



# Levit

MEDITATIONS 2022

*TRAC Board of Worship & Music*

# Welcome to Lent Meditations 2022!

As we journey together in reflecting on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, here are some new features that you might find helpful:



## Read the Word

Take time, first of all, to reflect on the life, words and ministry of Jesus Christ in the Gospel readings. There's nothing like reading it directly from your Bible! If you're reading this in the PDF format, just touch the *Bible Reading* reference and the hyperlink will take you to the passage of the day. Let's listen to what God might be saying to us individually through His Word so that the reflections can further enrich our time with Him.



## Listen to the Reflections

For those of us who are aural learners, an audio version of these daily meditations is also available, presenting each day's reading in the voice of yet another member of the TRAC family. Get the link from our TRAC Worship Facebook Page ([www.fb.com/TRACWorship](http://www.fb.com/TRACWorship)) and follow or subscribe to the podcast to get your daily feed.



## Reflect with Loved Ones

A Junior version of this booklet has been specially published for families with children in their formative years and pre-teens. It is our hope that, together, these resources will encourage a culture of family devotions where the Word of God is read aloud, where lessons of faith are spoken about, and where biblical convictions are strengthened and lived out.





### Worship in Song

Sundays within Lent are “mini-Easters” where we joyfully look forward to our Lord’s resurrection amidst the self-examination and reflectiveness of Lent. Our Sundays traditionally feature creative expressions such as photography, watercolour calligraphy and poetry. This year, we bring you the lyrics of timeless hymns with a QR code that you can scan to listen to the song and sing along with your family.



### Share the Love

Think of someone who would be blessed by each day’s meditation and drop them a note. Or better still, share the gift of Lent and Easter. Send them a copy of this booklet!

Whether you’re joining us solo, audio or with the kiddos, know that you’re journeying together with a larger family. May these 40 days of Lent and the seven Sunday celebrations of praise challenge our minds, inspire our hearts, and transform our conduct to become more like Jesus.

From your fellow Lent sojourners,

TRAC Board  
of Worship & Music



□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21](#)

## “OSA” OR “SHOW BUSINESS”?

*“Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 6:1; NIV 1984)*

Day

1

Ash Wednesday  
2 March 2022

Today is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. Today, Matthew gives us a crash course on how to do our “acts of righteousness” – how to give to the needy (almsgiving, i.e. giving of money, clothes and food to the poor), how to pray, and how to fast. It is by way of OSAs – “Official Secret Acts” – to be done “in secret”. Why? Because it is only for the Heavenly Father to see. The opposite of OSAs? “Show Business”! “Announce” your almsgiving – “Be honoured”. “Be seen” in your praying. “Be obvious” in your fasting.

Why are we reminded during Lent of almsgiving, praying and fasting? In almsgiving, we are reminded to love the needy as God would have us do (Matthew 25:31-46), especially during this national and global economic downturn. In praying privately, we are reminded to seek God’s face alone (Psalm 27:8), resetting our prayer focus. In fasting, we are reminded to humble ourselves before God for sins committed (Jonah 3).

Almsgiving, praying and fasting (with its spiritual rewards) may very well be laying up for ourselves “treasures in heaven”!



*How much of your almsgiving, praying and fasting is “Official Secret Acts” and how much is “Show Business”?*



Lord, grant me the wisdom to engage in my OSAs, and to place my time, talents, resources and heart where it matters for eternity. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Luke 9:18-25](#)

## WILL YOU DENY, TAKE UP, FOLLOW?

*“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.” (Luke 9:23)*

Day

2

Thursday  
3 March 2022

What do the following people have in common – Hudson Taylor, Mother Teresa, William Wilberforce, Amy Carmichael, Elizabeth Fry, Martin Luther King Jr., William Booth and Ernie Steury? They all knew what it is, as Christians, to go after “the Christ of God”, to deny themselves, to take up their cross daily, and to follow Him. When they embraced “the Christ of God”, read about and pondered the “many things” He suffered – His rejection by the Jewish leaders, His crucifixion and death, and His resurrection – they were filled with wonder and courage. They were emboldened and energised to “lose” their life for “the Christ of God”. Thus, they were able to leave their comfort zones to share the Good News in real and tangible ways – rescuing people from spiritual imprisonment, feeding their souls and bodies, freeing them from their dehumanising existence as slaves, child prostitutes, inmates in deplorable prison conditions, as well as those oppressed, discriminated and rejected because of their race, caste, colour, creed or poverty.

