine plan of salvation and future glory. The people just couldn't connect. Their hearts were closed to the possibility of God working in ways beyond human comprehension. Surely nothing good can come from Nazareth, and the coming Messiah is King, not the carpenter's son.

El-Shaddai is a God of surprises. He comes to us each day in refreshing ways. What a wonderful journey towards eternity for all who believe, for all who look beyond the signs of miracles and earthly wonder.

 *Come to the Lord with joy and a heart of praise; leave all doubts and fears behind. In Jesus, we have a friend, faithful and true. In the darkest of nights, in the storm clouds of life, be still and know that He is with us, yesterday, today and forever.*



*God, I come to Your throne of grace and mercy, grateful for all Your blessings. As I look to the cross of Christ, speak to me. Show me what You would have me do. Use me for Your glory. Amen.*



# The God Of Relationship

*Bible Reading: Matthew 7:7-12*

*“For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”*

He seeks us out. He gives us prayer. He loves us unconditionally. He died for us. He gives us life in eternity with Him. Yahweh is the God of relationship, always loving and seeking out, opening pathways for us to deepen our relationship with Him.

From teaching His disciples how to pray through the Lord's Prayer, Jesus continued to teach them the need to persevere in faith and persist in prayer. Whilst God our Father knows our every need, He wants us to come to Him, to talk to Him and to tell Him our thoughts, emotions and the problems we face—just as children do with their parents. Keep asking in faith, seek with your whole heart and know that God our Father knows what is best for you, according to His perfect will and wisdom.

The God of relationship is faithful and He will answer. How available have we made ourselves to Him through prayer? Have we truly opened our hearts to His leading and remained faithful, even if we find ourselves lost in despair with no immediate resolution to our prayer requests? Do we pray out of compulsion and obligation?



*What does it mean to ask, seek and knock? It is a life of total reliance on God's leading and provision, trusting Him for our every need in good times and when everything seems wrong. God fulfils His promises; He never fails.*



*Heavenly Father, thank You for today's lesson of trust and persistent prayer. Grant me wisdom and courage, patience and joy. I come to You as Your child. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Day

8

Thursday, 5 Mar

# Day 9

Friday, 6 Mar

## Righteousness And Reconciliation

*Bible Reading: Matthew 5:20-26*

*"For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."*

Our God is holy, righteous. Christians are called to righteous living, conducting our relationships according to God's standard of holiness. It is living God's way, where love for neighbour and forgiveness shape the conduct of our behaviour, so that others may see Christ in us.

In today's reading, Jesus emphasised the need for reconciliation with others. Godly perfection has a higher calling, way above the expectations of an ever increasing material and self-serving society. We are to be holy as God is holy. We are to forgive as God has forgiven us. We see this in the Lord's Prayer. Difficult in human terms, but with God, all things are possible.



*Be the good  
neighbour*

*God wants you to be. As with anything in life, the first steps are the hardest, but with practice, it will soon become second nature.*

As we worship in spirit and truth, and come to God's throne of grace and mercy, God commands us to do so with clean hands and hearts. Mend our fences and then bring our gift to Him. Consistency of faith and the Christian walk in action—deeds of love and kindness done in humility, patience and kindness. Truly, this is the Spirit life, that of abiding in Christ, our Lord and Saviour. *"A true and faithful Christian does not make holy living an accidental thing, it is his great concern. As the business of the soldier is to fight, so the business of the Christian is to be like Christ."* – Jonathan Edwards



*Shine upon my heart, O Lord. When my spirit is weak, lift me; when I am tempted, rescue me. May I decrease and Christ increase in me. Not my will, but Yours be done. Amen.*

# Perfection Made Possible

*Bible Reading: Matthew 5:43-48*

*“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

Society today sees perfection in an aesthetic sense, equating beauty with the norms and trends of contemporary culture. Perfection is also defined as being error-free, or when something lives up to the standards of our tastes or lifestyles. The world of economics references perfect market competition.

Today's reading ends with the call of Christ that we be perfect, just as our heavenly Father is perfect. He gives us clear examples of perfect love. We are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. A tall order for most of us and definitely not the most comfortable of ways.

Christian perfection is God's grace in action when He puts us on the path of growth towards holiness. It is about our lives united in pure love of God and others; it is about personal holiness. A spiritual transformation of renewed minds and hearts, living under the shadow of the Almighty. Not an aspiration, but a holy calling to all committed and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Love and pray even when you find it hardest to do so. Often, what gets in our way are pride and ego—something for us to reflect on in our checklist.



*When was the last time you loved an “enemy”?*

*Not in the far off mission fields—look within your circle of family, neighbours and friends. Reach out, build bridges and mirror Christ's love. Shine for Christ and show His love to the lost and broken.*



