



A
Daily Devotion
Reading of the Gospels
For

The word "Lent" is written in a large, elegant purple cursive font. To the left of the word is a grayscale illustration of a dove in flight, with its wings spread, set against a soft, smoky background.

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

And
EASTER

April 8-April 13, 2019

Days 29-34

Book 6 of 8

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Who Are You?
The real you...come forward
The Gospel of John
John 1-John 2

While John, the Baptist knew who he was, it was difficult explaining to others that he is NOT the “one” but he has come before the Messiah. He knows his position and his assignment in the scheme of things.

It seems that other people sometimes want us to be who they want us to be. And, we seem to be sometimes confused about who God wants us to be. Nevertheless, we are all here with different duties and different assignments that all work with God’s plan. Do you know who you are in this cycle of life?

Jesus was at a wedding celebration where his mother was also in attendance. Has your mother ever told you to do something and you thought it was not quite what you should be doing? My mom had the utmost confidence in the things she would encourage me to do. While I thought the task to be too large, she assuredly insisted that I could and that I should “try it.” She was that way with not only me, but many people, her family members, friends and even new acquaintances.

At his mother’s demand, Jesus was leery about making sure the “celebration” continued at his hand. When he did what his mother told him to do, he didn’t receive a process of instructions from her. Instead, he gave instructions to others that turned out to be even better than what the norm had always been (serving the best wine at the latter part of the party).

Therefore, coupled with knowing that God has a specific plan for your life and being encouraged by someone, one can find that thing that lets you know “WHO” God intends for you to be. While I have yet to follow some of the spoken acknowledgements of my mom, she left without a process of instructions for me to follow. However, I am still encouraged by her voice, by my sister, dad and brother and some of my friends and will surely be blessed as I do have the instructions from God.

Are you living in God's plan? You CAN be the best you when you live in God's plan for your life!

Prayer...During this Lenten season, deliver me from procrastinating and being all that you want me to be. While I thank you for choosing me, even though the tasks sometimes feel too large, I will forever be your witness in the marvelous works you DO! AMEN!

John 2:25 He did not need any testimony about mankind, for He knew what was in each person.

SUBMITTED BY Wanda Clay



The Gospel of John John 3-John 4

Jesus' popularity and credibility are growing as more and more people come to believe He is the Messiah. A leader among the people, Nicodemus, comes to see Jesus by night to find out more about him. Jesus tells him he must "be born again." A change needs to take place in his life so radical, that the power of God makes him a new person from the inside out. In Chapter 3, John makes it clear what Jesus' ministry is and why God sent him into the world:

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Jesus' ministry is creating quite a disturbance, even between His disciples and those of John the Baptist as Jesus' disciples seem to be baptizing more people. John attempts to assure them this is not a problem because he, John is not the Messiah. Jesus decides to head back toward Galilee. Traveling through Samaria, Jesus encounters a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well and they engage in a fascinating dialogue as Jews and Samaritans have nothing to do with each other for reasons going back centuries. The woman comes to know that Jesus is the Messiah and she runs and tells the whole town. Jesus and the disciples spend a couple of days there before moving on. In Cana of Galilee Jesus heals an official's son who is near death. John says this is the second miracle he performed after returning to Galilee.

Read these two chapters today. What impresses you most? Did you notice the scope of people Jesus ministers to? From the newly baptized to leaders of the temple, to government officials, to Samaritan women! There appears to be this openness to Jesus' ministry. What do you think? Could we moderns learn anything here?

SUBMITTED BY Herbert Lester, Jr.



Daily Lenten Readings

Day 31 Wed 4/10/19

Trust God He Will Make A Way
The Gospel of John
John 5-John 6

John 5:6

When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

I have a question for you. How long have you been lying there in your current condition? Do you want to get well? God will make a way, but you must do something to show your commitment to the change or a way ahead.

Why do we do the same thing day in and day out expecting a different result? You are three people: Who you think you are, who people think you are, and who God knows you are. To get well, you have to do something differently. You must learn to master your mind which is where wellness reside. God has given you enormous powers, but it's your challenge to learn how to tap into them daily.

Most of us have not because we have asked not! Show humility by bowing and kneeling daily before "the Father," and he will bless you all the days of your life while changing your condition and helping you get well.

I believe in the power of God. Therefore, because I have humbled myself before him, I am given the gifts of courage, hope, wealth, and love for all humanity to observe. I am obligated by our Lord to share this knowledge with all that will listen.

SUBMITTED BY *Danny Troutman*



Daily Lenten Readings

Day 32 Thur 4/11/19

‘God’s Mercy is Forgiveness’

The Gospel of John John 7-John 8

Read John 8:1-11

When Jesus was in the presence of the adulterous woman, he does not humiliate her, he does not say: ‘What have you done? When did you do it? How did you do it? With whom did you do it?’ No! He says: ‘Go and do not sin again!’