They did not gain the whole world. Through their deep conviction and stand for “the Christ of God”, they did not forfeit their very self; they saved their lives for eternity.



*How am I learning, from proven faithful Christians, to progressively go more passionately after “the Christ of God” – to deny myself, take up my cross daily, and follow Him?*



Lord, grant me humility to acknowledge my lack of passion – to deny myself, take up my cross daily, and follow You. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 9:10-17](#)

## STRETCHABLE OR NOT?

*“Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins ...  
No, they pour new wine into new wineskins ...” (Matthew 9:17)*

Day

3

Friday  
4 March 2022

Two questions were asked. First, by the Pharisees to Jesus’ disciples: *“Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”* The second, by the disciples of John the Baptist to Jesus: *“How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?”*

Why these questions? They did not recognise Jesus as the Messiah (God’s “Anointed One”) and as divine, even after all the healings He had done before this great banquet. The Pharisees had a fixed mindset like “old wineskins” – unstretchable. To them, it was incredible that a Messiah would be eating with tax collectors and “sinners”, whilst John’s disciples were too fixed on outward piety.

Therefore, Jesus, quoting from Hosea 6:6, told the “learned” Pharisees to *“go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice’”* – a sharp rebuke on their hollow religiosity. And Jesus had to tell John’s disciples, *“How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them?”* – clearly proclaiming in no uncertain terms that He was the “bridegroom” (an Old Testament metaphor for “God”).

It was into the “stretchable” – the *“tax collectors and the sinners”* who *“came and ate with Him”* – that Jesus could pour the “new wine”.



*Are you missing out on God in daily life because you have it “fixed” as to how God should show up, how He should be, should do, and so on?*



Lord, grant me “stretchability” so that You can continually pour Your new wine into me. Help me go forth presenting Your Good News in ever fresh and refreshing ways. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Luke 5:27-32](#)

## REACHING OUT

*"I have not come to call the righteous,  
but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:32)*

Day

4

Saturday  
5 March 2022

Who would you consider as "sinners"? Someone who is a gang leader living a self-destructive life of drugs, alcohol and street violence like Nicky Cruz? Someone who is into erroneous teachings, with a common-law wife and an illegitimate son like Augustine of Hippo? Someone who is a slave-ship captain (human trafficking) and a rapist like John Newton? Someone who is corrupt like Matthew?

If David Wilkerson did not reach out to Nicky, if Ambrose did not reach out to Augustine, if God did not answer the desperate prayer of John Newton who was caught in a severe storm at sea, and if Jesus did not reach out to Matthew, then many people would not have come to faith in Jesus Christ through them. For Nicky became an evangelist, Augustine became a great defender and preacher of the Christian faith, John became an Anglican priest and wrote the hymn "Amazing Grace", and Matthew became Jesus' disciple and wrote the Gospel.

In yesterday and today's readings, Jesus reached out to "sinners". When was the last time you actually went up to the "sick" and the "sinners" with the Good News? Or does your regular company consist only of "sanctified souls"?



*As a Christian in a multi-racial, multi-religious,  
multi-cultural and multi-lingual world, how would  
you reach out positively, and answer discerningly,  
the ever-emerging new and multi-faceted needs of  
our times?*



Lord, help me to recognise the "sinners" – the rejects, the marginalised, the oppressed, the discriminated – in my everyday life and courageously reach out to them with Your love. Amen.

## LED BY THE SPIRIT

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness ... (Luke 4:1)*



### LORD, WHO THROUGHOUT THESE FORTY DAYS

*Claudia F. Hernaman, 1873; © Public Domain*

Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/lentsun1>

Lord, who throughout these forty days  
For us did fast and pray,  
Teach us with You to mourn our sins,  
And close by You to stay.

As You with Satan did contend  
And did the victory win,  
O give us strength in You to fight,  
In You to conquer sin.

As You did hunger and did thirst,  
So teach us, gracious Lord,  
To die to self, and so to live  
By Your most holy Word.

