



A  
Daily Devotion  
Reading of the Gospels  
For

A watercolor-style background in shades of grey and white, with a large, flowing purple script word "Lent" overlaid.

Lent

"He fasted for forty days  
and forty nights..."

And  
EASTER

March 11, 2019 - March 16,  
2019  
Days 5-10

**Clark Memorial United Methodist Church**

1014 14th Avenue North

Nashville, TN 37208

615-329-4464

[www.clarkumcnashville.org](http://www.clarkumcnashville.org)

Rev. Dr. Herbert L. Lester, Jr., Senior Pastor

Dr. Elizabeth A. Williams, Associate Pastor



## Life as a Parable/Repast for John the Baptist Matthew 13-14

Have you ever felt that you were living your life as a parable? Now a parable is defined as, “a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson.” Think of how your faith moves you through life lessons. Just when you are ready to stand on your faith and tell everyone about it, situations come along and eat up your faith, devours it. There are the days when you wake up, jump out of bed and say my faith is strong today. I’m going to church, going to sing, to praise, and to fellowship. Then things happen throughout the day that you never saw coming. Before you can get back into bed that night your faith is all burned out. Now we even don’t want to talk about the people and events that choke off our faith and have us choking on the words coming out of our mouths. We forgot that we have any faith and lose our religion.

The good news is that Jesus Christ came to explain and declare what had been hidden. So even when we feel our faith has shrunk to the size of a mustard seed remember the sacrifice that Jesus made gives us the power and strengthens our faith so that it blossoms and grows.

In Matthew 14 we read about the death of John the Baptist. The story shows the arrogance and excessiveness of those in power. Herod, Herodias, and her daughter are weeds that the enemy places among the good seeds.

When Jesus heard that John the Baptist was dead he gave him a huge repast. He feeds five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. What a miracle. It would have happened if there had been one loaf and one fish. The repast shows that when Jesus wanted to reveal the secrets of heaven he had ways of doing it.

Later when Jesus walked on water he reveals that the Son of God was indeed here. He also shows that with Jesus we have the faith to even walk on water.



## Lenten Bible Study

### Matthew 15-16

In Matthew Chapter 15, we are shown a disdain and fading lack of confidence in The Teacher's Heavenly Father and His ability to do all that JESUS has proclaimed He can do. The Pharisees, who have wandered so long in search of a promised Utopia and Savior under Moses' Law, are readily confused and become naysayers, reminding Jesus of the tenets of Mosaic Law. Jesus rebukes them as non-believers and performs Miracles in their presence, showing no fear of retribution from the keepers of The Law. He reminds them again and again that He represents God in earthly form.

Jesus further intimidates keepers of the Old Law by healing and removing demons from a Canaanite woman's child who dares believe in His power. This sends a powerful message to today's Christians: That our faith cannot be shattered or led astray. We must remain steadfast in the belief that God can conquer any problem we encounter. Use of The Holy Bible as a guide, with the memory of Miracles Christ performed embedded in our souls is conviction enough.

Matthew 16--John, one of the major Disciples of Jesus' entourage, is taunted by leaders of the day, The Pharisees and Sadducees, to have Jesus show them a sign that He was The True Son of God. John's reminder of certain recent Miracles, The feeding of more than Five Thousand Men, not counting women and children, plus the subsequent feeding of Four Thousand more with scant resources and baskets full left over. in addition to other Miracles they had witnessed was enough. At this point. Jesus warned his followers of false prophets, then predicted His own Death and Resurrection. The beauty of Peter's Confession on who Christ really is gives us pause today that we must never show fear in face of danger, laziness in face of work or weakness when God's Almighty Power is at hand.

We must proclaim that Jesus The Christ is The Living Son of God, The Father Almighty, who reigns this day and forever, controlling our lives from the Cradle to the Grave. The Love we emulate during this Journey for our fellow man will indeed show our devotion honoring Jesus The Christ.

#### **Submitted by Bill Thompson, Certified Lay Speaker**

Please Read: Ecclesiastes 3:11-13 "He has made everything Beautiful in it's time., He has also set Eternity in the hearts of men...What God has done from Beginning to End...I know there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do Good while they live...that everyone may eat and drink and find satisfaction in all his toil- This is The Gift of God.



Daily Lenten Readings

Day 7

## Transfiguration, Transformation and Person Responsibility The Gospel of Matthew Matthew 17-18

In these chapters, Jesus offers the parable of the unforgiving servant. Remind you of anybody you know? She's the person who receives forgiveness for a huge mistake and refuses to be forgiving to someone else for a much small misdeed. Jesus also experiences the transfiguration with Peter, James and John there to watch. It is indeed a transforming experience not just for Jesus, but for the disciples as well and they ever so slowly begin to understand what Jesus has been trying to tell them.

When they get down the mountain, they are met immediately by the failure of the other disciples to expel a demonic spirit from a little boy. His father is irate and wants help! Jesus does indeed heal the child and tells the disciples they failed because they did not have faith as big as a mustard seed.

Is that why the church fails sometimes in its ministry? Because we do not trust God enough; because we do not depend on God enough; because we are not obedient as we should be? When Jesus and the disciples reach Capernaum, Peter is asked about paying taxes. Jesus sends him down to the shore where Peter finds a coin and pays both his and Jesus taxes! God will certainly provide, but what does that say about our citizenship practices as followers of Jesus?