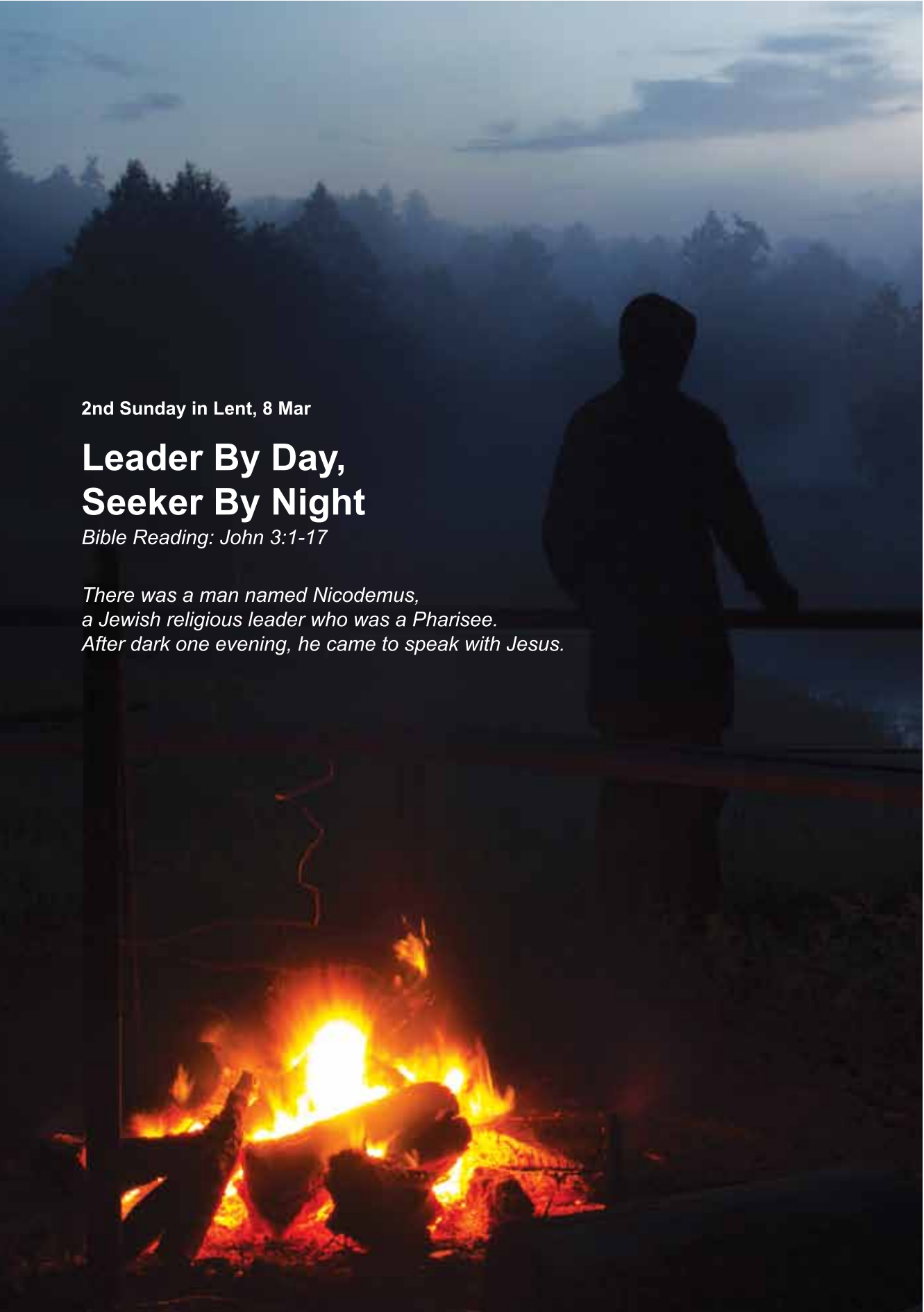
*Help me, Lord, to love and live like You, difficult though it may be. For I know that it is in loving, that I will find true love; that it is in consoling, that I will find joy renewed. Amen.*

Day

10

Saturday, 7 Mar





2nd Sunday in Lent, 8 Mar

# Leader By Day, Seeker By Night

*Bible Reading: John 3:1-17*

*There was a man named Nicodemus,  
a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee.  
After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus.*

# Day 11

Monday, 9 Mar

## A New Teaching

*Bible Reading: Luke 6:27-38*

*"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."*

What Jesus taught His disciples was unique, radical and revolutionary. No one in ancient times had ever heard such teachings before. Often, moral teachings have a self-preservation and reciprocating aspect to them. Jewish ethical laws set boundaries in order to restrain and avoid evil.

Jesus, on the contrary, spoke about how His disciples should behave, especially towards those who mistreated them. In these verses, He gave four imperatives to His disciples: love (*agape*), do good, bless and pray. These four verbs in Greek signify not just 'behavioural modification'; they refer to the life-long character formation of a disciple of Christ.

Christ teaches us to not only restrain from doing evil, but to even embrace the vulnerability and disadvantages of suffering in the face of evil for His sake. In living out such lives, one is reflecting the very nature and character of God in this world.



*Is there anyone whom the Lord is calling you to love today? Whom have you been avoiding? Are you a disciple of Christ who reflects His nature and character?*



*Father, I have often reacted to hurts and injustices out of my pain and bitterness. Please work in my heart through Your Spirit to follow Christ and reflect Your love and forgiveness, especially to those who do me harm. Amen.*

# Day 12

Tuesday, 10 Mar

## A New Understanding

*Bible Reading: Luke 2:41-52*

*But they did not understand  
what he was saying to them.*

In this only recorded account of Jesus' adolescence, we get a glimpse of His identity. Verse 49 is an important statement of Jesus, spoken near the time when Jewish boys would take responsibility for observing the Torah. Jesus indicated the uniqueness of His relationship with God when He referred to God as 'My Father'. Jesus' last words in Luke 24:49 also record the same reference to God.

Yet, this revelation of His identity came at a time and in a way that were perplexing to His parents. They experienced a crisis when Jesus was missing. It took them three days to find Him. His mother voiced the anxiety and fear experienced as parents in search of their child. Jesus, in His reply, spoke about 'His Father' and the place that He was destined to be. It almost sounded as if He assumed that they would have known, but they did not understand.

When we cannot understand what God is saying and doing, we must not arrive at hasty and rash conclusions. Such conclusions have the potential to hinder our growth and shipwreck our faith. Instead, we must pray for God to grant us a better understanding of Him (Luke 24:45).



*Are you  
able to  
understand God  
and His ways at  
this point in your  
life? Can you  
accept His ways  
even when you do  
not understand?*



*Father, teach me to trust You and follow You even when I feel pain and loss. Open the eyes of my understanding today so that I may know You better. Amen.*



# A New Reality

*Bible Reading: Matthew 20:17-28*

*"... and the Son of Man will be betrayed ...; and they will condemn him to death... And the third day he will rise again."*

The request for position in God's Kingdom by the Zebedee family and the reactions of the disciples to that request highlight the failure to see what Jesus spoke about. Jesus was preparing His disciples for what they would encounter in Jerusalem. Starting from Matthew 16, Jesus had been speaking about His suffering, death and resurrection, each time building and expanding on what He had said earlier.

Why did the disciples fail to grasp Jesus' words? Was it due to a lack of courage to face reality because of their own fears and ambitions? The disciples were expecting the reestablishment of God's Kingdom in a physical sense (Luke 19:11). Jesus' insight on true greatness allowed Him to clarify, correct and reinforce the true meaning of what was about to take place and show the principles and values of God's Kingdom as opposed to those of the world.

Jesus invites us today to take an honest look at His words and work in our lives. While we need to be aware of our fears and dreams, we must understand and accept the reality of what He says.



