MY DAILY

# JOURNEY

SETTING OUR FACES TOWARD JESUS



# Lenten 40-Day Journal

# Introduction to the Lenten Devotional Journal: A Journey of Reflection, Repentance, and Renewal

Lent is more than just a season—it is an invitation. An invitation to slow down, reflect, and draw near to the heart of God. It is a sacred journey that mirrors the path of Christ as He moved steadily toward the cross, fully aware of the suffering ahead, yet unwavering in His love for the world.

For forty days, we enter into this rhythm of repentance and renewal, not as an empty ritual, but as a means of spiritual formation. We intentionally step away from distractions, lay aside what weighs us down, and tune our hearts to the whisper of the Holy Spirit.

This devotional journal has been crafted to guide you through this journey, with daily reflections drawn from the Gospel of Luke. Each passage invites us to encounter Jesus—in His teachings, His miracles, His moments of solitude, His suffering, and ultimately. His victory over death.

You will notice a shift in voice throughout this journal, as different weeks reflect different perspectives. Some devotionals will challenge you to think deeply, as if you were sitting at the feet of a great theologian. Others will call you into personal reflection, as if Jesus Himself were walking beside you on the road to Emmaus. Each entry is designed to meet you where you are, but not leave you there—for Lent is a season of transformation.

As you journey through these pages, may you discover:

- The courage to surrender—letting go of what no longer serves you in light of Christ's calling.
- The depth of God's mercy—embracing the radical grace that meets us in our failures and calls us beloved.

• The urgency of the Kingdom—living today with the expectation that God is making all things new.

Lent is a time to ask hard questions, to wait in the silence of Holy Saturday, and to rejoice at the dawn of Resurrection Sunday. And through it all, we pray that this journal leads you not only to the cross but beyond it—to a life forever transformed by the risen Christ.

Each day, you will be presented with a scripture from Luke, a short devotional thought, a reflective question, and a prayer prompt. There will also be space provided for you to jot down your personal thoughts and responses.

May this journey bring renewal to your soul.

Blessings,

Dion

#### Ash Wednesday - March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Luke 4:1-13 Isaiah 58:1-12

#### The Purpose of Lent

Lent is a 40-day journey of self-examination, repentance, and renewal. It is a time to remember Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness—a period of fasting, prayer, and preparation. For centuries, Christians have stepped away from distractions to draw closer to God during this season.

Traditionally, fasting has meant abstaining from food, but in a world filled with constant noise and division, perhaps what we need most is to fast from the things that keep our souls restless. What if this year we stepped away from social media, political debate, and excess and instead feasted on the peace, presence, and wisdom of God?

#### **Fasting from Social Media: Silence Over Noise**

Jesus' wilderness experience was marked by silence. He was not surrounded by the voices of the crowd or the distractions of the world. In contrast, we live in an age of constant notifications and opinions. Social media promises connection but often leaves us feeling empty, anxious, and divided.

Fasting from social media does not mean ignoring the world but tuning into a different voice—the voice of God. It means stepping away from endless scrolling and instead using that time for prayer, Scripture, serving others, and being present with loved ones.

Isaiah 58 reminds us that fasting is about more than self-denial—it's about transformation. What if, instead of filling our minds with trending topics, we filled our hearts with God's Word? What if, instead of posting online, we wrote a letter of encouragement or had a meaningful face-to-face conversation?

#### **Fasting from Political Debate: Peace Over Division**

One of the temptations Satan presented to Jesus in the wilderness was power. The devil offered Him authority over all the kingdoms of the world (Luke 4:5-7), but Jesus refused, knowing that His kingdom was not one of earthly control but love, sacrifice, and servanthood.

We live in a time when political debates dominate our conversations, often sowing division and resentment. While thoughtful debate and discourse are not wrong, when it consumes our energy, breeds hostility, or distances us from others, they can become spiritually toxic.

Fasting from political debate during Lent could mean:

- Choosing listening over arguing
- Replacing news consumption with prayer for God's guidance
- Prioritizing unity over the need to "win" a debate Isaiah 58 challenges us: "If you do away with the pointing finger and malicious talk... then your light will rise in the darkness" (vv. 9-10). What if, instead of debating, we sought to be a light of grace and truth in a divided world?

#### **Fasting from Excess: Contentment Over Consumption**

We live in a culture of more—more food, more entertainment, more shopping, more distractions. But Jesus embraced less in the wilderness. He fasted, surrendered His comforts, and fixed His heart on God alone.