And through these days of penitence,  
And through Your Passiontide,  
Forevermore, in life and death,  
O Lord, with us abide.

Abide with us that, through this life  
Of doubts and hope and pain,  
An Easter of unending joy  
We may at last attain!

□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 25:31-46](#)

## ARE YOU A SHEEP, OR A GOAT?

*"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"*  
(Matthew 25:40)

Day

5

Monday  
7 March 2022

This parable depicts Judgement Day – the end of the world, when all accounts will be settled and justice will finally be done. Jesus is enthroned as Judge and King, and He divides humanity into two: the sheep, who are blessed and will inherit His Kingdom, and the goats, who are cursed and will suffer eternal punishment. Jesus' criteria is whether, when He was in need, they fed Him, sheltered Him, clothed Him, took care of Him, and visited Him.

Both groups are surprised: the sheep, at Jesus' commendation, and the goats, at His condemnation. They do not recall ever seeing Jesus in such dire straits. Jesus explains that when they had served and helped "the least" (or failed to do so), they were actually serving and helping Him (or failing to do so).

This parable tells us that our professed faith must lead us to have hearts after Jesus' heart – one that has compassion and cares for "the least": those who are marginalised, oppressed, ignored, unseen, unheard. Without this change wrought within us, all our sermons are merely hot air, and books like this devotional are simply a waste of pixels, paper and ink.



*What are your feelings and attitudes towards "the least"? Can you see Jesus in them? Will you do what you can to reach out, care for them, and help them?*



Change my heart, O God, to love those whom You love and to minister to them. Let my heart be broken by the things that break Your heart. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 6:7-15](#)

## HOW ARE WE TO PRAY?

*"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name ...'" (Matthew 6:9)*

Day

6

Tuesday  
8 March 2022

The words of today's passage are familiar and well-loved. This is the prayer Jesus taught us, which many of us pray together in church every Sunday.

The first half of the prayer centres on God: His identity as our loving Heavenly Father; His name, holy and revered; His Kingdom, which is a present reality with Jesus as our King, yet also a future consummation we anticipate; and His will, which we long to see fulfilled here and now.

The second half focuses on ourselves: our daily bread – not greedily making demands for our insatiable wants, but simply requesting God's provision for our needs; our debts – our sins that require confession and repentance, and upon receiving grace and forgiveness, we can then extend the same to those who wrong us; and our temptations, for which we need His guidance to avoid, His strength to resist and His power to be delivered.

Sometimes, when we utter a word or a phrase too often, it loses its significance. Let us ponder this simple, compact prayer, allowing Jesus' words to come to us with fresh meaning once again. Let us learn how to pray from the Master.



*How is your prayer life? Is prayer a mere afterthought, a formal ritual at set times and places? Will you cultivate an ongoing, daily conversation with God, following Jesus' example?*



Jesus, thank You for this model prayer. Help me to grow in intimacy with the Father. Teach me to pray simply and sincerely, aligning my will with His. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Luke 21:34–22:6](#)

Day

7

Wednesday  
9 March 2022

## HOW IS YOUR HEART?

*“Be always on the watch, and pray that you may ... escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:36)*

Reading this narrative of Jesus’ teaching and Judas’ betrayal, we observe four types of hearts:

**Weighted hearts:** In the light of His imminent return, Jesus warns that we should not weigh down our hearts. Interestingly, He says that both forbidden pleasures and life’s anxieties will do this. The indulgence of the former may be momentarily enjoyable, but it does not lead to the true lighthearted joy that God intends for us.

**Watchful hearts:** Jesus exhorts us to be on guard instead, ready and prepared for His second coming. Part of that is persevering in prayer, that we may escape what God allows us to elude, and endure what we must undergo.

**Wanting hearts:** As Jesus taught, people desired to receive God’s Word. Their spiritual hunger motivated them to wake up early in the morning to go to the temple and hear Him teach.

**Wicked hearts:** The priests and teachers of the law, jealous of Jesus’ popularity and fearful that the people might revolt, wickedly conspired to murder Him. Judas, in turn, listened to Satan’s enticements and decided to betray Jesus to them.



