



## **Hanging on Every Word Lenten Resource**

This will be a weekly resource made available to aid your Lenten fast. I will provide readings, questions for reflections and ideas to accompany your fast. May God richly bless your journey.

### **Monday**

- **Read Luke 23:13-34**
- **Having read the immediate context prior to Jesus' first word spoken from the cross, what are your reactions to what Jesus uttered?**
- **Why do you think Jesus offered forgiveness to those who do not apologize for their behavior?**
- **Spend some time in prayer. Use the ACTS acronym as a way to help you to remember "confession". When you pray offer to God:**
  - **Adoration – Give god praise for who He is, what He is doing**
  - **Confession – share your shortcomings, your brokenness, your sins**
  - **Thanksgiving – Be grateful for life and what it offers**
  - **Supplication – Ask God to be active in our lives and our world**

### **Tuesday**

- **Read Nehemiah 9:1-4**
- **React to the scene described in the text? Why do you think they spent so much time confessing?**
- **Why are we so hesitant to confess our sins to one another? How do we remedy this?**

- **Read James 5:13-16.**
- **What encouragement do you receive from this text?**
- **Spend some time in prayer. Again, use the ACTS acronym for assistance.**

### **Wednesday**

Today is the first day of Lent. Today is the day to begin your fast. During the next 40 days, you will be giving up something (fast). There are many benefits to fasting. For this reason, many choose to fast from sweets by eliminating sodas, juices and dessert from their diet through the duration of Lent. Others choose not to eat meat for the duration. While those restrictions will yield physical benefits, there are fasts that serve the mind and heart. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one of the most impactful fasts we can participate in is a fast from social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). In 1 Corinthians, Paul suggests that there may be times set aside for married couples to fast from sex for a period of prayer (1 Corinthians 7:5) – *Trust me, he actually wrote that* 😊

Giving up something is only part of the season of Lent. You should also consider doing something new. You might want to take on a discipline of physically exercising or a discipline of daily prayer for a specific person. There may be an activity that you do over the next 40 days that helps to make our world a better place. You might consider walking a route in your neighborhood for the purpose of picking up trash. You could also choose to write an encouraging note (or send an email) to someone. The possibilities are endless.

Today, start your journey. This is not a time to boast about what you are fasting from. At all possible, keep that between you and God. The 40 day fast does not include Sundays. We break the fast on Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup> (Easter Sunday). I am praying for your journey.

### **Thursday**

- Read Matthew 4:1-11
- What do you think Jesus' learned about God and himself during his fast?
- What do you think you will learn about God and yourself during your fast?
- Say a prayer to God that he will reveal to you a deeper understanding of Him and a deeper understanding of yourself.

### **Friday**

- Jesus said, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Paul said that we ought to forgive others as Christ forgave us (Ephesians 4:32). How do these two statements impact the way you forgive others?
- Why is the theme of forgiveness repeated so often in scripture?
- In what ways might you explore a better practice of forgiving others?