



# Lent

*A meditation guide*



# Reading schedule

## Week 1

Mark 1:1-13  
Mark 1:14-20  
Mark 1:21-28  
Mark 1:29-39

## Week 2

Mark 1:40-45  
Mark 2:1-12  
Mark 2:13-17  
Mark 2:18-22  
Mark 2:23-3:6  
Mark 3:7-19  
Mark 3:20-34

## Week 3

Mark 4:1-20  
Mark 4:21-25  
Mark 4:26-29  
Mark 4:30-34  
Mark 4:35-41  
Mark 5:1-20  
Mark 5:21-43

## Week 4

Mark 6:1-6  
Mark 6:7-29  
Mark 6:30-44  
Mark 6:45-56

## Week 5

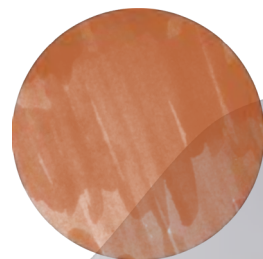
Mark 8:1-13  
Mark 8:14-21  
Mark 8:22-26  
Mark 8:27-33  
Mark 8:34-9:1  
Mark 9:2-13  
Mark 9:14-29

## Week 6

Mark 9:30-37  
Mark 9:38-50  
Mark 10:1-12  
Mark 10:13-31  
Mark 10:32-34  
Mark 10:35-45  
Mark 10:46-52

## Holy week

Palm Sunday: Mark 11  
Mark 12:1-34  
Mark 12:35-44  
Mark 13  
Maundy Thursday: Mark  
14:1-52  
Good Friday: Mark 14:53-  
15:41  
Holy Saturday: Mark  
15:42-47  
Easter Sunday: Mark 16



# What is Lent?

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Lent is a time for self-examination and deep meditation on the good news of the gospel. Celebrated throughout the Church since the third and fourth centuries, Lent was originally reserved as a time of preparation for those seeking baptism on Easter Sunday, but it has become a season of repentance, recommitment, and anticipation for all believers as we look forward to the events of Holy Week.

It spans a total of forty days, from Ash Wednesday to Easter—minus Sundays, which are considered “little Easters,” days to celebrate the victory of the cross together. The number forty connects to many stories throughout the Bible, but for the purposes of Lent, it relates specifically to the years of Israel’s wandering in the desert and to the forty days Jesus fasted in the wilderness.

Practicing Lent is our way of following Jesus into an extended season of prayer and fasting, a time to deny ourselves the comforts of life so that we may focus on the story of Jesus and make room for deeper intimacy with God.

We take time to prepare for major events like weddings or graduations, and Lent extends the same opportunity of preparation for celebrating the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Easter is not something that should sneak up on us, leaving us unprepared to exult in the love of God displayed on the cross. To truly step into the good news of Easter, we need time to meditate on the life of Jesus and on the sorrow of His death.

So, please join us in a season of emptying ourselves of the things of this life and being filled up with the great things of the world to come, made possible through the work of Christ and by the power of the Spirit.

## Practicing Lent

This Lenten guide will take you through the story of Jesus as told by the Gospel writer Mark. Every day there will be a reading from the book of Mark, followed by a prayer from *The Valley of Vision*

(collected prayers from the Puritans) or other written prayers, and an opportunity to write out a short prayer or reflection of your own.

We encourage you to make these readings and prayers part of your daily habits. Whether in the morning, at the end of the day, or at another opportune moment throughout your daily activities, find a space and a time to sit with God and the story of His Son. To make the process of habit formation easier on yourself, we suggest choosing a consistent time throughout the week. You should need no more than 30 minutes.

## Lectio Divina

Take your time as you read through these Scripture passages. Many of the chosen texts are intentionally shorter so as to encourage deeper meditation. As Lent is a season of repentance and self-examination, allow the Spirit to examine you as you read His word.

Follow the ancient Christian practice of meditation called lectio divina, a Latin term meaning “divine reading.”

This way of reading God’s word treats the Bible for what it is—the very words of the living God.

Begin by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His word with a short prayer. Perhaps as simple as, “Come Holy Spirit” or “Here I am, Lord, speak.” Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with?

Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life. Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

## Fasting

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that has been practiced by the people of God, even before the birth of the Church (Ex. 34:28). Jesus Himself gives guidelines on how we are to practice fasting (Matt. 6:16-18). Fasting is practiced throughout the Bible as a means to better hear from God, to repent of sin, and to grow in humility and intimacy with God.

Fasting is not just about taking things away from our lives. It is an opportunity to remove distractions and quiet the noise of life so that we can better hear from God and turn to Him in times of need.

For this Lenten season, we will be suggesting a different area of fasting every week. Each one is chosen because they represent comforts that we can often turn to as distractions. We hope that fasting from these things will help to bolster your self-examination and reflection on the story of Jesus, as well as support a growing intimacy with God. As you fast in these different areas, use those moments in which you miss their comfort as opportunities to turn your heart and mind back on Christ.

## Fasting Schedule

- Week 1: Food
- Week 2: Caffeine and/or Alcohol
- Week 3: Sweets
- Week 4: Shopping for Non-Essentials
- Week 5: Non-Worship Music & Radio
- Week 6: Social Media
- Week 7: TV & Movies

*Note: Follow the Spirit's leading with your fasting. Is*

*there something not listed that is keeping you from seeking comfort in the Lord? Are you feeling called to fast food for one day, one meal per day, or multiple day-long fasts?*

## Sabbath

Sabbath keeping is an important spiritual discipline for followers of Christ. It is a set aside day of rest when we recognize our creatureliness before our Creator God, being thankful for all He has given us and acknowledging our limits. It is a time “to pray and a time to play” (Eugene Peterson), when we take a break from weekly work activities and connect with God, one another, and the good world God has made.

As each Sunday throughout the season of Lent is considered a “little Easter” celebration, we encourage you to set aside Sunday as your day of rest. Take a break from fasting on Sunday and celebrate the gospel story with your church family.

## Additional resources

To learn more about the why, what, and how of these historic Christian practices, check out these resources:

### On the Sabbath



Sermon: “Resurrection Rest | Mark 2:23-28”

### On prayer and fasting



Blog: “Pray, Fast and Respond.”

### On spiritual disciplines



Blog: “Spiritual Disciplines: Seeking God’s Grace or Responding to It”

# Week 1

## This week's fast is food.

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

### — Food

Caffeine and/or Alcohol

Sweets

Shopping for Non-Essentials

Non-Worship Music & Radio

Social Media

TV & Movies

# Day 1 Ash Wednesday

Read Mark 1:1-13

Today marks the beginning of Lent. Over the course of Church history, Ash Wednesday developed into a day to ponder our sin and mortality, as well as our need for Jesus.

In some traditions it is celebrated with a worship service where ashes are drawn on the foreheads of worshippers in the shape of a cross. The ashes

symbolize frailty, mortality, and mourning, but also a means of purification. Ash Wednesday services commemorate the truth of discipleship to Christ: that we are to daily die to our old self—sold as it is to sin—and rise to the new life we have in Christ by the Spirit.

Three in One, One in three, God of my salvation,  
Heavenly Father, blessed Son, eternal Spirit, I adore Thee as one Being, one Essence, one God in  
three distinct Persons, for bringing sinners to Thy knowledge and to Thy kingdom.

O Father, Thou hast loved me and sent Jesus to redeem me;

O Jesus, Thou hast love me and assumed my nature, shed Thine own blood to wash away my  
sins, wrought righteousness to cover my unworthiness;

O Holy Spirit, Thou hast loved me and entered my heart, implanted there eternal life, revealed  
to me the glories of Jesus.

Three Persons and one God, I bless and praise Thee, for love so unmerited, so unspeakable, so  
wondrous, so mighty to save the lost and raise them to glory.

O Father, I thank Thee that in fullness of grace Thou hast given me to Jesus, to be His sheep,  
jewel, portion;

O Jesus, I thank Thee that in fullness of grace Thou hast accepted, espoused, bound me;

O Holy Spirit, I thank Thee that in fullness of grace Thou hast exhibited Jesus as my salvation,  
implanted faith within me, subdued my stubborn heart, made me one with Him forever.

O Father, Thou are enthroned to hear my prayers,

O Jesus, Thy hand is outstretched to take my petitions,

O Holy Spirit, Thou art willing to help my infirmities, to show me my need, to supply words, to  
pray within me, to strengthen me that I faint not in supplication.

O Triune God, who commandeth the universe, Thou hast commanded me to ask for those things that  
concern Thy kingdom and my soul. Let me live and pray as one baptized into the threefold Name.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



O LORD God,

The first act of calling is by Thy command in Thy Word,  
'Come unto Me, return unto Me';

The second is to let in light, so that I see that I am called particularly, and perceive the sweetness of the command as well as its truth, in regard to Thy great love of the sinner, by inviting him to come, though vile, in regard to the end of the command, which is fellowship with Thee, in regard to Thy promise in the gospel, which is all of grace.