*Examine your heart. Are you weighed down by pleasures and anxieties, or tempted to do wrong? Repent. Will you guard your heart, to be watchful and want more of God?*



Holy Spirit, search my heart. If it has been weighed down or turned to wickedness, help me repent. Change my heart to be watchful and wanting more of God. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 7:7-12](#)

## A FAMILY AFFAIR

*"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:11)*

Day

8

Thursday  
10 March 2022

Walk into any home with young children and loving parents. You will observe the relentless tenacity of children asking and pursuing their parents for what they want, and how parents are generous in their giving with their children's wellbeing constantly in mind. It is no surprise that Jesus uses this everyday, ordinary and familiar situation to teach His disciples about the basics of prayer.

In verse 7, the imperatives to ask, seek and knock, which are common metaphors for prayer, are in the present tense. This implies the idea of a continual asking, seeking and knocking, thus emphasising the need for persistence in prayer. As disciples, we are reminded that, as children of God, we are to similarly ask, seek and approach God with our needs. And God, being the Father, will indeed be delighted to respond, according to His will, for the wellbeing of His children.

It is important that we retain the childlike simplicity of this relationship when we draw near to God in prayer. Difficult situations, disappointments in life and complex situations can often complicate a simple approach to God in prayer.



*Reflect on your prayer life. Do you struggle with prayer? Come to your Heavenly Father and relate to Him as His child. He longs to bless you with good gifts.*



Lord, teach me to relate to You as my Father in Heaven. Let me discover Your heart, and delight in Your answers to my prayers. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 5:20-26](#)

Day

9

Friday  
11 March 2022

## A NEW REALITY

*“For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)*

One may wonder what Jesus meant by these words. Was Jesus referring to the observation of the Law, similar to that of the religious leaders of His time? Was He promoting a new spiritual legalism? Could such “righteousness” be achieved? What, then, are the chances of anyone getting to heaven if these are the requirements taught by Jesus?

In reflecting and applying the Law that is found in the Torah, Jesus addressed the very essence or spirit of the Law. Such righteous living is only possible with the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a believer. A life of faith in Christ will result in the circumcision of the heart and the renewal of the mind; these, in turn, will empower a believer to live righteously in a manner that is pleasing to God. These requirements of Jesus are mirrors that reflect the transformative power of the Gospel. It is a new reality of the believer’s life in Christ.

Now is the time to seek God for the inner, transformative work of the Spirit within our hearts and minds that will bring about restoration in our broken relationships.



*Are you struggling to get along with someone?  
Facing difficulty in restoring a broken relationship?  
Do your emotions flare up at certain individuals?  
Talk to God about these.*



Heavenly Father, I ask for Your grace and work in my heart and mind, so that the reality of Your Kingdom may be seen in my life. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 5:43-48](#)

## A HIGHER CALLING

*"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."  
(Matthew 5:48)*



It is said that married people often look alike. Apparently, after many years, a close resemblance shows in the way they look and act. Children also often resemble their parents in looks, speech and actions.

As children in a loving relationship with the Heavenly Father, do you bear a resemblance to Him? What identifies and differentiates you as a child of God in this world? In today's passage, Jesus gives a radical and unique teaching: "... love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven." Love as the Father loves. In this manner, believers reflect the very nature and character of God.

In our encounters with people, we can choose our reactions or responses to them. If we are of this world, our behaviour will be no different from that of the world's. But if we have God as our Heavenly Father, we will reflect Him in our interactions with others. If our relationship with God is lacking, then this aspect of wholeness (perfection) in our relationships with others would also be lacking. As God's dearly beloved children, we have this higher calling in our lives – to love.



*In order to be true to Jesus' teaching about being His disciple, are there changes you need to make in how you react to others?*



Heavenly Father, work in me so that I may reflect You in my life. Help me pursue the higher calling of loving so that others will glimpse You in me. Amen.

# THE REJECTION

*"I tell you, you will not see me again until you say,  
'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'" (Luke 13:35b)*



# JESUS



## AT THE NAME OF JESUS

*Caroline M. Noel, 1870; © Public Domain*

Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/lentsun2>

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,  
Every tongue confess Him King of glory now;  
'Tis the Father's pleasure we should call Him Lord,  
Who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season, to receive a name  
From the lips of sinners unto whom He came,  
Faithfully He bore it, spotless to the last,  
Brought it back victorious when from death He passed.