As a parent or grandparent, watching our children grow into youth and then into a young adult, how many times have we reiterated to them, ‘Do Not Do Anything To Shame Your Family Name’, or ‘Remember Who You Are’. How often have we had to show mercy to our youth or young adult because they have done an awful wrong? We still believe in our children, although they have disappointed us. How many times?

As an adult, how often have you been shown mercy by friends and family when you have hurt them through sins of commission or omission? Is it too numerous to keep account of? When we are offered mercy from others, it helps and makes it easier to show mercy toward others.

Jesus showed mercy to the adulterous women and did not condemn her. God’s loving kindness to us has given us the base and pattern for our kindness to others. Today, our fear, our anger and elevation of self has caused us to throw stones at or judge those who fall down, even when we know we should forgive and show compassion. We as the ‘Body of Christ’ are called to challenge structures or dynamics that dishonor God and dehumanize people. We can offer daily expressions of mercy which express the nature of God’s kingdom.

Lent is our opportunity to reconnect with the heart of God or to renew our connection with him by showing Mercy to others. This is our challenge!

Prayer

Be merciful O Lord, for we have sinned. Forgive us and heal us!

SUBMITTED BY Janice J. Woodard



Jesus the true Shepherd
The Gospel of John
John 9-John 10

John 10:1-42

This is a parable about the lost sheep. Jesus spoke about being the Shepherd to his sheep. Jesus is talking about heaven with the Pharisees and how He is the way to get to heaven. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for His sheep. Jesus says you should know your sheep, like His father knows Him. He told the crowd He was the gate to the sheep. Anyone enters through Him shall be saved. Some of the people and the Jews thought Jesus was crazy, demonic and possessed. So the crowd was divided.

Jesus went to another festival in Jerusalem. Some of the people asked, "how he could keep them in suspense, instead of speaking plainly?" He said, "I did tell you plainly, but you cannot understand because you are not my sheep. My sheep hear my voice and no one can snatch them from me. I and the Father are one." So the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered, "My good works have I shown you from my father. For which of these do you stone me?" The Jews said, "The good works is not why we stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." "...the Father is in me and I in the Father."

God wants us to understand that "Jesus is equal with God the Father."

Prayer: Thank you Father that Jesus is My Good Shepherd. Continue to guide us, to understand that we may know you better. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

SUBMITTED BY Ta'Kensnia J. Dowell



Daily Lenten Readings
Day 34 Sat 4/13/19

The Gospel of John John 11-John 12

Many things can influence our thoughts and action is it losing power and prestige? That cause some of us to stray from our daily walk with Jesus Christ. What if we had this five-minute rule at Clark Church where we come together for five minutes in prayer before we do anything at Church? Have you received this freedom that Christ Jesus offers us yet? Christ overcame sin and death while offering us life everlasting. Therefore, as a Church our lives, work, and ministry should never ever be deterred by anything or anyone. So, in this story, the “divine escape” some religious authority has formed a huge conspiracy of their very own Church. So, after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (11:38_44), then they called an emergency meeting while plotting to kill Him (vv. 45-53). Can you believe this--they didn't stop there it's not enough? Yes, after Jesus rose from the dead, the religious leaders spread lies about what happened at the grave (Matthew 28:12-15). They also began a campaign to silence Jesus' followers (Acts 7:57; 8:3). What started as a religious plot against one man for the “greatest good” of the nation became a web of lies, deceit, and multiple casualties. Church we are witnessing something like that today in DC.

The Gospel of John 12

We, the body of Christ's willing, count on God's unfailing strength to help guide us to overcome these stumbling blocks in our faith journey. So, here's pastor Herbert “if you do not anticipate God doing something in your life above and beyond anything you might already celebrate, then your ability to demonstrate in your life the power and presence of God is significantly limited!”

Lord please uphold all of us whenever we falter, and pick us up again as we fall. Church please don't allow this opportunity from our Lent devotion to be in vain. Thanks.

As Jesus' public ministry drew to a close, so did the opportunity for the Jews to accept Him as their Messiah. He may have hidden from them to underscore what He had just told them that the soon the "light" would be taken from them (that's why He hid. 12:36). If the Jews could not believe, how would they be held accountable? (12:39) Though we cannot understand everything about the purposes of God, the Bible teaches that His judgments are just. God's actions are very consistent with the choice people make. John mentions the people's inability to believe after their unwillingness to believe (12:37). Because they refused to believe in Jesus, God hardened their hearts.

Prayer: Words from pastor Herbert, “anticipation, celebration, demonstration, and manifestation of the object of your celebration could be limited,” but God still hears our prayers in joyful obedience. Our responsibility is to respond to God's ability in humility. Now let's give glory Church! Amen.

SUBMITTED BY Jethro B. Smith

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.

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Wanda Clay, Witness Chair and Editor



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Book 6 of 8



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Witness
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