*Can you accept what God says? Will you allow Him to lead you beyond your expectations and disappointments? Will you accept the life He has purposed for you?*



*Father, You know my future and You know my heart. Help me to see beyond my struggles and fears and embrace the destiny that You have for me. Amen.*

Day

13

Wednesday, 11 Mar

# Day 14

Thursday, 12 Mar

## A New Order

*Bible Reading: Luke 16:19-31*

*'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.'*

In the preceding verses, the rich, powerful and influential Pharisees showed contempt and ridiculed Jesus for His teachings about money. Luke identifies them as those “who loved money” and Jesus rightly points out that their self-justification in the public’s eye is “detestable in God’s sight”.

There is a great reversal coming where the tables are turned between ‘the wicked and righteous’. A new order is at hand! Can the wicked see it? Their ignorance and neglect to practice godliness is due to their failure to listen to the teachings of the Scriptures. It is sad to note that even after death, the rich man in the parable failed to recognise the dignity of Lazarus. Even in Hades, his mindset was for Lazarus to bring him water.

Like the Pharisees, we can easily justify our relationship with God in the light of our material wealth and possessions. We can easily forget the ‘Lazaruses’ at our gate who are seeking crumbs under our table. We are once again challenged to listen carefully to Jesus’ words and pay attention to the teachings of the Scriptures.



*Do you have  
a mindset*

*with eternal  
values? Do you  
use your resources  
and opportunities  
to reach out to  
the needy and  
unfortunate?*



*Father, please show me the areas in my life that are not consistent with  
Your values. Work in me and teach me to have an eternal worldview.  
Help me to reach out and love others. Amen.*

# A New Charge

*Bible Reading: Matthew 21:33-43*

*"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."*

The tenants did not pay rent by disallowing the true owner to 'receive its fruits'. They wanted to claim ownership of the land. Despite the many attempts by the landowner, the tenants behaved wickedly by harming and killing his servants. Their intentions were exposed when they killed the son in order to 'seize his inheritance'.

As we meditate on this passage, we are confronted with the indictment and judgment that God brings on the leaders of Israel. Over time, Israel's leadership had failed to recognise their position as stewards of God's Vineyard, i.e. the nation Israel. They had killed the prophets in rejection of God's Kingship and now they intended to do the same to His Son. Jesus' words in verse 43 draw attention to a prophetic judgment that was about to take place—the removal of the Kingdom of God from them to be given to another.

As people who have received this new charge from God (1 Peter 1:9-10), let us continue to 'bear the fruits of it'. We will do well to learn from Israel's failure and to be faithful to this new charge that God has given us.



*What are the marks of stewardship and how have you been responding to His claim of ownership over your life? Are you producing fruit in keeping with repentance?*



*Father, grant me a new resolve to worship and honour You in the life that You have entrusted to me. Enable me to bear fruit for Your glory. Amen.*

Day  
**15**

Friday, 13 Mar



# Day 16

Saturday, 14 Mar

## Taking Personal Responsibility

Bible Reading: Luke 15:11-32

*'I will set out and go back to my father and say to him:  
Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.  
I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'*

In this familiar parable, we want to look at the prodigal son who came to his senses and realised what he had done. He made a decision to return to his father and humbled himself to admit that he had made a mess of his life.

In life's journey, we make many decisions, very often based on our own human and worldly wisdom, thinking that we know what is best for ourselves. When things don't turn out the way we expected, we often tend to shift the blame to other people, circumstances, bad luck, fate and even God. Many of these difficult or unpleasant circumstances are often due to our own shortcomings and a lack of dependence on God. If this is indeed the case, we need to take responsibility for our wrong choices and decisions, and repent. God is always gracious, merciful, loving and eager to receive us back as He loves us.

God actually wants to be involved in every aspect of our lives. He wants us to seek Him out because He loves us and has plans for us to live our lives to the fullest. He wants us to enjoy all that He has planned for us. His perspective is what matters and is very different from the world's perspective.



*How often  
do you*

*involve God in your  
decision-making?*

*Do you believe that  
God wants the best  
for you in all areas  
of your life, not just  
spiritual?*



*Father, I confess I have often left You out in the decisions in my life and run to You only when things go wrong. Help my unbelief about Your best intentions for me. Enable me to trust You. You are God, You are Sovereign, and You are Love. Amen.*



3rd Sunday in Lent, 15 Mar

## Never Thirst Again!

*Bible Reading: John 4:5-42*

*Jesus replied,  
“Anyone who drinks this water  
will soon become thirsty again.  
But those who drink the water I give  
will never be thirsty again.  
It becomes a fresh,  
bubbling spring within them,  
giving them eternal life.”*

# Day 17

Monday, 16 Mar

## God And His Word Are One

*Bible Reading: Luke 1:26-38*

*"For no word from God will ever fail."*

Imagine a young girl about to be married, getting a visit from an angel (which, in itself, is terrifying), being singled out as being highly favoured by God to bear a child when she is a virgin. What would your reaction be?

The angel Gabriel's reference to Elizabeth's pregnancy probably reminded Mary of what God can do as Elizabeth was beyond child-bearing age. As such, Mary was able to respond, "Be it unto me according to thy word". All that was required of Mary was to believe that what God said would come to pass. In contrast, Zechariah was struck dumb when he did not believe that his wife Elizabeth would bear a child when told by the angel Gabriel.



*What is preventing us from believing that God's Word is true? What do I do when there seems to be conflict with what God has said in the Bible? Who do I choose to believe?*

God has spoken to us in the Bible, which is His Word. The apostle John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). We have to decide whether we believe that is true or not. We do not have the option to believe certain parts and reject other portions. The Scriptures form the entire basis of our beliefs, our faith, and our hope. If any part is not true, then God, as we know Him, does not exist. We are often faced with choosing whether to believe the Bible, or other sources such as the world, human reasoning and the flesh. Faith is choosing to believe what God says is true!



*Lord, I believe; help my unbelief. Help me grow to trust You and Your Word more each day. Amen.*



# Forgiving From The Heart

*Bible Reading: Matthew 18:21-35*

*"Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?"*

Unforgiveness is one of the main root causes in conflicts and it comes from wanting revenge for what is perceived to be unjust and unfair. It is essentially an issue of the heart, i.e. emotions. Because we feel aggrieved and wronged, we want the offender to experience the same, if not much more and worse.

Forgiving from the heart requires us to revisit the offence(s) done to us and the accompanying negative emotions, and out of that pain, choose to forgive the offender because God has commanded us to forgive. Just like physical wounds, the healing process begins when the wound is cleansed and we experience pain.

Forgiveness is not an issue between you and the offender, but an issue between you and God. When we choose not to forgive, we are disobeying God and He allows us to experience mental torture like anger, bitterness, sleeplessness and even ill health. Forgiveness is a choice.