Name Him, Christians, name Him, with love strong as death  
But with awe and wonder, and with bated breath!  
He is God the Saviour, He is Christ the Lord,  
Ever to be worshipped, trusted and adored.

Surely, this Lord Jesus shall return again,  
With His Father's glory, with His angel train;  
For all wreaths of empire meet upon His brow,  
And our hearts confess Him King of glory now.

□ Bible Reading: [Luke 6:27-38](#)

## WE LOVE BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE

*“But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.” (Luke 6:35a)*



The heart of Jesus' teaching here is the call to love. He was teaching His disciples and the crowds to love differently from those around them if they wanted to be counted as children of the Most High. Their Heavenly Father is kind to the ungrateful and wicked, and they were to be merciful like Him.

Jesus knows that, left to ourselves, we would never willingly love the unlovable. So, He points us to someone who does – God Himself. If we call ourselves His children, we are to be like Him. We are to be radically different and, even in the face of rejection and hurt, we are to love our aggressors. We are to do good to them without expecting anything in return.

Loving our enemies is something that goes against the grain of our human nature. We need to remind ourselves that, as God's children, we have His Holy Spirit and His power at work within us to empower us to do so. What father would not help his children to be like him? If there is one prayer that our Heavenly Father would definitely answer, it would be, “Father, help me love like You love.”



*Who are some people that you find really difficult to love? Talk to God about why you find it hard to love them and ask for grace to love them.*



Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me despite my being unworthy of Your love. Grant me that same grace to love those people whom I find difficult to love. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 23:1-12](#)

## LOOKING GOOD ON THE OUTSIDE

*"Everything they do is done for people to see ..."  
(Matthew 23:5a)*



Jesus was warning His disciples and the crowd against following the example of the scribes and Pharisees. He pointed out that all they were concerned about was public recognition and admiration of their spiritual status and piety. They only made an outward show of their spirituality, but they never walked the talk.

This desire for praise and recognition of our importance all stem from the sin of pride in us. In God's eyes, greatness is not measured by how much we are noticed for our achievements in Christian ministry, or respected for our gifts or spirituality. The people who are truly great in God's Kingdom are those who have no desire to look great or be considered great. They are those who are content to be nobodies, living lives of quiet service without seeking attention or praise.

We all struggle with the sin of pride – the desire to look good outwardly and be noticed and admired. We need to be attentive to what God is saying to us about ourselves each time our pride creeps in and surfaces. Let us allow Him to teach us and work His change in us that we can grow to become more like Christ.



*Think of a time when you wanted to be acknowledged or praised. What went through your mind at that time? What do you think God was saying to you?*



Father, forgive me for desiring praise and recognition from others. Help me remember what is more important to You, and teach me to live in ways that please You. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 20:17-28](#)

## LIVE TO SERVE

*“... just as the Son of Man did not come to be served,  
but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”  
(Matthew 20:28)*



Thinking that Jesus would soon be ushering in God's Kingdom on earth, the disciples began fighting over which positions of authority should rightfully be theirs. As the Messiah's closest followers, they saw themselves as deserving positions of power, with authority to rule over others. They had yet to understand that God's values are completely opposite to the values of the world.

Jesus began to explain to them that greatness and importance in God's Kingdom meant serving like slaves, not ruling in power. They were to be like slaves, the lowest class of society who had no human value except to be of service to their masters. They were to be like Him who, though He was God, *“made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant”* (Philippians 2:7), and came to live and serve them.

It is this heart attitude of humility and service, of putting others first before ourselves, that Jesus is calling us to embrace. Not that we cannot hold positions of authority, but that whatever our roles or status, our attitude and motivation must be the same as His. In humility, we are to consider others better than ourselves and to put their interests above ours.