Therefore Lord,

I need not search to see if I am elect, or loved, for if I turn Thou wilt come to me; Christ has promised me fellowship if I take Him, and the Spirit will pour Himself out on me, abolishing sin and punishment, assuring me of strength to persevere.

It is Thy pleasure to help all that pray for grace, and come to Thee for it.

When my heart is unsavoury with sin, sorrow, darkness, hell, only Thy grace can help me act with deep abasement under a sense of unworthiness.

Let me lament for forgetting daily to come to Thee, and cleanse me from the deceit of bringing my heart to a duty because the act pleased me or appealed to reason.

Grant that I may be salted with suffering, with every exactement tempered to my soul, every rod excellently fitted to my back, to chastise, humble, break me.

Let me not overlook the hand that holds the rod, as Thou didst not let me forget the rod that fell on Christ, and drew me to Him.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



My Father,

In a world of created changeable things, Christ and His Word alone remain unshaken.  
O to forsake all creatures, to rest as a stone on Him the foundation, to abide in Him, be  
borne up by Him!

For all my mercies come through Christ, who has designed, purchased, promised, effected  
them.

How sweet it is to be near Him, the Lamb, filled with holy affections!  
When I sin against Thee I cross Thy will, love, life, and have no comforter, no creature, to go  
to.

My sin is not so much this or that particular evil, but my continual separation, disunion,  
distance from Thee, and having a loose spirit towards Thee.  
But Thou hast given me a present, Jesus Thy Son, as Mediator between Thyself and my soul,  
as middle-man who in a pit holds both him below and Him above, for only He can span the  
chasm breached by sin, and satisfy divine justice.

May I always lay hold upon this Mediator, as a realized object of faith, and alone worthy by  
His love to bridge the gulf.

Let me know that He is dear to me by His Word;

I am one with Him by the Word on His part, and by faith on mine;

If I oppose the Word I oppose my Lord when He is most near;

If I receive the Word I receive my Lord wherein He is nigh.

O Thou who hast the hearts of all men in Thine hand, form my heart according to the  
Word, according to the image of Thy Son,  
So shall Christ the Word, and His Word, be my strength and comfort.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Thou God of all grace,  
Thou hast given me a Saviour, produce in me a faith to live by Him,  
to make Him all my desire, all my hope, all my glory.  
May I enter Him as my refuge, build on Him as my foundation, walk in Him as my way,  
follow Him as my guide, conform to Him as my example,  
receive His instructions as my prophet, rely on His intercessions as my high priest,  
obey Him as my king.  
May I never be ashamed of Him or His words, but joyfully bear His reproach,  
never displease Him by unholy or imprudent conduct,  
never count it a glory if I take it patiently when buffeted for a fault,  
never delay when Thy Word invites me to advance.  
May Thy dear Son preserve me from this present evil world,  
so that its smiles never allure, nor its frowns terrify,  
nor its vices defile, nor its errors delude me.  
May I feel that I am a stranger and a pilgrim on earth,  
declaring plainly that I seek a country, my title to it becoming daily more clear,  
my meetness for it more perfect, my foretastes of it more abundant;  
and whatsoever I do may it be done in the Saviour's Name.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Week 2

## This week's fast is caffeine.

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

Food

— **Caffeine and/or Alcohol**

Sweets

Shopping for Non-Essentials

Non-Worship Music & Radio

Social Media

TV & Movies

# Day 5

Read Mark 1:40-45

*Reminder: Sundays are a no-fast day. Celebrate the resurrection with your church family.*

O fountain of all good,  
Destroy in me every lofty thought,  
Break pride to pieces and scatter it to the  
winds,  
Annihilate each clinging shred of self-  
righteousness,  
Implant in me true lowliness of spirit,  
Abase me to self-loathing and self-  
abhorrence,  
Open in me a fount of penitential tears,  
Break me, then bind me up;  
Thus will my heart be a prepared dwelling  
for my God;  
Then can the Father take up His abode in  
me,  
Then can the blessed Jesus come with  
healing in His touch,  
Then can the Holy Spirit descend in  
sanctifying grace;  
O Holy Trinity, three Persons and one God,  
inhabit me, a temple consecrated to Thy  
glory.  
When Thou art present, evil cannot abide;  
In Thy fellowship is fullness of joy,  
Beneath Thy smile is peace of conscience,  
By Thy side no fears disturb,

no apprehensions banish rest of mind,  
With Thee my heart shall bloom with  
fragrance;  
Make me meet, through repentance,  
for Thine indwelling.  
Nothing exceeds Thy power,  
Nothing is too great for Thee to do,  
Nothing too good for Thee to give.  
Infinite is Thy might, boundless Thy love,  
limitless Thy grace, glorious Thy saving  
Name.  
Let angels sin for  
sinners repenting,  
prodigals restored,  
backsliders reclaimed,  
Satan's captives released,  
blind eyes opened,  
broken hearts bound up,  
the despondent cheered,  
the self-righteous stripped,  
the formalist driven from a refuge of lies,  
the ignorant enlightened,  
and saints built up in their holy faith.  
I ask great things of a great God.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

LORD God Almighty,  
Thou art beforehand with men  
for Thou hast reconciled Thyself to the world through the cross,  
and dost beseech men to accept reconciliation.  
It is my responsibility to grasp Thy overtures of grace,  
for if Thou, the offended part, act first with the word of appeasement,  
I need not call in question Thy willingness to save,  
but must deplore my own foolish maliciousness;  
If I do not come to Thee as one who seeks Thy favour,  
I live in contempt, anger, malice, self-sufficiency,  
and Thou dost call it enmity.  
Thou hast taught me the necessity of a Mediator,  
a Messiah,  
to be embraced in love with all my heart,  
as king to rule me,  
as prophet to guide me  
as priest to take away my sin and death,  
and this by faith in Thy beloved Son who teaches me not to guide myself,  
not to obey myself,  
not to try to rule and conquer sin,  
but to cleave to the One who will do all for me.  
Thou hast made known to me that to save me is Christ's work,  
but to cleave to Him by faith is my work,  
and with this faith is the necessity of my daily repentance  
as a mourning for the sin which Christ by grace has removed.  
Continue, O God, to teach me that faith apprehends Christ's righteousness  
not only for the satisfaction of justice,  
but as unspotted evidence of Thy love to me.  
Help me to make use of His work of salvation as the ground of peace,  
and of Thy favour to, and acceptance of me the sinner,  
so that I may live always near the cross.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O Thou terrible Meek,  
Let not pride swell my heart.  
My nature is the mire beneath my feet,  
the dust to which I shall return.  
In body I surpass not the meanest reptile;  
Whatever difference of form and intellect is  
mine is a free grant of Thy goodness;  
Every faculty of mind and body is Thy  
undeserved gift.  
Low as I am as a creature, I am lower as a  
sinner;  
I have trampled Thy law times without  
number;  
Sin's deformity is stamped upon me,  
darkens my brow, touches me with  
corruption;  
How can I flaunt myself proudly?  
Lowest abasement is my due place,  
for I am less than nothing before Thee.  
Help me see myself in Thy sight,  
then pride must wither, decay, die, perish.  
Humble my heart before Thee,  
and replenish it with Thy choicest gifts.  
As water rests not on barren hill summits,

but flows down to fertilize lowest vales,  
So make me the lowest of the lowly,  
that my spiritual riches may exceedingly  
abound.

When I leave duties undone,  
may condemning thought strip me of pride,  
deepen in me devotion to Thy service,  
and quicken me to more watchful care.  
When I am tempted to think highly of  
myself,  
grant me to see the wily power of my  
spiritual enemy;  
Help me to stand with wary eye on the  
watch-tower of faith,  
and to cling with determined grasp to my  
humble Lord;  
If I fall let me hide myself in my  
Redeemer's righteousness,  
and when I escape, may I ascribe all  
deliverance to Thy grace.  
Keep me humble, meek, lowly.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O Lover to the uttermost,  
May I read the meltings of Thy heart to me  
in the manger of Thy birth  
in the garden of Thy agony,  
in the cross of Thy suffering,  
in the tomb of Thy resurrection,  
in the heaven of Thy intercession.  
Bold in this thought I defy my adversary,  
tread down his temptations,  
resist his schemings,  
renounce the world,  
am valiant for truth.  
Deepen in me a sense of my holy  
relationship to Thee,  
as spiritual Bridegroom,  
as Jehovah's Fellow,  
as sinners' Friend.  
I think of Thy glory and my vileness,  
Thy majesty and my meanness,  
Thy beauty and my deformity,

Thy purity and my filth,  
Thy righteousness and my iniquity.  
Thou hast loved me everlastingly,  
unchangeably,  
may I love Thee as I am loved;  
Thou hast given Thyself for me,  
may I give myself to Thee;  
Thou hast died for me,  
may I live to Thee,  
in every moment of my time,  
in every movement of my mind,  
in every pulse of my heart.  
May I never dally with the world and its  
allurements,  
but walk by Thy side,  
listen to Thy voice,  
be clothed with Thy graces,  
and adorned with Thy righteousness.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