Excess is not just about material things—it is about anything that numbs our souls and keeps us from true fulfillment in Christ. Fasting from excess could mean:

- Simplifying our lifestyle buying less, consuming less, and practicing gratitude
- Re-evaluating our priorities—spending time in prayer and service rather than in pursuit of more
- Being generous giving away what we don't need to bless those who do

Isaiah 58 reminds us that true fasting is about justice, mercy, and generosity (v. 7). Perhaps the best way to fast from excess is to give sacrificially – choosing generosity over self-indulgence.

#### An Invitation to Fast

Lent is not about legalism; it is about opening space for God to work in us. Whatever you choose to fast from, let it draw you closer to Christ.

- If you fast from social media, fill that time with prayer and Scripture.
- If you fast from political debate, replace it with peacemaking and understanding.
- If you fast from excess, practice contentment and generosity.

As we begin this season, let's follow Jesus into the wilderness—not to be defeated but to be transformed. Let's surrender what weighs us down so that we may be filled with the Spirit and prepared for the joy of resurrection.

#### **Our Lenten Journey Together**

Our fast begins today, March 5, and ends on Easter Sunday, April 20. Since we do not fast on Sundays, this will be a full 40-day journey. To guide us, I will provide daily Scripture prompts and reflections based on the Gospel of Luke. Additionally, on Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, we begin a new sermon series titled "Journey: Setting Our Faces Toward Jesus." We will walk through the latter part of Luke's Gospel, starting with Luke 9:51 – "When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem."

#### **Prayer**

Lord, as we begin this Lenten journey, lead us into the wilderness. Help us to hunger for You more than the things of this world. Teach us to fast in ways that draw us closer to You – silencing the noise, seeking peace over division, and finding contentment in You alone. Transform our hearts, that we may be a light to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

alone. Transform our hearts, that we may be a light to others. In Jesus' name, Amen. I am looking forward to the love and power of God that will be experienced over the next several weeks. **Blessings** Dion Journal Space: What are you fasting from during Lent? Share why you shoes this fast.

# Day 2 – March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 9:51

Title: The Power of Determination

Jesus knew what awaited Him in Jerusalem—betrayal, suffering, and the cross. But He didn't flinch. He set His face. Determination. Focus. Unwavering resolve.

What would happen if we lived with the same clarity of purpose? If we aligned our daily choices with God's ultimate plan for our lives? Distractions are everywhere, but a life of purpose requires determination.

This Lent, let's ask: What distractions keep me from walking in step with Jesus? What would it look like to "set my face" toward God's calling on my life?

#### **Prayer Prompt:**

Jesus, give me the courage to live with purpose. Help me set my face toward what truly matters, even when the road ahead is uncertain.

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Scripture: Luke 9:52-62

#### Title: No Looking Back

Jesus meets people who say they **want** to follow Him—but first, they have things to take care of. A funeral. Family obligations. Life responsibilities. **Their hearts are divided.** 

Jesus' response is radical: "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)

He's not saying families or responsibilities don't matter. He's saying **nothing can come before Him.** Following Jesus requires a willingness to go all in, no hesitation, no excuses.

**Reflection:** What's holding you back from fully following Jesus? Is there something you're clinging to, afraid to let go of?

**Prayer Prompt:** Father, help me to trust You enough to follow You fully. Give me the courage to release whatever is keeping me from total surrender.

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#### Day 4 – March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 10:1-16

#### Title: Sent with a Mission

Jesus sends out 72 disciples, telling them to **go ahead of Him** into every town. But here's the thing—He sends them **without a safety net.** No extra money. No luggage. No backup plan.

Why? Because **dependency on God is the mission.** If they carried everything they needed, they wouldn't need to rely on Him.

How often do we hesitate in obedience because we're waiting until we feel **ready**? The truth is, God calls us **before we feel fully prepared.** 

Reflection: What step of faith is God calling you to take today? What if you stopped waiting for perfect conditions and just trusted Him?

Prayer Prompt: Lord, help me to trust that You provide what I need when I follow You. Give me the faith to step out, even when I feel unprepared.

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#### Day 5 - March 10th, 2025

Scripture: Luke 10:17-37 Title: Who is My Neighbor?

The disciples returned from their mission, excited about their success—they had cast out demons and performed miracles. But Jesus redirected their focus: "Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:20)

Success in the kingdom of God isn't measured by power or achievements, but by the reality of our relationship with Him and others. And then, almost as if to illustrate this point, Jesus tells one of His most famous parables: The Good Samaritan. A man is left beaten on the road, and two religious leaders—who should have known better—walk right past him. But a Samaritan, a man from a despised group, stops, helps, and loves his neighbor in the most practical way possible.