*What would it mean for you to have the heart of a servant? Spend some time to talk with God over what your struggles might be over this.*



Search my heart, Lord. Reveal the areas of pride in my life. Teach me what it means to have a servant's heart and help me become more like You. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Luke 16:19-31](#)

## WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

*"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'" (Luke 16:31)*

Day  
**14**  
Thursday  
17 March 2022

We often dream of going places – places that offer the comforts, scenery and a wonderful, rich experience with our family and friends. Our destinations are usually carefully picked out and planned well beforehand to ensure the trip is worthwhile. As we all know, a poorly planned trip may result in disastrous consequences. But while on earth, amendments can still be made to save the day. Our final destination after life on earth, however, would not be as forgiving or adaptable as our “failed” travel plans here on earth.

Today's passage from Luke 16 is one of the many “travel” advices for our final destination, telling us to choose our eternal destination while we are still alive. For when we die, there can be no rearrangements as to where we will go – whether a place of torment, or Abraham's side. On earth, wealth may determine our physical wellbeing, but at our destination beyond earthly life, wealth or poverty do not determine our spiritual wellbeing. Instead, only repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ will make a difference to our final destination. And that decision has to happen now.



*Have you made plans for your final destination?*



Thank You, God, for Your mercies found in Jesus Christ, and for the reminder to make the critical choice for Him while I still can. God, help my unbelief. Amen.





□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 21:33-44](#)

## TENANTS OR OWNERS?

*“Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.” (Matthew 21:44)*



Christians need frequent reminders that we are only “tenants” here on earth. We are here to look after God’s vineyard and to see to its fruitfulness. Over time, however, without the owner in sight, we may have become accustomed to decisions and actions that lead us to believe that we are the rightful owners. We decide and do whatever we want. We reject sound godly advice; we may even reject God’s servants, His messengers.

How have we been treating God’s servants all this while? How have we treated God’s Son, Jesus Christ, to-date? Have we rejected God’s servants and His heir in the same way the Jewish leaders rejected the prophets and Jesus Christ? Have we, too, become proud and deceived in our God-assigned positions?

Indeed, it will be better for us to repent than for God’s judgement to fall upon us. Pride and the rejection of the rightful place of God, His Son Jesus Christ and His servants are very serious transgressions. If the Holy Spirit convicts us of the sin of pride, we need to repent, for when God’s judgement falls, the consequences will be devastating.



*How have you treated your pastor(s), ministry staff and church members recently? More important, how have you treated Jesus Christ?*



Lord, forgive us if we have mistreated or rejected Your servants and, above all, Your Son Jesus Christ. We repent of our pride. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Luke 6:43-45](#)

## INSIDE OUT

*"For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." (Luke 6:45b)*



This passage does not need much explanation. It reminds us to assess what comes out of our inner selves daily, for what comes out of us reflects what is inside us. A non-fruit tree cannot produce fruits. A durian tree cannot produce papayas. And a poisonous fruit tree cannot produce edible fruit.

So what is of foremost importance here is the nature of the fruit tree. A non-Christian will not be able to produce any Christian "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23). Hence, the first step towards producing "good fruit" is to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Such analogies, however, seem to fall short amidst the realities of being redeemed fallen human beings – instead of trees – still in the process of ongoing transformation and sanctification.

Although we have been redeemed, our sinful nature is still at work in us (Romans 7). Even though we are Christians, we do not automatically produce good fruit; a struggle continues to take place between our old nature and the new. But thanks be to God that Jesus Christ can help us to overcome our sinful nature. Yielding to Jesus' ways, then, is the path to producing "good fruit".



*Are you yielding to Christ's ways lately?*



Lord, without You, I cannot produce good fruit. Help me "abide in You" so that my thoughts, words and deeds will indeed bring glory to Your Almighty name. Amen.



# GOD GIVES SECOND CHANCES

*'If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'*  
(Luke 13:9)



## I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED

*Daniel W. Whittle, 1883; © Public Domain*

Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/lentsun3>

I know not why God's wondrous grace  
To me He hath made known;  
Nor why, unworthy as I am  
He claimed me for His own.

Refrain:

But I know Whom I have believed,  
And am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I've committed  
Unto Him against that day.

I know not how this saving faith  
To me He did impart;  
Nor how believing in His Word  
Wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves,  
Convincing men of sin;  
Revealing Jesus through the Word,  
Creating faith in Him.

I know not when my Lord may come,  
I know not how, nor where;  
If I shall pass the vale of death,  
Or meet Him in the air.