# Day 9

Read Mark 2:23-3:6

O Maker and Upholder of all things,  
Day and night are Thine; they are also mine  
from Thee –  
the night to ride me of the cares of the day,  
to refresh my weary body,  
to renew my natural strength;  
the day to summon me to new activities,  
to give me opportunity to glorify Thee,  
to serve my generation,  
to acquire knowledge, holiness, eternal life.  
But one day above all days is made  
especially for Thy honour and my  
improvement;  
The sabbath reminds me  
of Thy rest from creation,  
of the resurrection of my Saviour,  
of His entering into repose.  
Thy house is mine,  
but I am unworthy to meet Thee there,  
and am unfit for spiritual service.  
When I enter it I come before Thee as a  
sinner,  
condemned by conscience and Thy Word,  
For I am still in the body and in the  
wilderness,

ignorant, weak, in danger,  
and in need of Thine aid.  
But encouraged by Thy all-sufficient grace  
let me go to Thy house with a lively hope of  
meeting Thee,  
knowing that there Thou wilt come to me  
and give me peace.  
My soul is drawn out to Thee in longing  
desires  
for Thy presence in the sanctuary, at the  
table,  
where all are entertained on a feast of good  
things;  
Let me before the broken elements,  
emblems of Thy dying love,  
cry to Thee with broken heart for grace and  
forgiveness.  
I long for that blissful communion of Thy  
people  
in Thy eternal house in the perfect  
kingdom;  
These are they that follow the Lamb;  
May I be of their company!

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O Saviour of sinners,  
Thy Name is excellent,  
Thy glory high,  
Thy compassion unfailing,  
Thy condescension wonderful,  
Thy mercy tender.  
I bless Thee for the discoveries, invitations,  
promises of the gospel  
for in them is pardon for rebels,  
liberty for captives,  
health for the sick,  
salvation for the lost.  
I come to Thee in Thy beloved Name of  
Jesus;  
re-impress thy image upon my soul;  
Raise me above the smiles and frowns of  
the world,  
regarding it as a light thing to be judged by  
men;  
May Thy approbation be my only aim,  
Thy Word my one rule.  
Make me to abhor that which grieves Thy  
Holy Spirit,

to suspect consolations of a worldly nature,  
to shun a careless way of life,  
to reprove evil,  
to instruct with meekness those who  
oppose me,  
to be gentle and patient towards all men,  
to be not only a professor but an example of  
the gospel,  
displaying in every relation, office, and  
condition  
its excellency, loveliness and advantages.  
How little have I illustrated my principles  
and improved my privileges!  
How seldom I served my generation!  
How often have I injured and not  
recommended my Redeemer!  
How few are those blessed through me!  
In many things I have offended,  
in all come short of Thy glory;  
Pardon my iniquity, for it is great.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

God of the passing hour,  
Another week has gone and I have been  
preserved  
in my going out,  
in my coming in.  
Thine has been the vigilance that has  
turned threatened evils aside;  
Thine the supplies that have nourished me;  
Thine the comforts that have indulged me;  
Thine the relations and friends that have  
delighted me;  
Thine the means of grace which have  
edified me;  
Thine the Book, which, amidst all my  
enjoyments,  
has told me that this is not my rest,  
that in all successes one thing alone is  
needful,  
to love my Saviour.  
Nothing can equal the number of Thy  
mercies  
but my imperfections and sins.

These, O God, I will neither conceal nor  
palliate,  
but confess with a broken heart.  
In what condition would secret reviews of  
my life leave me  
were it not for the assurance that with Thee  
there is plenteous redemption,  
that Thou art a forgiving God,  
that Thou mayest be feared!  
While I hope for pardon through the blood  
of the cross,  
I pray to be clothed with humility,  
to be quickened in Thy way,  
to be more devoted to Thee,  
to keep the end of my life in view,  
to be cured of the folly of delay and  
indecision,  
to know how frail I am,  
to number my days and apply my heart  
unto wisdom.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Week 3

## This week's fast is sweets.

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

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Caffeine and/or Alcohol  
— **Sweets**  
Shopping for Non-Essentials  
Non-Worship Music & Radio  
Social Media  
TV & Movies

# Day 12

Read Mark 4:1-20

*Reminder: Sundays are a no-fast day. Celebrate the resurrection with your church family.*

Heavenly Father,  
Thou hast placed me in the church  
which Thy Son purchased by His own  
blood.  
Add grace to grace that I may live worthy of  
my vocation.

I am a voyager across life's ocean;  
Safe in heaven's ark, may I pass through a  
troubled world  
into the harbour of eternal rest.

I am a tree of the vineyard Thou hast  
planted.  
Grant me not to be barren, with worthless  
leaves and wild grapes;  
Prune me of useless branches;  
Water me with dews of blessing.  
I am part of the Lamb's bride, the church.  
Help me to be true, faithful, chaste, loving,  
pure, devoted;  
Let no strong affection wantonly dally with  
the world.

May I live high above a love of things  
temporal,  
sanctified, cleansed, unblemished, hallowed  
by grace,  
Thy love my fullness,  
Thy glory my joy,  
Thy precepts my pathway,  
Thy cross my resting place.  
My heart is not always a flame of adoring  
love,  
But, resting in Thy Son's redemption,  
I look forward to the days of heaven,  
where no langour shall oppress,  
no iniquities chill,  
no mists of unbelief dim the eye,  
No zeal ever tires.  
Father, these thoughts are the stay, prop,  
and comfort of my soul.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
Fill me with Thy Spirit  
that I may be occupied with His presence.  
I am blind – let Him say, 'Let there be light!'  
May He give me faith to behold  
my name engraven in Thy hand,  
my soul and body redeemed by Thy blood,  
my sinfulness covered by the life of  
pure obedience.  
Replenish me by His revealing grace,  
that I may realise my indissoluble union  
with Thee;  
that I may know Thou hast espoused me  
to Thyself for ever,  
in righteousness, love, mercy, faithfulness;  
that I am one with Thee,  
as a branch with its stock, as a building  
with its foundation.  
May His comforts cheer me in my sorrows,  
His strength sustain me in my trials,  
His blessings revive me in my weariness,  
His presence render me a fruitful tree of  
holiness,

His might establish me in peace and joy,  
His incitements make me ceaseless in prayer,  
His animation kindle in me undying  
devotion.  
Send Him as the searcher of my heart,  
to show me more of my corruptions  
and helplessness  
that I may flee to Thee,  
cling to Thee,  
rest on Thee,  
as the beginning and end of my salvation.  
May I never vex Him by my indifference  
and waywardness,  
grieve Him by my cold welcome,  
resist Him by my hard rebellion.

Answer my prayers, O Lord,  
for Thy great Name's sake.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O LORD God, who inhabitest eternity,  
The heavens declare Thy glory,  
The earth Thy riches,  
The universe is Thy temple;  
Thy presence fills immensity,  
Yet Thou hast of Thy pleasure created life,  
and communicated happiness;  
Thou hast made me what I am, and given  
me  
what I have;  
In Thee I live and move and have my being;  
Thy providence has set the bounds of my  
habitation,  
and wisely administers all my affairs.  
I thank Thee for Thy riches to me in Jesus,  
for the unclouded revelation of Him in Thy  
Word,  
where I behold His Person, character, grace,  
glory,  
humiliation, sufferings, death, and  
resurrection;  
Give me to feel a need of His continual  
saviourhood,  
and cry with Job, 'I am vile',  
with Peter, 'I perish',

with the publican, 'Be merciful to me, a  
sinner'.  
Subdue in me the love of sin,  
Let me know the need of renovation as well  
as  
of forgiveness,  
in order to serve and enjoy Thee for ever,  
I come to Thee in the all-prevailing Name  
of Jesus,  
with nothing of my own to plead,  
no works, no worthiness, no promises.  
I am often straying,  
often knowingly opposing Thy authority,  
often abusing Thy goodness;  
Much of my guilt arises from my religious  
privileges,  
my low estimation of them,  
my failure to use them to my advantage,  
But I am not careless of Thy favour or  
regardless of Thy glory;  
Impress me deeply with a sense of Thine  
omnipresence, that Thou art about my path,  
my ways, my lying down, my end.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



LORD Jesus,  
Give me a deeper repentance,  
a horror of sin,  
a dread of its approach;  
Help me chastly to flee it,  
and jealously to resolve that my heart  
shall be Thine alone.  
Give me a deeper trust,  
that I may lose myself to find myself in  
Thee,  
the ground of my rest,  
the spring of my being.  
Give me a deeper knowledge of Thyself  
as Saviour, Master, Lord, and King.  
Give me a deeper power in private prayer,  
more sweetness in Thy Word,  
more steadfast grip on its truth.  
Give me a deeper holiness in speech,  
thought, action,  
and let me not seek moral virtue apart from  
Thee.