It's easy to think that being "spiritual" is about having big faith moments—casting out demons, preaching, leading ministries. But Jesus shows us that true spirituality is how we love our neighbor. It's the quiet acts of mercy, the inconvenient kindness, the willingness to see the person in need rather than walk by on the other side.

Reflection: Where have you been too busy, too distracted, or too self-focused to see the needs of your neighbor? Who is God calling you to stop for today?

Prayer: Lord, open my eyes to see the people You have placed in my path. Help me to be a neighbor who reflects Your love in real, practical ways. Amen.

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| Day | 6 – | March | 11 <sup>th</sup> | , 2025 |
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Scripture: Luke 10:38-42

#### **Title: Fuss or Focus**

While visiting with his close friends, Jesus encounters sisters with competing intentions. One is "distracted" by all the work to do to prepare for Jesus' visit. The other is soaking in Jesus' presence.

This is not a question of whether we are more like Martha or more like Mary. This is an inquiry regarding missed opportunities to soak in the presence of God because we are addicted to busyness. Jesus commends the former as he recognizes Mary, who is given her full attention to hearing from her Master.

Reflection: What worthy activities are creating distractions from spending time with God?

Prayer Prompt: Father, help me to look past my need to fuss with distractions so I can focus on being with you.

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#### Day 7 - March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

#### Title: Praying with the Heart of a Child

Jesus teaches His disciples to pray with childlike trust. He reminds us that our Father longs to give us good gifts, just as a parent delights in caring for their children. Prayer is not a formula—it is a relationship, a space where we bring our hearts honestly before God.

So often, we struggle to pray because we feel unworthy or unsure of what to say. But Jesus shows us that God welcomes us as we are. Prayer is not about having the perfect words; it is about having an open heart.

Reflection: How might your prayers change if you approached God with the trust of a child?

Prayer Prompt: Father, teach me to pray with simplicity and trust. Help me to come before You with openness and confidence in Your love.

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# Day 8 - March 13th, 2025

Scripture: Luke 11:14-28

#### Title: A Divided Heart

Jesus warns that a divided kingdom will collapse. The same is true for our hearts. When we try to hold onto both **God and the world**, we find ourselves exhausted, restless, and disconnected. Lent is a time to **return fully to God**.

Jesus makes it clear: **if we aren't fully aligned with Him, we will struggle.** The things we focus on shape our faith. What are you focusing on today?

You can't be **half in and half out!** You're either walking in faith or you're stuck in doubt. Jesus said, "Whoever is not with me is against me." It's time to CHOOSE!

Reflection: What parts of your heart are divided?

Prayer: Lord, unite my heart to love You with all that I am.

Journal Space:

| Day | 9 – | March | 14 <sup>th</sup> , | 2025 |
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Scripture: Luke 11:29-36

Title: The Sign of God's Presence

Many sought signs from Jesus, proof that He was truly the Messiah. But Jesus tells them that the only sign they will receive is Himself. In our search for certainty, we often forget that God has already given us all that we need—His presence.

Jesus reminds us that true faith doesn't come from **waiting for proof**—it comes from **trusting God's promises**. If you're always waiting for a sign, you'll never step forward in faith.

God has already shown you He is with you! You don't need **one more sign**—you need to **step into your calling**. Stop waiting and start walking!

Reflection: Are you waiting for a sign from God before you trust Him fully?

Prayer: Lord, help me to trust in Your presence even when I cannot see.

Journal Space:

| Day 10 | - March | 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2025 |
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Scripture: Luke 11:37-54

#### Title: More Than an Appearance of Holiness

Jesus warns the Pharisees about focusing on outward holiness while neglecting the heart. It is easy to appear faithful—attending church, speaking the right words—but Jesus calls us to something deeper. True holiness is about love, mercy, and humility.

You can look perfect on the outside but be broken on the inside. Jesus cares about **who you are**, not just **what you look like** to others.

God is NOT interested in fake religion! He is looking for **real**, **surrendered**, **passionate faith!** It's time to stop **pretending** and start **walking in power!** 

Reflection: Are there areas in your faith where you focus more on outward appearances than on inner transformation?

Prayer: Lord, cleanse my heart from pretense. Teach me to love You authentically, from the inside out.

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#### Day 11 - March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 12:1-12

Jesus reminds us not to fear those who can harm the body but to trust in the One who holds our soul. Fear can be a powerful force—it can keep us silent when we should speak, hesitant when we should act. But Jesus calls us to boldness, to a trust so deep that we are freed from the weight of fear.