*Ask God to reveal to you people that need to be forgiven and release them from each situation in which they have offended you. Acknowledge the pain and hurt, and release them to God for He is your avenger. Only He is just and will deal fairly with them.*



*Lord, reveal to me the people that I need to forgive and the associated pain/hurt. Open my eyes to see the lies I have been believing. Amen.*

Day

18

Tuesday, 17 Mar

# Day 19

Wednesday, 18 Mar

## Fulfilment Of The Law And The Prophets

*Bible Reading: Matthew 5:17-19*

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them..."*

Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament, i.e. what is written in the Law and the Prophets. He constantly challenges the Pharisees, who claim to know the Law inside out, to disprove His claims. We, of course, have the benefit of hindsight and God's revelation. But what would have been our reaction to Jesus if we were alive then?

The modern church tends to over-emphasise the New Testament over the Old. The church in its early days only had the Old Testament. As they studied it, they could see God's unraveling plan for the world through Jesus. The Old Testament revealed the character of God—His holiness, righteousness, sovereignty, love, grace and much more—in the bigger scheme of things, not just for Israel, but for the whole world. The many Old Testament festivals ordained in the Law point to Jesus' coming and His role (past, present and future).

The Old Testament contains many minute details which we often question with regard to their relevance in today's world. Did God make a mistake putting those details there? Not so, according to Jesus. He came to fulfil all that was written in the Law and the Prophets.



*What is my attitude towards the Old Testament? Do I see it as relevant to my Christian faith?*



*Open my eyes to see the Bible (Old Testament and New Testament) as a whole—Your Word for me. Give me wisdom to understand what and why You have written Your Word as contained in the Scriptures. Amen.*

# Are You With Jesus?

*Bible Reading: Luke 11:14-23*

*"Whoever is not with me is against me,  
and whoever does not gather with me scatters."*

The story of Jesus' healing of the mute man through deliverance serves as the background to this declaration. We are either with Jesus or we are against Him. There is no neutral stance. Anyone who is not with Jesus belongs to the other side (Satan), i.e. against Him. There is no other option. Jesus reaffirms this in His letter to the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:15-16) in which He says that, because they were neither hot nor cold, He will spit them out of His mouth.

Jesus goes on to say that if we are not involved in bringing people to Him/God (gathering), then we are effectively driving people away from Him (scattering). Anything that does not involve bringing people to know God is as good as driving them away.



*Where do we place Jesus in our lives? Is He an afterthought?  
Is He someone we go to only when we have problems?*

*We need to be conscious of our behaviour, speech and actions.  
Do they bring people to Jesus or do they drive them away  
from Jesus?*



*Search my heart, O God. Show me where  
I place You in my life. Open my eyes and  
heart to the truth and give me the courage,  
strength and faith to follow You faithfully.  
Amen.*

Day  
**20**

Thursday, 19 Mar

Day  
**21**

Friday, 20 Mar

## No Other God, No Other Lord

Bible Reading: Mark 12:28-34

*'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.'*

One of the teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Christ prefaced His answer with the opening words of the *Shema* (recited by the Jews twice a day in their prayers): "*Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one*".

This is the foundation to loving God.

He is **the Lord**, Jehovah, and there is no other. "*This is what the Lord says: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God*" (Isaiah 44:6).

He is **our God** and we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. This means that we have to have a personal relationship with Him.

He is **the one Lord**, and should therefore occupy first place in our hearts and in our lives.

Do you desire to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind? Jesus tells us how it can happen. You have to believe that *only* He is God; you have to cultivate your relationship with *your* God, to trust Him and obey Him, and you have to enthrone Him as *the* Lord of your life.



*How is your relationship with God? Do you love Him with all your heart and soul and mind and strength? Is Jesus Christ Lord of your life?*



*Lord Jesus, my desire is to love You with all that is in me. Help me to free myself from everything that comes between. Amen.*



# The Direction Of Our Prayer

*Bible Reading: Luke 18:9-14*

*The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself... but the tax collector would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner."*

Two men went up to the temple to pray.

The Pharisee was there. He was there to tell God how good he was, and if the people around him heard his self-praise, that was a bonus. In essence, his prayer was **to** himself and **about** himself; he stood and prayed in the direction of himself. He did address his words to God, but it was only a formality. His was no prayer to God. It was a tribute to himself and a prayer of self-praise. He went away justified before men, but not before God.

The tax collector, on the other hand, poured his heart out to God, throwing himself at God's mercy. His was just a simple prayer of only one sentence, but one in which he meant every word he said to God. It was a prayer from the heart, and God heard his prayer and had mercy on him.

Let us beware lest our prayers become a meaningless ritual, lest the words roll smoothly off our tongues without heart or thought. Let us make sure that we mean every word we say before the throne of grace and that we are truly praying to God and no one else.



*When you pray, are you more aware of God or more concerned about what others think of your prayer? Are you talking to God or trying to impress others, or even yourself?*



*Father, teach me to focus on You as I pray, and to be sincere and humble before You, seeking only Your face. Amen.*

Day  
**22**

Saturday, 21 Mar

4th Sunday in Lent, 22 Mar

# What? Are We Blind Too?

*Bible Reading: John 9:1-41*

*Then Jesus told him, "I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind."*



Day  
**23**

Monday, 23 Mar

## Taking Jesus At His Word

*Bible Reading: John 4:43-54*

*The man took Jesus at his word and departed.*

What did the royal official expect when he begged Jesus to go down to Capernaum to heal his son? He probably did not expect the Master's seemingly cold and unfeeling response, *"Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders, you will never believe."*

Jesus had a reason for responding thus, for these people were coming to Him not because they believed in Him, but because of the miraculous signs and wonders they had seen.

In healing the royal official's son, Jesus did not give any sign. He only gave His word, *"You may go. Your son lives."* **And the man took Jesus at His word and left.**

Christ only gave His word, but His word was all-sufficient, for He is the Word of God. By the Word of God, the heavens and the earth were created. God spoke and it was so. Here we see the grace of our Lord leading the man to faith in God, and God alone, for faith that is dependent on seeing signs and wonders is not faith at all. Faith, mighty faith, rests solely on the God we believe.

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17, NKJV).