Plough deep in me, great Lord,  
heavily Husbandman,  
that my being may be a tilled field,  
the roots of grace spreading far and wide,  
until Thou alone art seen in me,  
Thy beauty golden like summer harvest,  
Thy fruitfulness as autumn plenty.  
I have no Master but Thee,  
no law but Thy will,  
no delight but Thyself,  
no wealth but that Thou givest,  
no good but that Thou blessest,  
no peace but that Thou bestowest.  
I am nothing but that Thou makest me,  
I have nothing but that I receive from Thee,  
I can be nothing but that grace adorns me.  
Quarry me deep, dear Lord,  
and then fill me to overflowing  
with living water.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O LORD of grace,  
The world is before me this day,  
and I am weak and fearful,  
but I look to Thee for strength;  
If I venture forth alone I stumble and fall,  
But on the Beloved's arms I am firm as the  
eternal hills;  
If left to the treachery of my heart  
I shall shame Thy Name,  
but if enlightened, guided, upheld by Thy  
Spirit,  
I shall bring Thee glory.  
Be Thou my arm to support,  
my strength to stand,  
my light to see,  
my feet to run,  
my shield to protect,  
my sword to repel,  
my sun to warm.  
To enrich me will not diminish Thy  
fullness;  
All Thy lovingkindness is in Thy Son,  
I bring Him to Thee in the arms of faith,

I urge His saving Name as the One who  
died for me.  
I plead His blood to pay my debts of wrong.  
Accept His worthiness for my  
unworthiness,  
His sinlessness for my transgressions,  
His purity for my uncleanness,  
His sincerity for my guile,  
His truth for my deceits,  
His meekness for my pride,  
His constancy for my backsliding,  
His love for my enmity,  
His fullness for my emptiness,  
His faithfulness for my treachery,  
His obedience for my lawlessness,  
His glory for my shame,  
His devotedness for my waywardness,  
His holy life for my uncaste ways,  
His righteousness for my dead works,  
His death for my life.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Creator and Redeemer God,  
Author of all existence, source of all  
blessedness,  
I adore Thee for making me capable of  
knowing Thee,  
for giving me reason and conscience,  
for leading me to desire Thee;  
I praise Thee for the revelation of Thyself in  
the gospel,  
for Thy heart as a dwelling place of pity,  
for Thy thoughts of peace towards me,  
for Thy patience and Thy graciousness,  
for the vastness of Thy mercy.  
Thou hast moved my conscience to know  
how  
the guilty can be pardoned,  
the unholy sanctified,  
the poor enriched.  
May I be always amongst those who not  
only  
hear but know Thee,  
who walk with and rejoice in Thee,  
who take Thee at Thy word and find life  
there.  
Keep me always longing

for a present salvation in Holy Spirit  
comforts  
and rejoicings,  
for spiritual graces and blessings,  
for help to value my duties as well as my  
privileges.  
May I cherish simplicity and godly sincerity  
of character.  
Help me to be in reality before Thee  
as in appearance I am before men,  
to be religious before I profess religion,  
to leave the world before I enter the church,  
to set my affections on things above,  
to shun forbidden follies and vanities,  
to be a dispenser as well as a partaker of  
grace,  
to be prepared to bear evil as well as to do  
good.  
O God, make me worthy of this calling,  
that the Name of Jesus may be glorified in  
me  
and I in him.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O Holy Father, Thou hast freely given Thy Son,  
O Divine Son, Thou hast freely paid my debt,  
O Eternal Spirit, Thou hast freely bid me come,  
O Triune God, Thou dost freely grace me  
with salvation.

Prayers and tears could not suffice to  
pardon my sins,  
nor anything less than atoning blood,  
but my believing is my receiving,  
for a thankful acceptance is no paying of  
the debt.

What didst Thou see in me?  
that I a poor, diseased, despised sinner  
should be clothed in Thy bright glory?  
that a creeping worm  
should be advanced to this high state?  
that one lately groaning, weeping, dying,  
should be as full of joy as my heart can hold?  
that a being of dust and darkness  
should be taken like Mordecai from captivity,  
and set next to the king?  
should be lifted like Daniel from a den

and be made ruler of princes and provinces?  
Who can fathom immeasurable love?  
As far as the rational soul exceeds the  
senses,  
so does the spirit exceed the rational in its  
knowledge of Thee.  
Thou hast given me understanding to  
compass the earth,  
measure the sun, moon, stars, universe,  
but above all to know Thee, the only true God.  
I marvel that the finite can know the Infinite,  
here a little, afterwards in full-orbed truth;  
Now I know but a small portion of what  
I shall know,  
here in part, there in perfection,  
here a glimpse, there a glory.  
To enjoy Thee is life eternal,  
and to enjoy is to know.  
Keep me in the freedom of experiencing  
Thy salvation continually.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Week 4

This week's fast is shopping for non-essentials.

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

Food  
Caffeine and/or Alcohol  
Sweets  
— **Shopping for Non-Essentials**  
Non-Worship Music & Radio  
Social Media  
TV & Movies

*Reminder: Sundays are a no-fast day. Celebrate the resurrection with your church family.*

Lord Jesus

I am blind, be Thou my light.  
ignorant, be Thou my wisdom.  
self-willed, be Thou my mind.

Open my ear to grasp quickly Thy Spirit's voice,  
and delightfully run after His beckoning hand;  
Melt my conscience that no hardness remain,  
make it alive to evil's slightest touch;  
When Satan approaches may I flee to Thy  
wounds,

and there cease to tremble at all alarms.

Be my good Shepherd to lead me into  
the green pastures of Thy Word,  
and cause me to lie down beside the rivers  
of its comforts.

Fill me with peace, that no disquieting  
wordly gales

may ruffle the calm surface of my soul.

Thy cross was upraised to be my refuge,  
Thy blood streamed forth to wash me clean,  
Thy death occurred to give me a surety,

Thy Name is my property to save me,  
By Thee all heaven is poured into my heart,  
but it is too narrow to comprehend Thy love.  
I was a stranger, an outcast, a slave, a rebel,  
but Thy cross has brought me near,  
has softened my heart,  
has made me Thy Father's child,  
has admitted me to Thy family,  
has made me joint-heir with Thyself.  
O that I may love Thee as Thou lovest me,  
that I may walk worthy of Thee, my Lord,  
that I may reflect the image of heaven's  
first-born.

May I always see Thy beauty with the clear  
eye of faith,

and feel the power of Thy Spirit in my heart,  
for unless He move mightily in me  
no inward fire will be kindled.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Sovereign God

Thy cause, not my own, engages my heart,  
and I appeal to Thee with greatest freedom  
to set up Thy kingdom in every place  
where Satan reigns;

Glorify Thyself and I shall rejoice,  
for to bring honour to Thy Name is my sole  
desire.

I adore Thee that Thou art God,  
and long that others should know it, feel it,  
and rejoice in it.

O that all men might love and praise Thee,  
that Thou mightest have all glory  
from the intelligent world!

Let sinners be brought to Thee for Thy dear  
Name!

To the eye of reason everything respecting  
the conversion of others is as dark as  
midnight,

But Thou canst accomplish great things;  
the cause is Thine,  
and it is to Thy glory that men should be saved.

Lord, use me as Thou wilt,  
do with me what Thou wilt;  
but, O, promote Thy cause,

let thy kingdom come,  
let Thy blessed interest be advanced  
in this world!

O do Thou bring in great numbers to Jesus!

let me see that glorious day,  
and give me to grasp for multitudes of  
souls;

let me be willing to die to that end;  
and while I live let me labour for Thee  
to the utmost of my strength,  
spending time profitably in this work,  
both in health and in weakness.

It is Thy cause and kingdom I long for,  
not my own.

O, answer Thou my request!