Fear distorts reality. It makes us believe we're alone, powerless, or unloved. But Jesus says, "Do not be afraid." If God sees you, knows you, and loves you, what do you have to fear?

Fear has NO place in your destiny! It's time to **stand up, shake off your doubts, and declare that God is for you!** 

Reflection: What fears keep you from living fully in faith?

Prayer: Lord, release me from fear. Help me to trust that I am known, seen, and loved by You, and to live boldly in that truth.

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| Day 12 - | March | 18th, | 2025 |
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Scripture: Luke 12:13-21

#### Title: What Are You Living For?

Jesus tells a story about a man who worked hard, made money, and planned to enjoy life—only to die that night. He had everything, **except a heart for God**.

We spend so much time **building careers, making money, chasing success**—but what if we're climbing the wrong ladder? What really **matters** at the end of the day?

Jesus challenges us to invest in what **lasts**—our relationship with Him, how we love people, how we make an eternal impact. Because when it's all said and done, that's what counts.

**Reflection:** Are you living for what truly lasts?

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to invest my life in things that have eternal impact.

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| Day 13 – March 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2025  |
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| Scripture: Luke 12:22-34  |
| Title: Worry Less, Trust More Jesus said, "Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" (Luke 12:25)   |
| Worry <b>feels productive</b> , but it's really just <b>a thief</b> . It steals our joy, our peace, and our focus. Jesus doesn't just tell us to <b>stop worrying</b> —He tells us <b>where to place our focus</b> : "Seek first His kingdom." (Luke 12:31) |
| When we put <b>God first,</b> He takes care of the rest.  |
| <b>Reflection:</b> What's one worry you need to surrender to God today?   |
| <b>Prayer:</b> Lord, help me to seek You first and trust You with my needs.   |
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# Day 14 - March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Scripture:** *Luke 12:35-48* 

**Title: Living Ready** 

Jesus reminds us to be **watchful and ready**. Not in a fearful way, but in a way that keeps us **focused on what truly matters**. Living for Jesus isn't about waiting for "**someday**" to get serious. It's about making **every day** count.

| Reflection: Are you living like Jesus could return any day? What does that look like? |
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| Prayer: Lord, help me to live with purpose and urgency.                               |
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# Day 15 - March 21st, 2025

Scripture: Luke 12:49-59

**Title: Making a Clear Choice** 

Jesus makes it clear: **following Him is a choice.** There's no neutral ground. Faith isn't just a **nice addition** to your life—it's **a whole-life commitment**. The question is: Are you

fully in?

Reflection: What's holding you back from giving Jesus your full commitment?

Prayer: Lord, I choose to follow You fully, not halfway.

Journal Space:

## Day 16 - March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 13:1-17

Title: Repentance Is an Invitation, Not a Threat

When people heard about tragedy, they assumed the victims must have done something wrong. But Jesus flipped their thinking—"Unless you repent, you too will perish." (Luke 13:3)

Jesus wasn't threatening people into repentance; He was **inviting them into life**. Repentance isn't about fear—it's about freedom. It's the chance to turn away from what is breaking us and toward the **God who loves us**.

Maybe you've been resisting repentance because it feels like admitting failure. But what if it's actually about stepping into grace?

Reflection: Is there an area in your life where you need to stop resisting repentance and start receiving grace?

Prayer: Lord, thank You that repentance is an invitation, not condemnation. Help me turn toward You today.

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## Day 17 - March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 13:18-30

#### Title: Small Steps Lead to Big Growth

Jesus described the Kingdom of God like a **mustard seed**—small, almost invisible, yet growing into something powerful.

We often look for **instant transformation**, but Jesus shows us that real, lasting change **starts small**. That one prayer, one act of obedience, one moment of trust—it all adds up.

Don't underestimate what God is doing in the small moments. Your faithfulness today is preparing you for greater things tomorrow.

Reflection: What small step of faith is God asking you to take today?

Prayer: Lord, help me to trust that small steps of faith lead to big growth in Your kingdom.

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| Day 1 | <b>.</b> 8 – | March | 25 <sup>th</sup> , | 2025 |
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Scripture: Luke 13:31-35

#### Title: Jesus' Heart for the Lost

The Pharisees warned Jesus that Herod wanted to kill Him. But Jesus didn't change His plans. He stayed on mission.

Then, He spoke these words over Jerusalem:

"How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34)

This is Jesus' heart for people. He longs for them to come home. And yet, some refuse. The same is true today. Jesus is still calling. The question is: Are we willing to follow?

Reflection: Where is Jesus calling you to trust Him, but you've been resisting?

Prayer: Lord, I don't want to hold back. Give me a heart that is willing to follow You fully.