*On what do you base your faith? Is your faith centred on God or on whether you see signs and miracles and answered prayers?*



*Father, help me that I will walk by faith alone, that I will rest my faith on who You are as my God and my Father. Amen.*



# Day 24

Tuesday, 24 Mar

## Reaching Out In Faith

*Bible Reading: John 5:1-18*

*"Do you want to get well?"*

The Pool of Bethesda, where a great many of the sick, the blind, the lame and the disabled congregated day after day hoping for a miracle, a chance to be healed. The scene reminds us of our hospitals, except that here there was no medical care, no doctors and no nurses. But that day, Jesus was there, walking among them.

Out of the multitude of sick and needy people, Jesus came to only one man—one who had been paralysed and confined to his bed for thirty-eight years; one man who did not even ask Him for healing. *"Do you want to get well?"* Jesus asked him.

That is the question our Lord is asking us today. Do you want to be healed? Take a look at those things hidden within us that cause spiritual paralysis, like bitterness, unforgiveness and unresolved conflicts. They affect our walk with God, rob us of inner peace and joy, and grieve the Holy Spirit, so that we are left with little power.

Jesus Christ is asking you today, *"Do you want to get well?"* Come to Him and give up whatever "sicknesses" to which you are holding on. Come in faith for His healing touch.



*Do you know your own heart? Take time today to search your heart, to listen to His still small voice. Do you want to be healed?*



*Lord Jesus, I want Your continued healing in my life. Teach me and help me to come to You in faith and obedience, and perfect trust. Amen.*



# The Father And The Son Are One

*Bible Reading: John 5:19-29*

*"For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it."*

Is it enough to be satisfied that we have eternal life? Jesus tells us that He has come that we may have life and have it to the full. To have life to the full, we need to know Him better. How can our hearts be filled with the desire to want to know our Lord better?

When you have felt His power, when you have been touched by His grace, when you have read a passage of Scripture that struck right at your heart, then you would want to know Him better. When you have stood in awe on a mountaintop looking down at the clouds and the valleys below, when you have marvelled at the changing colours of the hills around you every day, then you would want to know Him better.

The way to know Jesus better is to see what He says about Himself. Jesus talks about His divine identity as the Son and His relationship with His Father; that the Father and the Son are one. Life for us, eternal life and abundant life, comes through our relationship with our God and Saviour. Do you have a close relationship with the Father and the Son?



*Do you want to know our Lord better? Does your soul long after God? Take time today to come to Him and pour out your heart's desire to Him.*



*Lord, re-ignite in me the desire to want to be close to You and to know You better. Help me to cast off everything that prevents me from doing so. Amen.*

Day  
**25**

Wednesday, 25 Mar

Day  
**26**

Thursday, 26 Mar

## Christ's Witnesses

*Bible Reading: John 5:30-47*

*"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear,  
and my judgment is just, for I seek  
not to please myself but him who sent me."*

Jesus backed up His claim of deity and divinity with the testimony of four witnesses: John the Baptist, His miracles, God the Father and the Scriptures.

John the Baptist bore witness to the Light of the World and made it possible for more people to know Christ and be saved.

Jesus' miracles bore witness that He was sent by God. His miracles were no hocus-pocus, but were a cumulative witness to His deity.

God the Father has etched His testimony concerning the truthfulness of Jesus into the very fabric of the universe. Everywhere we look, we can see God's witness to His Son. Jesus had the Father's witness to Him constantly present.

The Scriptures bear witness to Christ Himself. The message of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ and the promises of God related to His Son.

The hindrance to our belief in Christ is not a lack of evidence. Rather, it is us choosing to reject Christ. It is quite common for us to subscribe to preconceived ideas of who Christ is and to reject what does not fit. This is akin to judging Jesus and twisting the evidences to justify our rejection.

The truth is, when we do not believe in the Jesus of the Bible, we actually do not believe in the Bible either.



*How we live  
our lives will  
demonstrate what  
we really believe.*



*Lord, I  
believe; help  
my unbelief. Amen.*

# God's Way And Time

*Bible Reading: John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30*

*"... I am not here on my own authority, but he who sent me is true.  
You do not know him, but I know him because I am from him and he sent me."*

Jesus seems to be contradicting Himself here. On the one hand, He tells His family that the time is not ripe for Him to go to Jerusalem, but He goes privately later. In Jerusalem, Jesus goes to the Temple area and begins to teach openly although He knows that He is the target of the religious leaders.

Jesus is a source of some confusion in the minds of many people. Is He the Messiah-Christ? Can the Messiah come from Nazareth? Where did His knowledge of the Scriptures come from?

What people do not know is Jesus' vocation and mission are from God. He did not come on His own accord; He came to obey a vocation set by His Father. Hence, Jesus moved with the assurance that no one could lay a hand on Him "because His hour had not yet come". His actions were governed by God's ways and time.



*Jesus continues to be a contradictory figure today. Can we say that we really know who Jesus is? Some may say that they know nothing about Him, while others think they know everything.*

*We can only know the real Jesus by reading the Bible, by prayers and contemplation. Knowing Christ is not merely to be convinced in our minds. It is also to accept Him in our hearts and lives. This is the kind of knowledge that Jesus values.*



*Teach me Your ways so I may know You  
and continue to find favour with You.  
Amen.*

Day  
**27**

Friday, 27 Mar



Day  
**28**

Saturday, 28 Mar

## If Anyone Is Thirsty...

*Bible Reading: John 7:37-52*

*"Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."*

The Festival of Tabernacles celebrated God's presence and provision for Israel in the wilderness. Water was an important symbol reminding the Israelites of the water miracles that manifested God's care and protection.

In His call to the thirsty, Christ is declaring that He is the Messiah who offers living water. However, His is a call that requires an acknowledgement of need rather than an all-enveloping command—"... if anyone is thirsty", not "everyone come to me and drink". This suggests that some may not thirst.

What is thirst? Thirst is a sign of life, and life comes from God. "Thirst" is the awareness of a problem. Those who realise the problem are to **"Come to Me and drink"**. Coming and drinking from Jesus is what happens when we believe. It's what belief means.

The "living water" that Jesus promised has two meanings. Literally, it refers to flowing water in contrast to stagnant water. Metaphorically, it refers to the cleansing grace that the Holy Spirit brings. Jesus suggests that those who drink of the water He gives will themselves become sources of this living water.