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



Thou art the blessed God,  
Happy in Thyself,  
source of happiness in Thy creatures,  
my Maker, Benefactor, Proprietor,  
Upholder.  
Thou hast produced and sustained me,  
supported and indulged me,  
saved and kept me;  
Thou art in every situation able to meet  
my needs and miseries.  
May I live by Thee, live for Thee,  
never be satisfied with my Christian progress  
But as I resemble Christ;  
And may conformity to His principles, temper,  
and conduct grow hourly in my life.  
Let Thy unexampled love constrain me into  
holy obedience,  
and render my duty my delight.  
If others deem my faith folly,  
my meekness infirmity,

my zeal madness,  
my hope delusion,  
my actions hypocrisy,  
may I rejoice to suffer for Thy Name.  
Keep me walking steadfastly towards the  
country  
of everlasting delights,  
that paradise-land which is my true  
inheritance.  
Support me by the strength of heaven  
that I may never turn back,  
or desire false pleasures  
that wilt and disappear into nothing.  
As I pursue my heavenly journey by Thy grace  
let me be known as a man with no aim  
but that of burning desire for Thee,  
and the good and salvation  
of my fellow men.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O my Saviour  
Help me.  
I am so slow to learn,  
so prone to forget,  
so weak to climb;  
I am in the foothills when I should be  
on the heights;  
I am pained by my graceless heart,  
my prayerless days,  
my poverty of love,  
my sloth in the heavenly race,  
my sullied conscience,  
my wasted hours.  
my unspent opportunities.  
I am blind while light shines around me:  
take the scales from my eyes,  
grind to dust the evil heart of unbelief.  
Make it my chiefest joy to study Thee,  
meditate on Thee,  
gaze on Thee,  
sit like Mary at Thy feet,  
lean like John on Thy breast,

appeal like Peter to Thy love,  
count like Paul all things dung.  
Give me increase and progress in grace  
so that there may be  
more decision in my character,  
more vigour in my purpose.  
more elevation in my life,  
more fervour in my devotion,  
more constancy in my zeal.  
As I have a position in the world,  
keep me from making the world my  
position;  
May I never seek in the creature  
what can be found only in the Creator;

Ride forth in me, Thou King of kings  
And Lord of lords,  
That I may live victoriously,  
and in victory attain my end.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Heavenly Father,  
Save me entirely from sin.  
I know I am righteous through the  
righteousness of another,  
but I pant and pine for likeness to Thyself;  
I am Thy child and should bear Thy image,  
Enable me to recognize my death unto sin;  
When it tempts me may I be deaf unto its  
voice.  
Deliver me from the invasion as well as  
the dominion of sin.  
Grant me to walk as Christ walked,  
to live in the newness of His life,  
the life of love, the life of faith,  
the life of holiness.  
I abhor my body of death,  
its indolence, envy, meanness, pride.  
Forgive, and kill these vices,  
have mercy on my unbelief,  
on my corrupt and wandering heart.  
When Thy blessings come I begin to idolize  
them,  
and set my affection on some beloved object  
—

Children, friends, wealth, honour;  
Cleanse this spiritual adultery and give me  
chastity;  
close my heart to all but Thee.  
Sin is my greatest curse;  
Let Thy victory be apparent to my  
consciousness,  
and displayed in my life.  
Help me to be always devoted, confident,  
obedient,  
resigned, childlike in my trust of Thee,  
to love Thee with soul, body, mind,  
strength,  
to love my fellow-man as I love myself,  
to be saved from unregenerate temper,  
hard thoughts, slanderous words, meanness,  
unkind manners,  
to master my tongue and keep the door  
of my lips.  
Fill me with grace daily,  
that my life be a fountain  
of sweet water.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O LORD,  
The world is artful to entrap,  
approaches in fascinating guise,  
extends many a gilded bait,  
presents many a charming face.  
Let my faith scan every painted bauble,  
and escape every bewitching snare  
in a victory that overcomes all things.  
In my duties give me firmness, energy, zeal,  
devotion to Thy cause,  
courage in Thy Name,  
love as a working grace,  
and all commensurate with my trust.  
Let faith stride forth in giant power,  
and love respond with energy in every act.  
I often mourn the absence of my beloved Lord  
whose smile makes earth a paradise,  
whose voice is sweetest music,  
whose presence gives all graces strength.

But by unbelief I often keep Him outside  
my door.  
Let faith give entrance that He may abide  
with me for ever.

Thy Word is full of promises,  
flowers of sweet fragrance,  
fruits of refreshing flavour  
when culled by faith.  
May I be made rich in its riches,  
be strong in its power,  
Be happy in its joy,  
abide in its sweetness,  
Feast on its preciousness,  
draw vigour from its manna.  
Lord, increase my faith.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O my God,  
Thou fairest, greatest, first of all objects,  
my heart admires, adores, loves Thee,  
for my little vessel is as full as it can be,  
And I would pour out all that fullness  
before Thee in ceaseless flow.  
When I think upon and converse with Thee  
ten thousand delightful thoughts spring up,  
ten thousand sources of pleasure are  
unsealed,  
ten thousand refreshing joys spread over  
my heart,  
crowding into every moment of happiness.  
I bless Thee for the soul Thou hast created,  
for adorning it, sanctifying it,  
though it is fixed in barren soil;  
for the body Thou hast given me,  
for preserving its strength and vigour,  
for providing senses to enjoy delights,  
for the ease and freedom of my limbs,  
for hands, eyes, ears that do Thy bidding;  
for Thy royal bounty providing my daily  
support,

for a full table and overflowing cup,  
for appetite, taste, sweetness,  
for social joys of relatives and friends,  
for ability to serve others,  
for a heart that feels sorrows and  
necessities,  
for a mind to care for my fellow-men,  
for opportunities of spreading happiness  
around,  
for loved ones in the joys of heaven,  
for my own expectation of seeing Thee  
clearly.  
I love Thee above the powers of language  
to express,  
for what Thou art to Thy creatures.  
Increase my love, O my God, through time  
and eternity.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Week 5

This week's fast is non-worship music & radio.

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

Food  
Caffeine and/or Alcohol  
Sweets  
Shopping for Non-Essentials  
— **Non-Worship Music & Radio**  
Social Media  
TV & Movies

# Day 26

Read Mark 8:1-13

*Reminder: Sundays are a no-fast day. Celebrate the resurrection with your church family.*

Lord Jesus, great High Priest,

Thou hast opened a new and living way  
by which a fallen creature can approach

    Thee with acceptance.

    Help me to contemplate

    the dignity of Thy Person,

    The perfectness of Thy sacrifice,

    the effectiveness of Thy intercession.

O what blessedness accompanies devotion,

when under all the trials that weary me,

    the cares that corrode me,

    the fears that disturb me,

    the infirmities that oppress me,

    I can come to Thee in my need

    and feel peace beyond understanding!

The grace that restores is necessary to preserve,

    lead, guard, supply, help me.

And here Thy saints encourage my hope;

they were once poor and are now rich,

    bound and are now free,

    tried and now are victorious.

Every new duty calls for more grace than

I now possess,

but not more than is found in Thee,

the Divine Treasury in whom all the  
fullness dwells.

To Thee I repair for grace upon grace,  
until every void made by sin be replenished

and I am filled with all Thy fullness.

May my desires be enlarged and my hopes

    emboldened,

    that I may honour Thee by my entire

    dependency

    and the greatness of my expectation.

Do Thou be with me, and prepare me for all

the smiles of prosperity, the frowns of

    adversity,

the losses of substance, the death of friends,

the days of darkness, the changes of life,

    and the last great change of all.

May I find Thy grace sufficient

    for all my needs.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



Compassionate LORD,  
Thy mercies have brought me to the dawn  
of another day,  
Vain will be its gift unless I grow in grace,  
increase in knowledge,  
ripened for spiritual harvest.  
Let me this day know Thee as Thou art,  
love Thee supremely,  
serve Thee wholly,  
admire Thee fully.  
Through grace let my will respond to Thee,  
Knowing that power to obey is not in me,  
but  
that Thy free love alone enables me to serve  
Thee.  
Here then is my empty heart,  
overflow it with Thy choicest gifts;  
Here is my blind understanding,  
chase away its mists of ignorance.  
O ever watchful Shepherd,  
lead, guide, tend me this day;  
Without Thy restraining rod I err and stray;  
Hedge up my path lest I wander into

unwholesome pleasure,  
and drink its poisonous streams;  
Direct my feet that I be not entangled  
in Satan's secret snares,  
nor fall into his hidden traps.  
Defend me from assailing foes,  
from evil circumstances,  
from myself.  
My adversaries are part and parcel of my  
nature;  
They cling to me as my very skin;  
I cannot escape their contact.  
In my rising up and sitting down they  
barnacle me;  
They entice with constant baits;  
My enemy is within the citadel;  
Come with almighty power and cast him  
out,  
peirce him to death,  
and abolish in me every particle  
of carnal life this day.  
—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Thou great I AM,  
I acknowledge and confess that all things  
come of Thee –  
life, breath, happiness, advancement,  
sight, touch, hearing,  
goodness, truth, beauty –  
all that makes existence amiable.  
In the spiritual world also I am dependant  
entirely upon Thee.  
Give me grace to know more of my need of  
grace;  
Show me my sinfulness that may willingly  
confess it;  
Reveal to me my weakness that I may know  
my strength in Thee.  
I thank Thee for any sign of penitence;  
give me more of it;  
My sins are black and deep,  
and rise from a stony, proud,  
self-righteous heart;  
Help me to confess them with mourning,  
regret, self-loathing,  
with no pretense to merit or excuse;  
I need healing,  
Good Physician, here is scope for Thee,  
come and manifest Thy power;

I need faith;  
Thou who hast given it me, maintain,  
strengthen, increase it,  
Centre it upon the Saviour's work,  
upon the majesty of the Father,  
upon the operations of the Spirit;  
Work it in me now that I may never doubt  
Thee  
as the truthful, mighty, faithful God.  
Then I can bring my heart to Thee  
full of love, gratitude, hope, joy.  
May I lay at Thy feet these fruits grown  
in Thy garden,  
love Thee with a passion that can never  
cool,  
believe in Thee with a confidence that  
never staggers,  
hope in Thee with an expectation that can  
never be dim,  
Delight in Thee with a rejoicing that cannot  
be stifled,  
glorify Thee with the highest of my powers,  
burning, blazing, glowing, radiating, as from  
Thy own glory.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O God,

I bless Thee for the happy moment  
when I first saw Thy law fulfilled in Christ,  
wrath appeased, death destroyed, sin  
forgiven, my soul saved.