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| Day | 19 – | March | 26th | , 2025 |
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Scripture: Luke 14:1-14

#### **Title: Take the Lowest Seat**

Jesus noticed how people picked the best seats at a banquet—choosing places of honor. Then, He flipped the script:

"When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor... Instead, take the lowest place." (Luke 14:8,10)

Jesus isn't just talking about dinner parties. He's talking about how we live. The world says: Push ahead. Make a name for yourself. Climb the ladder. But Jesus says: Serve first. Humble yourself. Let God lift you up.

Reflection: Where is God calling you to serve instead of seeking recognition?

Prayer: Lord, give me a heart that values humility over status.

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| Day 20 – March 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2025   |
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| Scripture: Luke 14:15-24   |
| Title: The Great Invitation  |
| <b>Devotional Thought:</b> Jesus tells a story about a man who threw <b>a huge banquet</b> —but people made excuses not to come.   |
| One was busy with work. Another had family obligations. Someone else had other priorities.   |
| So, the man invited <b>the outcasts, the overlooked, the forgotten.</b> And they came. Here's the point: <b>God is inviting us into something greater.</b> But are we making <b>excuses</b> ? Are we too busy, too distracted, too comfortable to say <b>yes</b> ? |
| Reflection: What excuse have you been making that's keeping you from saying "yes" to God?  Prayer: Lord, I don't want to miss what You have for me. Help me to say yes to Your invitation.   |
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#### Day 21 – March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 14:25-35

**Title: Counting the Cost** 

Jesus says: "Whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27)

Let's be honest. We like easy faith. We love grace, hope, and blessing. But Jesus reminds us: Following Him is costly. It requires surrender. It means putting Him first, above everything else.

That's not part-time faith. That's all-in faith.

Jesus doesn't want half-hearted followers. He wants disciples who say: "Whatever it takes, I will follow You."

Reflection: What's one thing in your life competing with your commitment to Jesus?

Prayer: Lord, help me to follow You fully, no matter the cost.

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# Day 22 - March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 15:1-10

Title: The One Who Searches

Jesus tells **two stories**:

- A shepherd who leaves **99 sheep** to find **one lost sheep**.
- A woman who searches her whole house to find one lost coin.

Why? Because what's lost matters.

That's how **God sees people**. He doesn't give up. He doesn't say, "Well, I have most of them, so that's enough." He goes **after the one**. And guess what? That means **He came after you, too**.

**Reflection:** Who in your life is far from God, and how can you reflect Jesus' love to them?

| <b>Prayer:</b> Lord, thank You for pursuing me. Help me to care about the lost the way You do |
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#### Day 23 - March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 15:11-32

#### Title: A Homecoming Like No Other

The prodigal son didn't just mess up—he hit rock bottom. He took his inheritance, ran off, and wasted everything. He knew he didn't deserve to be welcomed back. But the father? He was already watching for him. He didn't wait for an explanation. He ran to his son and embraced him.

Some of us live like God is waiting to punish us. But Jesus tells this story to show us the truth: God is waiting to welcome us. No matter how far you've gone, the Father is already running toward you.

Reflection: Where do you need to let go of guilt and receive God's grace?

Prayer: Lord, thank You that no matter how far I wander, You always welcome me home.

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#### Day 24 – April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16:1-13

#### Title: Faithful in What You Have Now

Jesus tells a parable about a shrewd manager who knew how to handle money—but He isn't just talking about finances. He's talking about stewardship.

We often think, "Once I have more, I'll be generous. Once life slows down, I'll serve more." But Jesus reminds us: faithfulness starts now. If we're not faithful with what we have today—our time, resources, gifts—why would God entrust us with more?

Reflection: What is one area where God is calling you to be more faithful right now?

| Prayer: Lord, help me to be a faithful steward of what You've given me today. |  |  |  |  |  |
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#### Day 25 – April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16:14-31

#### **Title: Seeing Beyond This Life**

The rich man had everything—wealth, comfort, power. But when he died, none of it mattered. The poor man, Lazarus, had nothing in this world but gained everything in eternity.

Jesus isn't saying money is the issue. The issue is what we live for. Are we focused on earthly success or eternal impact? Are we seeing the needs around us, or are we so consumed with our own comfort that we miss the hurting at our doorstep?

Reflection: Are you more focused on what will last forever or just what makes life easier today?

| Prayer: Lord, help me to see beyond temporary things and live with eternity in mind. |  |  |  |  |  |
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Scripture: Luke 17:1-10

Title: Faith in the Small Things

Jesus tells His disciples, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." (Luke 17:6)

We often think faith has to be huge to make a difference. But Jesus is saying: Faith isn't about size—it's about trust. A little faith in a big God goes a long way.