*Is my life  
a fountain  
of living, running  
water, out of which  
plentiful streams  
flow, cooling and  
cleansing as water  
to a thirsty world?*



*Lord, help me to be a river of living water that flows to a thirsty world.  
Amen.*



5th Sunday in Lent, 29 Mar

# Believe And See My Glory

*Bible Reading: John 11:1-45*

*"Lazarus is dead, and for your sake  
I am glad I was not there,  
so that you may believe."*

# Day 29

Monday, 30 Mar

## Being The Light

*Bible Reading: John 8:12-20*

*So Jesus again continued to speak to them. "I am the Light of the World," he said. "He who follows me will not walk in darkness, but he will have the light of life."*

In pronouncing that He is the Light of the World, Jesus is saying that He is the very Light of God come among people; He is the Light which gives people life. What does it mean to be followers of the Light and to be sources of light?

To be a follower of the Light is to give oneself, body, soul and spirit, in obedience to the Master. It is to follow where the Commander leads, to always serve the Master, to submit our lives and conduct to Christ's guidance and counsel. To enter into that following is to walk in the light.

When we walk alone, we are bound to stumble and grope, for so many of life's problems are beyond our own resolution. When we walk alone, we are bound to take the wrong way, because we have no fool-proof human GPS of life. Jesus Christ is our heavenly GPS. He alone is the satellite to life's coordinates. We need His heavenly guidance to walk our earthly way.



*Just as a flower can never blossom when it never sees the sunlight, so our lives can never flower with the grace and beauty they ought to have until they are irradiated with the light of Jesus.*



*May I follow the Light of the World and learn the mystery of what I can do and what I can be. Amen.*



# From Another World

*Bible Reading: John 8:21-30*

*"You are from below; I am from above.  
You are of this world; I am not of this world."*

Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus repeatedly shows us that He was conscious of where He came from and where He was going to (John 7:33; 14:1-4). He was also aware that His time on earth was short and, therefore, lived a life that was focused, purposeful and intentional in carrying out the will of His Father (John 4:34).

Jesus understands that we can get distracted and too caught up with life that we lose sight of our purpose on earth. He knows how easily we are weighed down by family matters, work issues, relationship problems, financial setbacks and ministry conundrums. We are also sometimes tempted and influenced by the values of the world that we lose sight of our mission and identity as God's children in extending His Kingdom on earth. Jesus says, "You're tied down to the mundane; I'm in touch with what is beyond your horizons. You live in terms of what you see and touch. I'm living on other terms. I told you that you were missing God in all these." Jesus exhorts us not to just focus on what's immediate and tangible, but invites us to look beyond the horizon and to see God with us in our day-to-day living so that we don't miss Him in all these.



*What currently distracts or weighs you down?*

*What will it look like to include God into these things and work together with Him on it?*



*"This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through ..." – Jim Reeves.*

*Lord, help me to live my life purposefully here on earth remembering that I'm a sojourner passing through. Amen.*

Day

30

Tuesday, 31 Mar

Day  
**31**

Wednesday, 1 Apr

## True Freedom

*Bible Reading: John 8:31-42*

*"Then you will know the truth,  
and the truth will set you free."*

Just like Jesus' hearers, we might be puzzled about being set free as we have never been slaves to anyone before. However, Jesus was not referring to the freedom that is obtained from human slavery, but from spiritual bondage to sin, as "everyone who sins is a slave to sin". Even after we become Christians, we can still struggle with sin as we allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify and transform the sinful nature within us (Galatians 5:16-26). Some of us may feel helpless in overcoming sin, as sin has a way of enslaving and controlling us. However, Jesus came to set us free by breaking the power of sin over our lives. Through knowing Jesus and God's truth, we can become aware of our sins and the "attachments that have exerted authority over us in such a degree that we are incapable of choosing to say yes to God and God's purposes for our lives" (Larry Warner, *Journey with Jesus*). This discernment frees us from darkness, falsehood, sin and self-deception, and results in an inner spiritual freedom that allows us to respond in obedience to God's invitation to become the person that God created us to be.



*From what  
areas of  
"unfreedom" or sin  
do you need to be  
set free?*



*Grant me the grace, Lord, to remain in Your word and to be set free by  
Your truth. Amen.*

# I Am Who I Am

*Bible Reading: John 8:51-59*

*"Whoever obeys my word will never taste death."*

Death is something that is feared by many. It signifies the end of our lives, hopes, dreams, relationships, possibilities and potential here on earth. The Jewish leaders accepted that death was the natural course of life as all the prophets, including their patriarch Abraham, had died at some point in time. Therefore, when Jesus told them that they would not experience death if they obeyed His word, they thought He was out of His mind. Little did they know that Jesus was not referring to physical death, but spiritual death. When Jesus claimed His pre-existence before Abraham and applied God's name (Exodus 3:14) to Himself, He was claiming His divinity and equality with God. Jesus' invitation to the Jewish leaders was for them to recognise and accept this truth so that they need not experience spiritual death. However, despite the many miracles they had witnessed and teachings they had heard, their hearts were closed and they reacted negatively to Jesus by trying to stone Him. Today might be a good day for you to examine your heart. How have you responded to Jesus as the Son of God and Lord over your life? Are there places in your hearts and minds that you have closed to Jesus?



*Are you satisfied with the relationship you have with Jesus? How can you continue to grow and deepen your relationship with Jesus?*



*"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:68-69). Amen.*

Day  
**32**

Thursday, 2 Apr



Day  
**33**

Friday, 3 Apr

## Words Backed By Works

*Bible Reading: John 10:31-42*

*"Do not believe me unless I do  
the works of my Father."*

"Stone him! Stone him! Stone him!" These were the thoughts that played in the minds of the Jewish leaders over and over again. They were appalled at the claims Jesus made that went against the grain of what they believed, practiced and understood.

On the contrary, the one thing that preoccupied Jesus' mind was to do the works of His Father who sent Him. He knew who He was, and His actions proved that His words were true.

Like Jesus, the works we do in our Father's name testify that He is in us, and we are in Him. In His final moments with His disciples, Jesus said, "The person who trusts me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things, because I ... am giving you the same work to do that I've been doing. You can count on it. From now on, whatever you request along the lines of who I am and what I am doing, I'll do it." (John 14:12-14, The Message).

Like Jesus, may our lives overflow with evidence that point others to the glory and goodness of our Father—that they might burst forth in worship and declare, "Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!"