Ever since, Thou hast been faithful to me:  
daily have I proved the power of Jesus' blood,  
daily have I known the strength of the Spirit,  
my teacher, director, sanctifier.

I want no other rock to build upon than  
that I have,  
desire no other hope than that of gospel truth,  
need no other look than that which gazes  
on the cross.

Forgive me if I have tried to add anything  
to the one foundation,

if I have unconsciously relied upon my  
knowledge,  
experience, deeds, and not seen them  
as filthy rags,

if I have attempted to complete what is  
perfect in Christ;

May my cry be always, Only Jesus! only

Jesus!

In Him is freedom from condemnation,  
fullness in His righteousness,  
eternal vitality in His given life,  
indissoluble union in fellowship with Him;  
In Him I have all that I can hold;  
enlarge me to take in more.

If I backslide,  
let me like Peter weep bitterly and return  
to Him;

If I am tempted, and have no wit,  
give me strength enough to trust in Him;

If I am weak,  
may I faint upon His bosom of eternal love;

If in extremity,  
let me feel that He can deliver me;  
If driven to the verge of hope and to the pit  
of despair,

grant me grace to fall into His arms.

O God, hear me, do for me more  
than I ask, think, or dream.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O LORD

I marvel that Thou shouldst become  
incarnate,

be crucified, dead, and buried.

The sepulchre calls forth my adoring  
wonder,

for it is empty and Thou art risen;

the four-fold gospel attests it,

the living witnesses prove it,

my heart's experience knows it.

Give me to die with Thee that I may rise to  
new life,

for I wish to be as dead and buried

to sin, to selfishness, to the world;

that I might not hear the voice of the  
charmer,

and might be delivered from his lusts.

O Lord, there is much ill about me –  
mortify it.

Purge me from selfishness,

the fear of man, the love of approbation,

the shame of being thought old-fashioned,

the desire to be cultivated or modern.

Let me reckon my old life dead  
because of crucifixion,

and never feed it as a living thing.

Grant me to stand with my dying Saviour,

to be content to be rejected,

to be willing to take up unpopular truths,  
and to hold fast despised teachings until  
death.

Help me to be resolute and Christ-  
contained.

Never let me wander from the path of  
obedience  
to Thy will.

Strengthen me for the battles ahead.

Give me courage for all the trials,  
and grace for all the joys.

Help me to be a holy, happy person,  
free from every wrong desire,

from everything contrary to Thy mind.

Grant me more and more of the  
resurrection life:

may it rule me,

may I walk in its power,

and be strengthened through its influence.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Glorious God,  
It is the flame of my life to worship Thee,  
the crown and glory of my soul to adore  
Thee,  
heavenly pleasure to approach Thee.  
Give me power by Thy Spirit to help me  
worship now,  
that I may forget the world,  
be brought into fullness of life,  
be refreshed, comforted, blessed.  
Give me knowledge of Thy goodness  
that I might not be over-awed by Thy  
greatness;  
Give me Jesus, Son of Man, Son of God,  
that I might not be terrified,  
but be drawn near with filial love,  
with holy boldness;  
He is my Mediator, Brother, Interpreter,  
Branch, Daysman, Lamb;  
Him I glorify,  
in Him I am set on high.

Crowns to give I have none,  
but what Thou hast given I return,  
content to feel that everything is mine  
when it is Thine,  
and the more fully mine when I have  
yielded it  
to Thee.  
Let me live wholly to my Saviour,  
free from distractions,  
from carking care,  
from hindrances to the pursuit  
of the narrow way.  
I am pardoned through the blood of Jesus –  
give me a new sense of it,  
continue to pardon me by it,  
may I come every day to the fountain,  
and ever day be washed anew,  
that I may worship Thee always  
in the Spirit and in truth.  
—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

LORD God Almighty,  
I ask not to be enrolled amongst the earthly  
great and rich,  
but to be numbered with the spiritually  
blessed.  
Make it my present, supreme, persevering  
concern  
to obtain those blessings which are  
spiritual in their nature,  
eternal in their continuance,  
satisfying in their possession.  
Preserve me from a false estimate of the  
whole  
or a part of my character;  
May I pay regard to  
my principles as well as my conduct,  
my motives as well as my actions.  
Help me  
never to mistake the excitement of my  
passions  
for the renewing of the Holy Spirit,  
never to judge my religion by occasional  
impressions and impulses, but by my

constant and prevailing disposition.  
May my heart be right with Thee,  
and my life as becometh the gospel.  
May I maintain a supreme regard to another  
and better world,  
and feel and confess myself a stranger  
and a pilgrim here.  
Afford me all the direction, defense,  
support,  
and consolation my journey hence requires,  
and grant me a mind stayed upon Thee.  
Give me large abundance of the supply of  
the Spirit of Jesus,  
that I may be prepared for every duty,  
love Thee in all my mercies,  
submit to Thee in every trial,  
trust Thee when walking in darkness,  
have peace in Thee amidst life's changes.  
Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief  
and uncertainties.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Week 6

## This week's fast is social media.

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

Food  
Caffeine and/or Alcohol  
Sweets  
Shopping for Non-Essentials  
Non-Worship Music & Radio  
— **Social Media**  
TV & Movies

*Reminder: Sundays are a no-fast day. Celebrate the resurrection with your church family.*

Mighty God,  
I humble myself for faculties misused,  
opportunities neglected,  
words ill-advised,  
I repent of my folly and inconsiderate ways,  
my broken resolutions, untrue service,  
my backsliding steps,  
my vain thoughts.  
O bury my sins in the ocean of Jesus' blood  
and let no evil result from my fretful  
temper,  
unseemly behaviour, provoking pettiness.  
If by unkindness I have wounded or hurt  
another,  
do Thou pour in the balm of heavenly  
consolation;  
If I have turned coldly from need, misery, grief,  
do not in just anger forsake me:  
If I have withheld relief from penury and pain,  
do not withhold Thy gracious bounty from me.  
If I have shunned those who have offended me,  
keep open the door of Thy heart to my need.  
  
Fill me with an over-flowing ocean of  
compassion,  
the reign of love my motive,

the law of love my rule.  
  
O Thou God of all grace, make me more  
thankful, more humble;  
Inspire me with a deep sense of my  
unworthiness arising from  
the depravity of my nature, my omitted duties,  
my unimproved advantages, Thy commands  
violated by me.  
With all my calls to gratitude and joy  
may I remember  
that I have reason for sorrow  
and humiliation;  
O give me repentance unto life;  
Cement my oneness with my blessed Lord,  
that faith may adhere to Him more  
immovably,  
that love may enwinte itself round Him  
more tightly,  
that His Spirit may pervade every fibre  
of my being.  
Then send me out to make Him known  
to my fellow-men.  
  
—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*



O LORD,

I bless Thee that the issue of the battle  
between Thyself and Satan  
has never been uncertain,  
and will end in victory.

Calvary broke the dragon's head,  
and I contend with a vanquished foe,  
who with all his subtlety and strength  
has already been overcome.

When I feel the serpent at my heel  
may I remember Him whose heel was  
bruised,  
but who, when bruised, broke the devil's  
head.

My soul with inward joy extols  
the mighty conqueror.

Heal me of any wounds received  
in the great conflict;  
if I have gathered defilement,  
if my faith has suffered damage,  
if my hope is less than bright,  
if my love is not fervent,

if some creature-comfort occupies my heart,  
if my soul sinks under pressure of the fight.

O Thou whose every promise is balm,  
every touch life,  
draw near to Thy weary warrior,  
refresh me, that I may rise again  
to wage the strife,  
and never tire until my enemy is trodden  
down.

Give me such fellowship with Thee  
that I may defy Satan,  
unbelief, the flesh, the world,  
with delight that comes not from a  
creature,

and which a creature cannot mar.  
Give me a draught of the eternal fountain  
that lieth in Thy immutable, everlasting love  
and decree.