The second part of this passage reminds us that faith isn't about earning credit. We don't serve God to get a reward—we serve because that's who we are.

Reflection: Where is God asking you to trust Him, even if your faith feels small? Prayer: Lord, even when my faith feels small, help me to trust that You are big enough.

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Scripture: Luke 17:11-19

#### Title: The One Who Came Back

Ten lepers were healed. Only one came back to say thank you.

Jesus wasn't looking for applause—He was looking for recognition of God's goodness. Gratitude isn't just about being polite; it's about seeing God at work in your life and responding.

Here's the truth: We ask God for a lot, but how often do we stop and thank Him? Gratitude isn't just an action—it's a perspective. The more we recognize God's work, the stronger our faith grows.

Reflection: What's something you've forgotten to thank God for recently? Prayer: Lord, give me a heart of gratitude that always recognizes Your goodness.

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# Day 28 - April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 17:20-37

#### **Title: Living Ready for the Kingdom**

The Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God would come. They were expecting a grand display, a political revolution. But Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is in your midst." (Luke 17:21)

We do the same thing. We think, "One day, I'll get serious about faith. One day, I'll start making changes." But Jesus is saying, the time is now. His Kingdom isn't about waiting—it's about living today as if Jesus is coming back tomorrow.

Reflection: Are you living your life like Jesus could return at any moment?

| Prayer: Lord, help me to live today fully for You, not waiting for "someday." |  |  |  |  |  |
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Scripture: Luke 18:1-14

#### **Title: Praying with the Right Heart**

Jesus tells two parables about prayer. The first is about a persistent widow who doesn't give up. The second is about a Pharisee and a tax collector—one came in pride, the other in humility.

Here's the truth: God doesn't just hear words—He hears hearts. Some people pray to be noticed. Others pray because they know they are in desperate need of grace.

Prayer isn't about getting the right formula—it's about coming to God with the right heart. Are you persistent in prayer, and are you coming before God with humility?

Reflection: What's your posture when you pray—do you come in pride or in humility?

Prayer: Lord, teach me to pray with persistence and humility, knowing You hear my heart.

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| Day 30 – April 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2025   |
| Scripture: Luke 18:15-30  |
| Title: Childlike Faith, Grown-Up Decisions  |
| Jesus says, "Let the little children come to me, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Luke 18:16)   |
| Children don't come to Jesus with status, pride, or accomplishments—they just come. They don't overthink. They trust, love, and believe.                                |
| Then, right after this, we meet the rich young ruler—a man who couldn't let go of his wealth to follow Jesus. The children ran freely to Jesus, but this man held back. |
| Faith isn't just about believing—it's about letting go of whatever is keeping you from fully following Jesus.   |
| Reflection: Is there something you're holding on to that's keeping you from fully following Christ?   |
| Prayer: Lord, help me to have childlike faith and the courage to let go of whatever stands in the way of following You.   |
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Scripture: Luke 18:31-43

#### **Title: Seeing Jesus Clearly**

Jesus told His disciples exactly what was coming—His death and resurrection—but they didn't understand it. Meanwhile, a blind man on the roadside called out for Jesus, and he was healed.

The irony? The disciples could see but didn't understand. The blind man couldn't see but recognized Jesus clearly.

Sometimes, we can be so familiar with Jesus that we stop truly seeing Him. We assume we know what He's doing, but we don't stop to truly listen.

Reflection: Where do you need God to open your eyes to see Him more clearly?

Prayer: Lord, help me not to take You for granted. Open my eyes to see You at work in my life.

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# Day 32 - April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

#### Title: Jesus Calls Us Down from Our Trees

Zacchaeus climbed up a tree to get a glimpse of Jesus, but Jesus did something unexpected—He called him down.

Zacchaeus didn't invite Jesus over—Jesus invited Himself. He saw Zacchaeus, called him by name, and said, "I must stay at your house today." (Luke 19:5)

Jesus always calls us out of our comfort zones. Zacchaeus was watching from a safe distance, but Jesus wanted him face to face.

Maybe you've been keeping Jesus at a comfortable distance—watching from the tree instead of inviting Him into your life.

Reflection: Is Jesus calling you to come down from your tree and welcome Him into a deeper place in your heart?

Prayer: Lord, I don't want to just observe You from a distance. I invite You fully into my life.

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#### Day 33 - April 11th, 2025

| Scripture: Luke 19:1 | L1-27 |
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### Title: What Are You Doing with What You've Been Given?