*Is there  
something  
that is keeping  
you from believing  
God's Word?*

*Take a step of  
faith today. Watch  
Him work and  
experience His  
Word in a brand  
new way.*



*Father, empower me to step out in faith that the world may know and understand that You are in me, and I am in You. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen.*

# Man's Intent vs God's Unstoppable Purpose

*Bible Reading: John 11:45-53*

*"You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish."*

As more and more of the Jews witnessed the life-giving power of Jesus and believed in Him, the leaders of Israel felt more and more threatened. They saw the signs that God was in their midst, yet they chose to focus on the harm that the Healer could bring upon their status and existence. They decided to take the politically expedient course of action to protect their own interests. Thoughts turned into plots. Evil was rationalised as a necessary sacrifice for the greater good.

Yet in all their top-level scheming, God's great plan was in no way threatened. In fact, their plot to kill Jesus was a masterstroke in His glorious masterplan! In spite of Caiaphas' arrogance, God used the high priest to declare that Jesus would die not only for the nation, but also for the scattered children of God and make them one.

This same God knows the plans He has for us—plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). So take heart. When evil seems to prosper, know that God is also at work. The game plan is the Lord's. He has won the victory.



*Are you facing a situation where evil seems to prevail? Remember that it is always darkest before the dawn. Stay faithful to your calling. Trust in God's unstoppable purpose.*



*Father, Your ways are higher than mine. Help me to trust You. Grow my love for You, and empower me to walk in Your purpose. In Jesus' precious name. Amen.*

Day

34

Saturday, 4 Apr

Palm/Passion Sunday, 5 Apr

## Truly I Tell You

*Bible Reading: Matthew 26:14–27:66*

*Suddenly, Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind...*





Day  
**35**

Monday, 6 Apr

## Death And Doom Or Life-Giving Perfume

*Bible Reading: John 12:1-11*

*"He releases the fragrance of the knowledge of him  
everywhere through us..."*

The order was out. Anyone who saw Jesus was required to report it immediately so that the Jewish authorities could arrest Him. Yet Jesus came out of seclusion and returned to Bethany—the “crime scene” of Lazarus’ resurrection.

Here, a dinner was given in His honour. Martha served while Lazarus dined with Jesus. Then came Mary who, in a shocking display of pure devotion, let her hair down and poured her best at Jesus’ feet. As the aroma of worship filled the house, Judas Iscariot raised the familiar objection: “Why waste all that money? It should have been given to the poor!”—an ironic complaint by the disciples’ treasurer who neither cared for the poor nor had any qualms about using their money to his own indulgence.

Having a real relationship with Jesus is a beautiful yet costly affair. When we truly know Him, we cannot help but worship. And worship is sacrifice. While Mary faced painful opposition from within, Lazarus became public enemy number two by simply being a walking, talking testimony of who Jesus is. To those on the path to destruction, it is the stench of death and doom. But to others, it is a life-giving perfume.



*Which character do you identify with in today's Bible reading? God knows the depth of our hearts. Allow Him to test your thoughts and lead you in the way everlasting.*



*Gracious Father, lead me in Your triumphant way. Draw me closer that I may know You better. Strengthen me and fill me with the joy that comes in worshipping You. Amen.*

# Day 36

Tuesday, 7 Apr

## Seeking Jesus

Bible Reading: John 12:20-36

*"I tell you truly that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain of wheat; but if it does, it brings a good harvest."*

*"We wish to see Jesus."* But which Jesus were they looking for? The powerful miracle-worker? The charismatic preacher? The counter-culture teacher? Or...?

*The Son of Man!* Whatever others thought of Him, Jesus had no qualms about who He was. He saw Himself as *"the Son of Man"*—a human being, and yet also the prophesied divine Son of Man (Daniel 7:13-14) to whom authority, glory and sovereign power would be given, before whom all nations and peoples of every language will one day bow and worship, and a King whose Kingdom is everlasting and imperishable. Wow!

But to realise this, the Son of Man must first die. He who would be King of kings and Lord of lords would be betrayed and arrested, mocked and spat at, beaten and nailed to the cross, pierced in His side, and then buried in a borrowed tomb. What a paradox!

And now *"the time has come"*. To be glorified, He had to be crucified. To bring many sons and daughters to glory, He had to suffer shame and death. To bring about a *"good harvest"*—a harvest of people lost in darkness and doomed to death but now bought over to light and life (meaningful, fulfilling and everlasting)—He had to *"fall into the earth and die"*.



*Are you looking for Jesus? And who is this Jesus after whom you are seeking?*



*Dear God, help me to see Jesus as He really is. Take away all my false images of Jesus, and help me know Him as Your Son, my Saviour and my Lord. Amen.*

# Betraying Jesus

*Bible Reading: John 13:21-32*

*After Jesus had said this, he was clearly in anguish of soul, and he added solemnly, "I tell you plainly, one of you is going to betray me."*

*"One of you is going to betray me."* One of my trusted twelve, whom I called by name, personally. One of you who has followed me through my journeys and ministry, up-close and personal, these three years. One of you who has been my apprentice, tutored and mentored by me, your Master and Teacher.

*"One of you is going to betray me."* Who me? The disciples looked at one another with uncertainty and suspicion, in disbelief and perhaps even in fear. Would it be Simon Peter, the fiercely loyal leader of the band? Or John, the disciple whom Jesus loved? Or Judas, the keeper of the money? Or one of the others?

*"One of you is going to betray me."* Betrayal is a stab in the back. A sell-out. Treachery. Disloyalty. Abandonment. Double-crossing. The Devil had tempted Judas, and he had already caved-in in his heart (John 13:2). The Garden of Gethsemane would bring it to fruition. We know not the real reason for Judas' betrayal of Jesus. But we do know its price—thirty pieces of silver to Judas' coffers (Matthew 26:15), but crucifixion-death for Jesus. What? Pittance for the Son of Man's life! But betrayal brings guilt, and the burden can be excruciating. Judas regretted what he did. He returned the blood money and then hanged himself on a tree (Matthew 27:1-10).



*How are you like Judas? How have you betrayed Jesus, your Saviour and Master?*



*Dear God, please forgive me for not being true to You. Forgive me for being ashamed of You before the watching world. Grant me courage to walk with You through thick and thin, even as You walk with me. Amen.*

Day  
**37**

Wednesday, 8 Apr



# Day 38

Maundy Thursday, 9 Apr

## Following Jesus

*Bible Reading: John 13:1-17; 31b-35*

*“So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other’s feet. I’ve laid down a pattern for you. What I’ve done, you do.”*

Jesus knew His time on earth was up, and He was soon to return to God the Father. He knew He would be betrayed to His enemies, and by whom. Despite the ignominy of the cross looming ahead, Jesus knew His mission and He was resolute in staying on-course. Why? Jesus’ death would be ultimate proof of God’s amazing love for us—that we sinners mired in hopelessness could now be reconciled to God, to find renewed hope and eternal life.