Then shall my hand never weaken,  
my feet never stumble.  
my sword never rest,  
my shield never rust,  
my helmet never shatter,  
my breastplate never fall,  
as my strength rests in the power  
of Thy might.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O sovereign LORD,  
Thou art the Creator-Father of all men,  
for Thou hast made and dost support them;  
Thou art the special Father of those who know,  
love and honour Thee,  
who find Thy yoke easy, and Thy burden light,  
Thy work honourable,  
Thy commandments glorious.  
But how little Thy undeserved goodness has  
affected me!  
how imperfectly have I improved my  
religious privileges!  
how negligent have I been in doing good  
to others!  
I am before Thee in my trespasses and sins,  
have mercy on me,  
and may Thy goodness bring me to  
repentance.  
Help me to hate and forsake every false way,  
to be attentive to my condition and character,  
to bridle my tongue,  
to keep my heart with all diligence,  
to watch and pray against temptation,

to mortify sin,  
to be concerned for the salvation of others.  
O God, I cannot endure to see the  
destruction of my kindred.  
Let those that are united to me in tender ties  
be precious in Thy sight and devoted to Thy glory.  
Sanctify and prosper my domestic devotion,  
instruction, discipline, example,  
that my house may be a nursery for heaven,  
my church the garden of the Lord,  
enriched with trees of righteousness of  
Thy planting, for Thy glory;  
Let not those of my family who are amiable,  
moral, attractive,  
fall short of heaven at last;  
Grant that the promising appearances of a  
tender conscience,  
soft heart, the alarms and delights of Thy Word,  
be not finally blotted out,  
but bring forth judgment unto victory  
in all whom I love.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O God,  
We bless Thee,  
our Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, Teacher,  
for opening to us the volume of nature  
where we may read and consider Thy  
works.  
Thou hast this day spread before us the  
fuller pages  
of revelation,  
and in them we see what Thou wouldst  
have us do,  
what Thou requirest of us,  
what Thou hast done for us,  
what Thou hast promised to us,  
what Thou hast given us in Jesus.  
We pray Thee for a conscious experience  
of His salvation,  
in our deliverance from sin,  
in our bearing of His image,  
in our enjoying His presence,  
in our being upheld by His free Spirit.  
Let us not live uncertain of what we are,  
of where we are going.  
Bear witness with our spirit that we are Thy  
children;

And enable each one to say, 'I know my  
Redeemer.'  
Bless us with a growing sense of this  
salvation.  
If already enlightened in Christ, may we see  
greater things;  
If quickened, may we have more abundant  
life;  
If renewed, let us go on from strength to  
strength.  
Give us closer abiding in Jesus  
that we may  
bring forth more fruit,  
have a deeper sense of our obligations to  
Him,  
that we may surrender all,  
have a fuller joy,  
that we may serve Him more completely.  
And may our faith work by love  
towards Him who died,  
towards our fellow-believers,  
towards our fellow-men.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O Father of Jesus,  
Help me to approach Thee with deepest  
    reverence,  
    not with presumption,  
not with servile fear, but with holy  
    boldness.  
Thou art beyond the grasp of my  
    understanding,  
    but not beyond that of my love.  
Thou knowest that I love Thee supremely,  
    for Thou art supremely adorable, good,  
    perfect.

My heart melts at the love of Jesus,  
my Brother, bone of my bone, flesh of my  
    flesh.  
married to me, dead for me, risen for me;  
    He is mine and I am His,  
    given to me as well as for me;  
I am never so much mine as when I am  
    His,  
or so much lost to myself until lost in Him;  
    then I find my true personhood.  
But my love is frost and cold, ice and snow;  
    Let His love warm me,  
    lighten my burden,

    be my heaven;  
May it be more revealed to me in all its  
    influences  
that my love to Him may be more fervent  
    and glowing;  
Let the mighty tide of His everlasting love  
    cover the rocks of my sin and care;  
Then let my spirit float above those things  
    which had else wrecked my life.

Make me fruitful by living to that love,  
my character becoming more beautiful  
    every day.  
If traces of Christ's love-artistry be upon  
    me,  
may He work on with His divine brush  
until the complete image be obtained  
and I be made a perfect copy of Him  
    My Master.

O Lord Jesus, come to me,  
O Divine Spirit, rest upon me,  
O Holy Father, look on me in mercy  
for the sake of the well-beloved.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Father of Jesus,  
Dawn returns, but without Thy light within  
no outward light can profit;  
Give me the saving lamp of Thy Spirit that I  
may see Thee,  
the God of my salvation, the delight of my soul,  
rejoicing over me in love.  
I commend my heart to Thy watchful care,  
for I know its treachery and power;  
Guard its every portal from the wily enemy,  
Give me quick discernment of his deadly arts,  
Help me to recognize his bold disguise as an  
angel of light, and bid him begone.  
May my words and works allure others to the  
highest walks of faith and love!  
May loiterers be quickened to greater  
diligence by my example!  
May worldlings be won to delight in  
acquaintance with Thee!  
May the timid and irresolute be warned  
of the coming doom by my zeal for Jesus!  
Cause me to be a mirror of Thy grace,

to show others the joy of Thy service,  
May my lips be well-tuned cymbals  
sounding Thy praise,  
Let a halo of heavenly-mindedness  
sparkle around me  
and a lamp of kindness sunbeam my path.  
Teach me the happy art of  
attending to things temporal  
with a mind intent on things eternal.  
Send me forth to have compassion  
on the ignorant and miserable.  
Help me walk as Jesus walked,  
my only Saviour and perfect model.  
His mind my inward guest,  
His meekness my covering garb.  
Let my happy place be amongst the poor in spirit,  
my delight the gentle ranks of the meek.  
Let me always esteem others better than myself,  
and find in true humility  
an heirdom to two worlds.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

O Thou Most High,  
Creator of the ends of the earth,  
Governor of the universe,  
Judge of all men,  
Head of the church,  
Saviour of sinners;  
Thy greatness is unsearchable.  
Thy goodness infinite,  
Thy compassions unfailing,  
Thy providence boundless,  
Thy mercies ever new.

We bless Thee for the words of salvation.

How important, suitable, encouraging  
are the doctrines, promises, and invitations  
of the gospel of peace!

We are lost: but in it Thou hast presented to  
us a full, free and eternal salvation;

weak: but here we learn that help us found  
in One that is mighty,

poor: but in Him we discover unsearchable  
riches,

blind: but we find He has treasures of

wisdom and knowledge.  
We thank Thee for Thy unspeakable gift.  
Thy Son is our only refuge, foundation,  
hope, confidence;  
We depend upon His death,  
rest in His righteousness,  
desire to bear His image;  
May His glory fill our minds,  
His love reign in our affections,  
His cross inflame us with ardour.  
Let us as Christians fill our various  
situations in life,  
escape the snares to which they expose us,  
discharge the duties that arise from our  
circumstances,  
enjoy with moderation their advantages.  
improve with diligence their usefulness,  
And may every place and company we are  
in be benefited by us.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Holy Week

## This week's fast is TV & Movies

Begin your study by asking the Spirit to speak to you through His Word with a short prayer, perhaps as simple as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Here I am, Lord, speak." Allow this prayer to center your thoughts and focus your attention.

Then, as you read through the passage, allow yourself to be immersed in the text, reading it once for general understanding, and two more times for deeper reflection, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

Since these passages are longer than the previous weeks, try to commit to at least two readings, letting the Spirit guide you as you read and reflect.

On your second and third readings, consider what word or phrase stands out to you. Where do you find yourself in the passage? What characters or story elements do you connect with? Give yourself some time to ponder this word, phrase, or story element, and then ask God how it connects with your life.

Ask God what you must be, do, or know in light of this passage and in light of who Christ is for us in the gospel.

Food  
Caffeine and/or Alcohol  
Sweets  
Shopping for Non-Essentials  
Non-Worship Music & Radio  
Social Media  
— TV & Movies

# Day 40 Palm Sunday

Read Mark 11

*Reminder: Sundays are a no-fast day. Celebrate the resurrection with your church family.*

Today marks the beginning of Holy Week, the week leading up to Jesus' crucifixion on Friday and His resurrection on Easter Sunday. This Sunday commemorates the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to the praise of the people of Israel.

The day gets its name from the palm branches that the people took up to celebrate Jesus' entry into the city, which is also why, in some traditions,

churches celebrate this day by handing out palm branches to the congregation during gathered worship.

It is sobering to consider how the people recognized Jesus as King on Sunday but by Friday, many were crying out for Him to be crucified. This day is one of celebration but also a time to consider how fickle our own hearts can be in following Jesus.

Gracious God, having heard Your Word,  
we thankfully remember the life  
of our Lord Jesus Christ on this earth.

Yet we also acknowledge our failure  
to respond earnestly and faithfully to His  
witness.

We often mistake Jesus for a mere earthly  
king,  
friendly companion, or problem-solver,  
failing to see Him as the ruler of all  
creation.

We do not appreciate the depth

of His passion and sacrifice on the cross,  
failing to acknowledge Him as our way of  
salvation.