Jesus tells a parable about a master who gives his servants different amounts of money. Some invest it wisely, but one servant buries it out of fear.

Jesus is making a powerful point: What you do with what you've been given matters.

Your faith? Don't just keep it to yourself—share it.

Your gifts? Don't bury them—use them for God's kingdom.

Your resources? Don't hoard them—invest them in eternity.

God isn't looking for perfection—He's looking for faithfulness.

Reflection: What has God given you that you need to start using for His kingdom?

Prayer: Lord, help me to be faithful with everything You've entrusted to me.

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# Day 34 - April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 19:28-48

#### Title: The King Who Came Differently

Jesus rode into Jerusalem, and the crowds cheered Him on. They shouted, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Luke 19:38)

But the King they expected wasn't the King they got. They wanted a warrior to overthrow Rome, but Jesus came as a humble Savior. By the end of the week, some of these same people would call for His crucifixion.

How often do we struggle when Jesus doesn't meet our expectations? We expect Him to work a certain way, but He has bigger plans.

The question isn't whether we will praise Jesus when He meets our expectations. The question is: Will we still trust Him when He doesn't?

Reflection: Do you trust God's plan even when it doesn't look the way you expected?

Prayer: Lord, help me to trust that You know what's best, even when Your plan looks different than mine.

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### Day 35 - April 14th, 2025

Scripture: Luke 20:1-40

#### Title: The Authority of the King

Authority is a tricky thing. We tend to question it—sometimes for good reason, as history has shown. When the religious leaders asked Jesus, "By what authority are you doing these things?" (Luke 20:2), they weren't looking for truth. They were looking for a way to trap Him.

Jesus' response is masterful. He turns the question back on them, pointing to John the Baptist. If they acknowledge John's authority, they must acknowledge Jesus'. But their refusal to answer reveals the deeper issue: They weren't willing to accept the authority of God's kingdom, because it didn't fit into their system.

Many today still wrestle with Jesus' authority. If He is King, then our lives are not our own. If His kingdom has come, then our priorities must shift. The real question is not whether Jesus has authority—it's whether we are willing to submit to it.

Reflection: In what areas of your life do you struggle to accept Jesus' authority?

Prayer: Lord, help me to surrender to Your rule, trusting that Your authority brings life and truth.

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# Day 36 - April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Scripture: Luke 20:41-21:24

# Title: Signs of the Kingdom—Already and Not Yet

Jesus speaks of signs and struggles—wars, upheaval, persecution. The temple itself, the symbol of Jewish identity, would be destroyed. Yet, this isn't just a warning of catastrophe. It's a call to see the world through the lens of God's kingdom.

Too often, we get caught up in fear of the future. But Jesus reminds us that the world's chaos does not mean God is absent. Rather, it is the birth pains of the new creation.

The question is not whether suffering will come—it will. The question is whether we will stand firm, bearing witness to the hope that the world so desperately needs.

Reflection: Are you more focused on the turmoil of the world or the coming of God's kingdom?

Prayer: Lord, in times of uncertainty, help me to fix my eyes on Your unshakable kingdom.

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### Day 37 – April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Scripture: Luke 21:25-22:23** 

### Title: The Table of the New Covenant

As Jesus speaks of the end of the age, He doesn't just leave His disciples with warnings. He invites them to a table.

At the Last Supper, Jesus redefines Passover. No longer would it be just about Israel's deliverance from Egypt—it would now be about the new Exodus, the rescue from sin and death. The bread? His body, broken for us. The cup? His blood, poured out for the new covenant.

For centuries, God's people had rehearsed the story of redemption through the Passover meal. Now, Jesus was saying: I am the Lamb. This is the moment everything changes.

Reflection: What does it mean for you to live as part of the new covenant in Christ?

Prayer: Lord, as I take part in Your table, help me to live in the reality of Your redeeming love.

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### Day 38 - April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

| Scripture: Luke 22:24-5 |
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# Title: Strength in the Garden

Jesus is hours away from betrayal, and what are His disciples doing? Arguing about status.

Jesus reminds them that greatness in His kingdom is not about power but about service. The world measures greatness by position; Jesus measures it by humility.

Then, in Gethsemane, we see the full weight of Jesus' mission. He prays, "Father, if You are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but Yours be done." (Luke 22:42)

This is the moment everything hangs in the balance. Jesus could have walked away, but He doesn't. He chooses obedience, suffering, and the cross.

Reflection: What does it look like for you to say, "Not my will, but Yours be done"?

Prayer: Lord, teach me to seek Your will above my own, even when it's hard.

