

LENT :: find LIFE ::

"whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." - JESUS

Lent is a time for our community to seek the face of God and prepare for the JOY of Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday is all about the celebration of the resurrection of our LORD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST from the grave, and the new life that we receive by faith in HIM. Lent is traditionally a time you are encouraged to fast, or give up, something in your life for 40 days as a remembrance of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness before his public ministry. So what should we give to God during this time to prepare for our ministry to the city and world?

Jesus said these words in Matthew 10:39, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." This is Jesus' call to HIS kingdom; this is his call to discipleship. So this Lent would you fast, or give up your life for Jesus' sake?

How do we give up our life so that we may find it? The Apostle Paul says, "To set your mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace." So let us journey towards the cross of Jesus together by putting to death the mind set on the flesh, and let's journey towards the resurrection and new life of Jesus by setting our mind on the Spirit, which is life and peace.

For the next six weeks leading up to Easter we will be setting our minds on the 8 beatitudes of JESUS, the teaching of the kingdom life. During this time you will be receiving a weekly Lent journey guide. For each day of the week there will be a specific step in our journey towards resurrection Sunday. Below is an explanation on the specific steps you will repeat each weekday for six weeks.

Monday :: ACKNOWLEDGE ::

Our first steps towards the kingdom and life with God came through our acknowledging of our sin and brokenness and need for a Savior. But this acknowledgement should not cease the moment we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior; this is the first step toward a continually renewed life in Jesus each day we awake. Take Monday of each week and acknowledge the reality of sin and brokenness in your life revealed through the weekly beatitude.

Tuesday :: PRAY ::

Pastor John Piper says, "Prayer puts God in the place of the all-sufficient Benefactor and puts us in the place of needy beneficiaries." If we stopped there we would have the incorrect perception that God is the deck-hand on our vacation cruise who brings us Margaritas and Wine Coolers whenever we beckon. But he continues, "The purpose of prayer is the Father's fame and the saints' fullness." God receives glory not merely by providing for our needs but by transforming our lives. Take Tuesday to pray for Jesus' power to transform your life in line with his beatitudes.

Wednesday :: TRUST ::

Jesus promised, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." And the writer of Hebrews said, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Transformation and new life come through faith and faith comes through hearing and believing the word of God. Take Wednesday to meditate on, and put your trust in, the scriptures that expound on and correlate with the weekly beatitude.

Thursday :: ACT ::

New life results in new actions based on new thoughts. New life is just not merely a renewed mind, but a renewed mind that leads to new actions of love. As you have acknowledged your sin, prayed for the Holy Spirit's transforming power, and trusted God through the hearing of His Word, now comes the all important ACTION. James tells us that "Faith without works is dead." Thursday is the day to leave actions of a dead life and replace them with actions of new life. Each week there will be an action of love that you will embark on in accordance with the truth revealed in the weekly beatitude.

Friday :: THANK ::

Our new life exists for one reason...to glorify God. God is glorified in us when we are delighted in Him. True delight and satisfaction in God can not be bottled up...it must overflow. Friday is the day of thanks. Take time on this day to thank Jesus for the new life he has given you through his death and resurrection. Thank him for his transforming power. But one important thing...speak of your thanks to a spouse, coworker, family member, or a random person waiting in line for groceries or lunch, or the person sitting next to you on the EL or bus to work.

WEEK 1

Monday :: ACKNOWLEDGE ::

Blessing begins with admitting our poverty. This is not poverty in our value as image bearers of GOD. This is not poverty in gifting or talents. Nor is it financial poverty. This is poverty in your spirit; the knowledge that our value, talents, finances, etc come from an infinitely wealthy GOD and gracious FATHER.

Today reflect on your poverty in light of the fullness of JESUS. ADMIT and accept your spiritual poverty.

Tuesday :: PRAY ::

Today ask God to reveal to you areas in your life where you are RICH in your own eyes. Confess your sins of pride, haughtiness and self-esteem. Ask God for forgiveness for making much of yourself and not much of Him. Humbly ask God to reveal His power, majesty, and glory to you this week. Thank Him for his grace and mercy given to you through Jesus.

Wednesday :: TRUST ::

Today meditate on God's words to you. Take this card with you to work, school, or carry it around the house. Take time to read and contemplate the truth of God's word.

"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hand, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything." Acts 17:24-25

"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with

him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of this grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."
Ephesians 2:1-10

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."
2 Corinthians 8:9

Thursday :: ACT ::

As an outworking of the truth of Jesus' poverty to make us rich, today is a day that we can become poor to make others rich. Let's take today as a community to fast from food. To whatever you are capable of, skip a meal or two or three. Use the extra time you would to eat to thank God for His richness to you.

Giving up your food today will be a sign of becoming poor, but we now must make someone rich. With the money that you saved from not eating your meal, buy someone in need a meal or two or three. Take time to share the message of God's richness towards you through Jesus.

Friday :: THANK ::

Take today to thank God for his immeasurable richness towards you through Jesus. Thank him for your food, your job, your friends and family, but most importantly, thank him for his gift of salvation and your entrance into the kingdom of God. Share your gratitude with a friend, family member, coworker, or stranger so that they to may experience the love, grace, and mercy of Jesus Christ.