Even in this Lenten season, we have not  
walked faithfully  
in the way of Jesus Christ.  
Forgive us, we pray, and bring us ever more  
fully  
into the joy of union with Jesus Christ, our  
Lord. Amen.

—from *The Worship Sourcebook*

*Prayer & reflection:*



Sovereign LORD,  
Thy will is supreme in heaven and earth,  
and all beings are creatures of Thy power.  
Thou art the Father of our spirits;  
Thy inspiration gives us understanding,  
Thy providence governs our lives.  
But, O God, we are sinners in Thy sight;  
Thou hast judged us so,  
and If we deny it we make Thee a liar.  
Yet in Christ Thou art reconciled to Thy  
rebellious subjects;  
give us the ear of faith to hear Him,  
the eye of faith to see Him,  
the hand of faith to receive Him,  
the appetite of faith to feed upon Him;  
that we might find in Him light,  
riches, honour, eternal life.  
Thou art the inviting One,  
may we hearken to Thee;  
the Almighty Instructor,  
teach us to live to Thee;  
the Light-Dweller,  
inaccessible to man and angels,  
hiding Thyself behind the elements of  
creation,

but known to us in Jesus,  
Possess our minds with the grandeur  
of Thy perfections.  
Thy love to us in Jesus is firm and  
changless,  
nothing can separate us from it,  
and in the enjoyment of it nothing  
can make us miserable.  
Preserve us from hypocrisy and formality  
in religion;  
Enable us to remember what Thou art  
and what we are,  
to recall Thy holiness and our  
unworthiness;  
Help us to approach Thee clothed with  
humility,  
for vanity, forwardness, insensibility,  
disorderly affection, backwardness to duty,  
proneness to evil are in our hearts.  
Let us never forget Thy patience, wisdom,  
power, faithfulness, care,  
and never cease to respond  
to Thy invitations.

—from *Valley of Vision*

*Prayer & reflection:*

The pushing and shoving of the world is  
endless.  
We are pushed and shoved.  
And we do our fair share of pushing and  
shoving  
in our great anxiety.  
And in the middle of that  
you have set down your beloved suffering  
son  
who was like a sheep led to slaughter  
who opened not his mouth.  
We seem not able,  
so we ask you to create the spaces in our  
life  
where we may ponder his suffering  
and your summons for us to suffer with  
him,

suspecting that suffering is the only way to  
come to newness.  
So we pray for your church in these Lenten  
days,  
when we are driven to denial—  
not to notice the suffering,  
not to engage it,  
not to acknowledge it.  
So be that way of truth among us  
that we should not deceive ourselves.  
That we shall see that loss is indeed our  
gain.  
We give you thanks for that mystery from  
which we live.  
Amen.

—from *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth*

*Prayer & reflection:*

Almighty God,  
because of Christ's blood,  
do not hold against us, poor sinners that we  
are,  
any of the sins we do  
or the evil that constantly clings to us.  
Forgive us just as we are fully determined,  
as evidence of Your grace in us,  
to forgive our neighbors.  
By ourselves we are too weak  
to hold our own even for a moment.  
And our sworn enemies—  
the devil, the world, and our own flesh—

never stop attacking us.  
And so, Lord, uphold us and make us strong  
with the strength of Your Holy Spirit,  
so that we may not go down to defeat  
in this spiritual struggle,  
but may firmly resist our enemies  
until we finally win the complete victory.  
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

— based on *Heidelberg Catechism* from *The  
Worship Resource Book*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Day 44 Maundy Thursday

Read Mark 14:1-52

Today marks the Triduum—the three days leading up to and including Easter—and commemorates Jesus’ final Passover meal with His disciples, found in all four Gospel accounts. Its name comes from the Latin phrase *mandatum novum*, which means “new commandment,” a reference to Jesus’ command to His disciples to love one another (John 13:34).

Three events are highlighted on this day: the establishment of Communion, Jesus’ new command, and Jesus washing the disciples’ feet. Some traditions have a service on this day where worshipers celebrate Communion and possibly engage in other practices to demonstrate mutual devotion, such as foot washing.

Eternal God, whose covenant with us is  
never broken:

We confess that we have failed to fulfill  
Your will for us.

We have taken up the methods of this  
world, deserted our friends,  
and run in fear when we should be loyal.  
God, have mercy on us weak and willful  
people.

Lead us once again to Your table,  
and unite us to Christ,  
who is the bread of life  
and the vine from which we grow in grace.  
To Christ be praise forever. Amen.

—based on a prayer from *The Worship  
Resource Book*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Day 45 Good Friday

Read Mark 14:53-15:41

Today commemorates Jesus' death. The church has celebrated this day with a special service since its early history. It often includes a dramatic reading of the final hours leading up to Jesus' death, as well as meditations on the work that God has accomplished through the cross.

It is called *Good Friday* for a reason, for in His death, Jesus paid for our sins and made the way for a restored relationship with God. During this special service, some traditions also make a point of inviting worshipers to deeper prayer and commitment.

O crucified Jesus, Son of the Father,  
convinced by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, eternal Word of  
God,  
we worship You.

O crucified Jesus, holy temple of God,  
dwelling place of the Most High,  
Gate of heaven, burning flame of love,  
we worship You.

O crucified Jesus, sanctuary of justice and  
love,  
full of kindness, source of all faithfulness,  
we worship You.

O crucified Jesus, ruler of every heart,  
in You are the treasures of wisdom and  
knowledge,  
in You dwells all the fullness of the

Godhead,  
we worship You.  
Jesus, Lamb of God,  
have mercy on us.  
Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
have mercy on us.  
Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
grant us peace.

Almighty God, look with mercy on Your  
family  
for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing  
to be betrayed  
and to be given over to the hands of sinners  
and to suffer death on the cross;  
through Him who now lives and reigns  
with You and the Holy Spirit, one God,  
forever and ever. Amen.

—from *The Worship Resource Book*

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Day 46 Holy Saturday

Read Mark 15:42-47

This day, also known as Easter Vigil in some traditions, ends the forty day long fasting of Lent. The early church held no services on Saturday to commemorate the silence after Jesus' death and to reflect the tension of Christ's followers between His death and His resurrection. This has also been a day to remember Christ's descent into the realm

of the dead, where He proclaimed the good news (Eph. 4:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:18-19).

In later years (some time during the Middle Ages), the church began to celebrate this day with baptismal ceremonies in the evening, anticipating the Easter service to come, though today this practice has been abandoned by some.



For further study on Holy Saturday, check out this article:  
[thegospelcoalition.org/essay/christs-descent-dead/](http://thegospelcoalition.org/essay/christs-descent-dead/)

Merciful Savior,  
I am reminded today that in the waiting,  
You are with us.  
You know what it is like to face darkness,  
doubt, death.  
Remind me, even now, that in my own fears  
and worries, You are working.

In the waiting, You are there.  
Thank You that, even when all seems lost,  
You are still in control,  
and You work all things together for Your  
glory  
and our good.  
Help me rest in You now and always. Amen.

*Prayer & reflection:*

# Day 47 *Easter Sunday*

Read Mark 16:1-20

This is the most widely celebrated day of the church calendar; the climax of the story of redemption. For some traditions, Easter begins with the Easter Vigil, a service held early in the morning or late Saturday.

Traditionally, during this service new Christians were baptized, which is a practice that continues up to the present day. The Easter service is one of joy and celebration, leaving behind the dark tones and somber themes of Lent, as we remember that death was not the end of Jesus' story, nor the end of the story for all those who follow after Him.

In the church calendar, Easter is only the first of fifty days called Eastertide, which continue the celebration of the good news of the resurrection and lead up to Pentecost, the day we commemorate the sending of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church.

In commemoration of the Easter Vigil service, we recommend getting up early this morning to read the assigned text as you follow in the footsteps of the women who had the joy of being the first to hear the good news of the resurrection.

Christ is risen!

We give thanks for the gift of Easter  
that runs beyond our explanations,  
beyond our categories of reason,  
even more, beyond the sinking sense of our  
own lives.

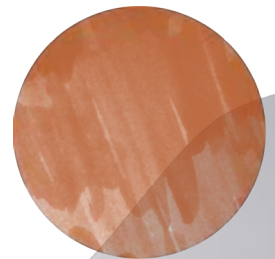
We know about the powers of death,  
powers that persist among us,  
powers that drive us from You, and  
from our neighbor, and  
from our best selves.

We know about the powers of fear and  
greed and anxiety,  
and brutality and certitude.  
powers before which we are helpless.

And then You ... You at dawn, unquenched,  
You in the darkness,  
You on Saturday,  
You who breaks the world to joy.  
Yours is the kingdom ... not the kingdom of  
death,  
Yours is the power ... not the power of  
death,  
Yours is the glory ... not the glory of death.  
Yours ... You ... and we give thanks  
for the newness beyond our achieving.  
Amen.

—from *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth*

*Prayer & reflection:*





**THE  
HALLOWS  
CHURCH**