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### **Day 39 – April 18th, 2025 (Good Friday)**

Scripture: Luke 22:54-23:25

#### Title: The Trial of the True King

Jesus stands before Pilate and Herod, falsely accused. The people cry out, "Crucify Him!" and a murderer—Barabbas—is set free instead.

The irony is striking: The sinless One takes the place of the guilty. The true King is rejected, while Rome's system of injustice prevails.

Barabbas represents all of us. We are the ones who deserved judgment, yet Jesus stands in our place. This is what makes Good Friday good.

Yet, Good Friday is not just about substitution—it's about victory. In His suffering, Jesus disarms the powers of darkness. Even as He is sentenced to death, He is still the King, reigning in a way that no one expected.

Reflection: How does it change your perspective to know that Jesus took your place on the cross?

Prayer: Lord, thank You for standing in my place and taking on what I deserved. Help me never to take Your sacrifice for granted.

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| Day 40 – April | 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2025 | 5 (Holy S | Saturday) |
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Scripture: Luke 23:26-56

Title: The Silence of Saturday

After the horror of the cross, silence.

Jesus is buried. The disciples scatter. The world goes on as if nothing happened. But beneath the silence, something is shifting. The old world is dying. A new creation is waiting to break forth.

Holy Saturday is a reminder that sometimes, we don't see the full story yet. God is still working, even when everything looks like defeat. Resurrection is coming.

The waiting is hard. The silence is painful. But this is the pattern of God's work—He brings life out of death, hope out of despair.

Reflection: Where in your life do you need to trust that God is still working, even in the silence?

Prayer: Lord, when I don't see the outcome, help me trust that You are still moving. Give me faith to believe that resurrection is coming.

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45

# Luke 24

#### The Resurrection of Jesus

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. <sup>2</sup> They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they went in, they did not find the body. <sup>4</sup> While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. <sup>5</sup> The women[b] were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men[c] said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.[d] <sup>6</sup> Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.' <sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.[e]

#### The Walk to Emmaus

<sup>13</sup> Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles[f] from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad.[g] 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' 19 He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth,[h] who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. <sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.[i] Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' 25 Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah[j] should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

<sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. <sup>29</sup> But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us[k] while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' <sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup> They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' <sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

46

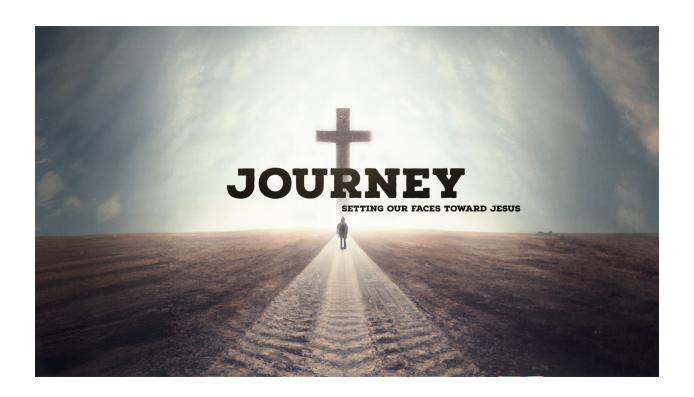
#### Jesus Appears to His Disciples

<sup>36</sup> While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' [I] <sup>37</sup> They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. <sup>38</sup> He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' <sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. [m] <sup>41</sup> While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' <sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish, <sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate in their presence.

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' <sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 46 and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah[n] is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses[o] of these things. <sup>49</sup> And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

#### The Ascension of Jesus

<sup>50</sup> Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.[p] <sup>52</sup> And they worshipped him, and[q] returned to Jerusalem with great joy; <sup>53</sup> and they were continually in the temple blessing God.



# Lenten Sermon Series At Reynoldsburg Church of Christ

Lent is a season of repentance, self-reflection, and renewal. Starting on Ash Wednesday, the church is encouraged to proclaim a fast lasting 40 days (excluding Sundays). As we fast, we will consider the "Travel Narratives" in the gospel of Luke. Jesus "sets his eyes toward Jerusalem". During his journey, Luke records some of his most impactful teaching and some intriguing encounters. As we reflect on his journey, we consider our own spiritual journey in our corner of the earth.

March 9th - The Journey Begins

March 16th - The Journey through Obstacles

March 23<sup>rd</sup> - The Journey with Others (Not like you)

March 30<sup>th</sup> - The Journey to Recovery

April 6th - The Journey to Repentance

April 13<sup>th</sup> - The Journey to the Home Stretch

April 20th - Easter Sunday - The Journey Begins: The Coda