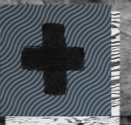


LENT

FROM ASHES TO RESURRECTION



Welcome to Lent.

Lent is a season where we intentionally slow down, quiet distractions, and turn our attention toward Jesus. Over the next forty days, this devotional guide is designed to help you walk with Christ in a steady, meaningful way by choosing reflection over hurry, surrender over control, and faithfulness over noise.

Each daily reading offers a short Scripture, a reflection, and a simple prayer intended to center our hearts on Jesus and return our focus to what matters most. The goal is not to add pressure to your schedule, but to create space for attention, surrender, and renewal.

Set aside a few quiet minutes each day. Read the Scripture slowly. Sit with the reflection. Respond honestly in prayer. Some days may resonate deeply, while others might feel ordinary. Both are part of our spiritual formation and becoming more like Christ.

Each week also includes a family practice designed to take 10-20 minutes. If you don't have kids at home, we encourage you to engage with these moments alongside a friend, roommate, or group.

May this season draw you closer to Jesus, deepen your faith, and renew your awareness of His presence.

What is Lent?

Lent is the 40 days leading up to Easter where we prepare our hearts to remember Jesus' death and celebrate His resurrection. It is patterned after Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness (Matthew 4), and it invites us into repentance, renewal, and deeper devotion to Christ.

Ways to practice Lent?

Lent has historically been shaped by three simple practices: fasting, prayer, and generosity. Together, these rhythms help us quiet distractions, center our hearts, and deepen our devotion to Jesus. You may choose to focus on one of these practices or engage with all three.

Fasting:

Fasting is the practice of intentionally laying down something that occupies our attention, appetite, or comfort. Traditionally this involved food, but it can also include anything that tends to crowd out space for God such as social media, entertainment, habits, or distractions. Remember that fasting is not about punishment or religious performance. It's about making room for Christ to fill our lives.

Prayer:

Prayer anchors the Lent season. As we remove distractions, we intentionally turn toward God through Scripture, reflection, silence, and honest conversation with Him. Lent invites us to slow our pace and deepen our awareness of God's presence.

Generosity:

Scripture reminds us that devotion to God is always connected to love for others. Lent is an opportunity to practice generosity through serving, encouraging, forgiving, and meeting needs.

We pray this devotional guide is helpful as you walk with Jesus throughout this Lent season.

Week 1 — Return to Jesus — February 18-24, 2026

Family Practice — Slow Down & Make Space — Exodus 20:8 + Psalm 46:10

Reflection: Lent invites us to slow our pace and create room for God. One simple way to practice this as a family is by setting aside a Sabbath Hour.

A Sabbath Hour is exactly what it sounds like: sixty intentional minutes where we stop striving, unplug from distractions, and rest together. This is not about being hyper-spiritual or perfectly quiet. It's about creating space to breathe, reconnect, and remember that God meets us in rest.

Practice: Pick one hour this week that works for your family. During this hour:

- turn off screens and devices
- pause chores and productive
- slow your pace.

Then simply enjoy rest together.

There is no single “right” way to do this. Choose what feels life-giving to you and your family:

- Sit and talk
- Play a game
- Color or draw
- Take a walk
- Read together
- Share highs and lows of the week

The goal is not activity. The goal is unhurried presence.

Day 1 — Dust & Desire (Ash Wednesday) — Joel 2:12-17

Reflection: God welcomes returning hearts, not polished appearances. Lent begins with honesty. This season is not about spiritual performance but about spiritual attention. Wherever you find yourself today, distracted, weary, hopeful, or searching, God invites you to draw near.

Practice: Ask: “Jesus, where have I drifted from you?” Write down what comes to mind.

Prayer: Lord, I return to You. Have mercy and make me new.

Day 2 — Clean Heart — Psalm 51:1-19

Reflection: God doesn't just forgive; He renews. Lent isn't about self-improvement but surrendering to others One who can remake our heart. Invite Jesus to create in you what you cannot manufacture.

Practice + Prayer: Sit in silence for one minute. Then pray these verses slowly:

Psalm 51:10-12 (NIV)

¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Day 3 — The Fast God Wants — Isaiah 58:6-12

Reflection: True devotion reshapes how we live and love. God reminds His people that faithfulness is more than outward practice. It is reflected in compassion, justice, mercy, and care for others. Our worship and surrender are meant to flow outward into everyday life.

Practice: Do one intentional act of kindness or generosity today. Keep it simple and quiet.

Prayer: Jesus, shape my heart toward loving You and others.

Day 4 — Walking in God's Presence — Micah 6:8

Reflection: God's desire has always been clear. He calls His people to live with humility, pursue justice, and walk closely with Him. Lent is an opportunity to realign our lives with this calling. Faithfulness is not complicated, but it is intentional. It is formed through daily choices and steady trust in Christ.

Practice: Ask yourself, "Where can I walk more humbly today?" Choose one posture of patience, listening, or grace.

Prayer: God, teach me to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You.

Day 5 — Sunday Worship — Psalm 95:1-7

Reflection: Psalm 95 calls us to worship with both joy and humility. We are invited to sing, to shout, to bow, to kneel. Worship is celebration and surrender held together. God is the great King over all creation, yet He is also our Shepherd. This is the tension of faith: awe and intimacy. Lent draws us into that posture. We remember who God is, and we remember who we are. We come not as consumers or observers, but as His people, formed by grace and dependent on mercy.

Practice: As you come to church today, arrive with intention rather than routine. Before the Gathering begins, take a quiet moment and pray: “God, I come to worship, not to evaluate. I come to receive, not resist. I come to surrender, not spectate.” Let your presence and participation become an act of worship, not just your attendance.

Prayer: God, You are worthy of my praise and trust. As I gather with Your people, quiet my distractions and soften my heart. Shape me, speak to me, and draw me closer to you.

Day 6 — Love In Action — 1 John 3:16-24

Reflection: Love becomes visible through action. Scripture reminds us that genuine faith expresses itself through how we treat others. Lent shapes us into people whose devotion to Christ influences our words, attitudes, and responses.

Practice: Encourage someone today with specific words. Be intentional and sincere.

Prayer: Jesus, teach me to love others through words and actions.

Day 7 — Faithful in the Small — Luke 16:1-15

Reflection: Spiritual growth is built through repetition. Faithfulness is rarely dramatic. It is formed through steady obedience in everyday moments. Small acts of faithfulness shape both our present and our future.

Practice: Choose one small act of obedience today. Follow through regardless of how you feel.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be faithful to You in all that You ask of me.