Prayer for Today: *Lord, help me to know the power of your transforming spirit that can guide me toward being the person you called me to be. Show me my duties as a citizen in a democratic society and my responsibility to my fellow citizens and their responsibility toward me. Help me to be an instrument of your forgiveness and not an impediment to your forgiveness, grace and mercy. Amen.*

***SUBMITTED BY Herbert L. Lester, Jr.***



## The Gospel of Matthew Matthew 19-20

### Matthew 19

- Jesus was asked about divorces as a test from the Pharises. It was told by Jesus that man and woman were joined together as One. Whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity and marries another commits adultery.
- Children should come forth without being told or led to Jesus for blessings for it is such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs to.
- To have eternal life keep the commandments. Also as you come into this world with nothing, you will leave that way.

### Matthew 20

- Everyone in heaven is treated the same way.
- Three times Jesus tells the disciples about his death and resurrection.
- No one can ask for favors before entering the kingdom. All has been prepared by the Father.
- Jesus is compassionate to those who speaks out loud enough to be heard. Whereas the blind men were healed.

### Prayer

*Jesus guide us that we may honor the commandments. Help us to follow your words and be able to see our heavenly father as promised to us.  
AMEN.*

***SUBMITTED BY Edna McDaniel***



## The Gospel of Matthew Matthew 21-22

Matt. 21-So as followers of Jesus we have the privilege, with the Holy Spirit's help, for us to come together regularly in worship in this great country. Do we know why we are coming to Church and what is really expected of us? The Lord is using us as instruments of His grace sharing, the Gospel to rescue others in our community every time we come together for worship. But after arriving in Jerusalem on what is known as Palm Sunday, Jesus made His way to the temple where He symbolically and prophetically reclaimed God's house for its rightful purposes (Matthew 21:12). In doing so, He quoted the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah (v. 13): "It is written," He said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer" (Isaiah 56:7), but you are making it a 'den of robbers'" (Jeremiah 7:11). Jesus's zeal for God's house was such that though risky, He did not let the mismanagement of the religious leaders go unchallenged. What may have been mercenary practices were at least momentarily replaced with marvelous acts of mercy (v. 14), deeds which were more consistent with the purpose of the Father's house. Though the physically blind were healed, the blindness of leaders remained, as noted by their indignation and words of Jesus (vv. 15-16). Leadership comes with one who will bridge these divides or is essential for holding people together. Therefore, let's choose leaders wisely today and moving forward towards (20/20) those who will effectively share Jesus Christ's rescue plan with others.

The parable of the wedding banquet, paying taxes to Caesar, marriage at the resurrection, the great commandment and whose son is the Christ? But i am focusing on wont we enjoy the intimacies of marriage in heaven? (22:30). Men we don't need to apply for any marriage license in heaven because our temporary stay here is enough with the woman and the hope for eternity will set us all free forever. We don't know how or why but the Sadducees were attempting to show that the concept of the resurrection was absurd. But Jesus point was the reality of the resurrection, not the lifestyle of heaven. Paul says that heaven's pleasure will be infinitely better than the best this life offers (1 Cor. 15:35-57). It is even hard to even try process that some people is still questioning our heavenly citizenship and what's going to take place after reading my Bible. Once we come together as a family and empower each other with this inspiration then hand it down to the next generation because that's our obligation. I have spent years analyzing things that went wrong because of lack of understanding and I have refused to compromise my convection for foolishness. Please study the word of God for yourself and sticking to what we believe despite these challenges we face every day. Don't leave our young people without faith in their lives. Let's protect their future by preaching the unadulterated word of God.

*Prayer: Father help us to be the instrument of your grace and to effectively rescue people from their sins and teach them Your plan of salvation. Amen.*

***SUBMITTED BY J.B. Smith***



**Walking Your Talk**  
**The Gospel of Matthew**  
**Matthew 21-22**

In these chapters, Jesus offers the parable of the guest at the wedding feast and some of his harshest criticism of the Pharisees who again and again attempt to trap him in some matter of the law. Jesus says they are hypocrites. He says they are like tombs for the dead that are white-washed on the outside, nice and clean, but filled with nothing but bones and decay on the inside. He tells the people to listen to what they say, but do not do what they do. In Matthew 22, Jesus also offers what are considered the “Great Commandments,” taken from Deuteronomy 6:4-5: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord *is* one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength (NKJV) and Leviticus 19:18: “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the Lord” (NKJV). Jesus, however, does not limit love of neighbor to “the children of your people” but includes all of humanity in His instructions.

As you contemplate these chapters today, how consistent is what you practice (i.e. what you do) with what you preach (what you say or claim to believe). Jesus’ challenge to those who heard him, and to us all, is to be consistent in our daily lives: to walk our talk.

Prayer for today: Dear God, help me to know your will for my life and the way I should go about doing your will so that all I do and say is in keeping with your will. Amen

***SUBMITTED BY Herbert L. Lester, Jr.***

Ash Wednesday begins the Lenten season

**Lent** is a solemn religious observance in the liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends approximately six weeks later, before Easter Sunday.

**This book of Meditations** is a means of studying and sharing God's word as it was designed by the pastor to read the four books of the Gospels-Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The Devotional Readings will be published in eight booklets. Copies may be requested from the church office or sent electronically.

Rev. Dr. Herbert Lester, Jr., Senior Pastor  
Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Williams, Associate Pastor  
Wanda Clay, Witness Chair and Editor



Daily Lenten Readings  
Book 2 of 8



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Witness  
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