So Jesus gathered His closest disciples in the Upper Room for one last meal. During the supper, He got up from the table, bent low and washed His disciples’ feet. He re-dressed as a servant, and He did what was reserved for the lowest of servants. His disciples must have been shocked, and wondered what this was all about. And Jesus said, “If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”

Selfless servanthood—no task too low or dirty! May this be our example. May this be our mission, what we do. And may this be our character, who we are!



*How can you be a servant like Jesus? To one another? To the world out there—family, friends, neighbours, workmates, fellow Malaysians?*



*Dear God, tear me away from my “privileged” mindset and behaviour. Help me be like Jesus—giving up my privileges and serving others selflessly for their betterment and good. Amen.*



# Crucifying Jesus

Bible Reading: John 18:1–19:42

*“It is finished.”*

Why did the Jews want to kill Jesus? Because He had claimed to be the Son of God; that was blasphemy and punishable by death according to Jewish law. Because He had claimed to be King of the Jews, and anyone setting Himself up as ‘king’ defied Caesar and warranted the death penalty.

But Jesus’ death was no accident nor a craft of human design. It was an integral part of God’s sovereign plan to rescue us from the stranglehold of sin and to put us right with Himself. That necessitated Jesus coming down to earth as a human being (John 1:14), showing us the ways of the Father, and then giving up His life for us in utter obedience to His Father’s will. Jesus said, “No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do.” (John 10:18, GNT)

*“It is finished.”* On the one hand, it meant Jesus’ death. But more significantly, it meant that His life’s work on behalf of His heavenly Father, for our benefit, was done. Mission accomplished! And our gains? Our sins forgiven, pardoned. Our peace with God restored. Our place as sons and daughters in God’s family secured. Our fear of the grave buried. Our hope of life in all its fullness fulfilled.



*Reflect on the journey that Jesus underwent before His final death on the cross. What, in particular, resonates with you? What does it mean for you?*



*Dear God, I will never fully understand Jesus’ death for me—the journey He underwent, the crucifixion, and why. But I know that He died for me because of Your utter love for us. Teach me to live in light of Your grace always. Amen.*

Day

39

Good Friday, 10 Apr

# Day 40

Saturday, 11 Apr

## Room For Jesus

*Bible Reading: Matthew 27:57-66;  
John 19:38-42*

*So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock.*

*And she (Mary) gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn (Luke 2:7). Jesus, the Son of God and God-with-us, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to Israel (Luke 1-2); yet “there was no room for them in the inn”, and He had to be laid in a manger.*

*And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). Jesus came to bear God’s message of love and salvation for all; yet, when He came to his own, they rejected Him, hounded Him, and finally crucified Him. He came to give them life, but there was no room for Him in their lives.*

*So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb. At birth, so too in death, Jesus did not have His own place to rest. He was laid in a borrowed tomb, that of Joseph of Arimathea.*



*Is there room in your heart for Jesus? Is there room in your life for Jesus? Reflect and pray.*



*Dear God, forgive me for shutting You out of my life. I hear Your knocks on the door of my heart and I open it for You. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Make Your home in my life. Amen.*



Easter Sunday, 12 Apr

## **It Is True! The Lord Has Risen**

*Bible Reading: Luke 24:13-49*

*"This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."*



## Contributors

The Board of Worship and Music would like to thank all our contributors (one of whom wishes to remain anonymous) for their prayerful contributions.

### WRITERS

**Rev. David T.C. Loo** started his Life of Ministry as a Director with Youth For Christ in 1970. He obtained his Diploma and Theological Degrees from the Singapore Bible College and Trinity Theological College, Singapore. In a ministry that spans more than 40 years, David has served as Church Youth Director, Pastor, District Superintendent, School Chaplain, Chairman of the National Church Boards on Missions and Worship. His keenness is in Evangelism and Music. Since his retirement from pastoral responsibilities in 2008, David spends his time writing songs and poems, visiting and preaching in the smaller churches, speaking at evangelistic gatherings, and conducting seminars on the needs of the aged, with a vision towards setting up retirement communities in various parts of the Peninsula.

**Celina May Benjamin** worships at Christ Methodist Church, Ampang. Values moments of quiet listening over a well-brewed kopi. Finds cooking therapeutic and reading Christian classics a balm for the weary soul. On the road to retirement and wondering what next on this pilgrim journey.

**Rev. Christopher Rao** is currently the pastor of Wesley Methodist Church Teluk Intan. He has been a pastor for 20 years. He was also a youth worker for 4 years prior to becoming a pastor. His passion is to preach and teach God's Word. His heart is for prayer and missions. He enjoys reading, journalling and quiet retreats.



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**Kuan Mei Koon** worships at Whispering Hope Methodist Church. She is a pilgrim in progress who hopes that by God's grace she will complete her journey as a true disciple in time to come. When she is not working or busy attending to the needs of her three four-legged fur kids, she travels across the globe marvelling at God's wondrous creation.

**Tang Swee Kit** worships at Trinity Methodist Church PJ and serves as the assistant director of the Institute for Christian Ministry (TRAC ICM). She is passionate about her calling to help people grow and deepen their relationship with God, and enjoys creating space for others to encounter God at retreats. Besides journeying alongside others as a spiritual director, she enjoys taking walks, nature and photography.

**Juwita Suwito** is a singer-songwriter with a heart for worship. She weaves words into music but also has a shy penchant for the written word. Juwita currently chairs the TRAC Board of Worship and Music, worships with Damansara Utama Methodist Church, and is on a mission to unite worshippers to light up Malaysia with heart songs of the land (#MYWorshipCollective).

**Samuel Ong** is a servant of God, a family person and a doctor of hearts, both physical and spiritual. Blessed with many talents by God's amazing grace, he is active in many different arenas of life. He has a passion for young people, the All Blacks and hymns, and now, he is active in photography, capturing God's creative wonders. He served as Trinity Annual Conference Lay Leader from 2007-2012 and established Whispering Hope. He is married to Loo Ling and they have three lovely daughters (Ming, Xian and En).

## EDITOR

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

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