□ Bible Reading: [Luke 4:23-30](#)

## DESPISED AND REJECTED

*“Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.” (Luke 4:24)*

Day  
**17**  
Monday  
21 March 2022

In this key verse, Luke transliterated into Greek the Hebrew word, “Amen” – a word usually spoken in response to another’s statement, often liturgically, that means “so be it” – to emphasise the gravity of what was to follow. As such, one might rephrase the verse to say, “Amen, I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown.” Jesus brought to fore the thoughts and attitudes that lay hidden in the hearts of His listeners – the scepticism, unbelief, and resistance to the truth of the Gospel. Ironically, the reaction from the people in the synagogue was itself the fulfilment of His words. Indeed, the prophet and Messiah was not accepted in His hometown. He was met with furious rejection.

This rejection of Jesus in Nazareth foreshadows the rejection of Jesus in Jerusalem. In Nazareth, the people said, “*Physician, heal yourself!*”; in Jerusalem, as He hung on the cross, the crowd sneered, “*He saved others; let Him save Himself ...*” (Luke 23:35). They demanded proof that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, without understanding that His dying before their eyes was the very evidence they asked for because the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him (Isaiah 53:5).



*Are you, like the crowd, still waiting for Jesus to prove Himself to you? Don't you believe that He is able to save you from your heartache and distress?*



Lord, forgive us when we have doubted Your love, and not trusted in Your sovereign power in our lives. Help us grow in our faith and trust in You. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 18:21-35](#)

## FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

*'Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' (Matthew 18:33)*



Relationships can hurt. Whenever that happens, it invariably feels like the offender has robbed us, and incurred a debt toward us. The pain goes deeper when the offence is repeated. Not once, but multiple times. Worse still when the offender is someone we love. We are then left with a choice: to demand restitution, or to forgive.

Peter generously offered to forgive an offence seven times; the Jewish rabbis considered three times for the same sin sufficient. Although Jesus' reply to Peter seemed hyperbolic, yet when we consider the extravagant forgiveness of God towards humanity, the hyperbole might well be an understatement. The sacrifice of His only Son for a sinful world demonstrates the immense generosity of a holy God. This interrelatedness between human and divine forgiveness cannot be dismissed. We base our forgiveness and mercy toward others on God's forgiveness and mercy toward us. When we choose to forgive, we die to our wish for payback, as well as the desire to cling to anger, bitterness, and resentment. Death leads to resurrection. And so, in due time, love, joy and peace will be resurrected in our lives.



*Has someone robbed you of your happiness, reputation, or opportunity? Is that person's debt owed to you as big as your debt owed to God?*



Heavenly Father, help us grasp the magnitude of our own debt, and teach us to extend the same forgiveness You have shown us to those who sin against us. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Matthew 5:17-19](#)

## FULFILMENT OF THE LAW

*“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.”  
(Matthew 5:17)*

Day  
**19**  
Wednesday  
23 March 2022

The entire Old Testament is referred to as The Law and the Prophets. By declaring the Scriptures will stand until “*heaven and earth disappear*” and “*everything is accomplished*”, Jesus was not only emphasising its importance for His followers two thousand years ago, but He was also emphasising its importance for His followers today. In His own life, Jesus did not only know God’s Word, He lived it; and He calls us to do the same. Its teachings require a standard of holiness that no one can live up to. Not then. Not now. Hence the need for God to send a Saviour to the world – a need foretold in the Scriptures. Everything in the Old Testament points to Jesus – the Mosaic Law finds a fuller and deeper realisation through Christ’s teachings, and the prophetic teachings are revealed and confirmed through Christ’s actions.

Jesus did not come to abolish the Law and Prophets because they led the way to the Father. He came to fulfil them so that He could pave the way to the Father for us. Through His life, He fulfilled their requirements perfectly, and through His death and resurrection, He fulfilled their requirements on our behalf.



*Is the Bible the authoritative Word of God in your life?  
Do you take the time to not only search it, but allow it  
to search your heart?*



Jesus, thank You for living among us and dying for us. We ask that You teach us to love and live out the Word of God as You did. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Luke 11:14-23](#)

## WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

*“Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” (Luke 11:23)*

Day  
**20**  
Thursday  
24 March 2022

“You are in cahoots with Beelzebub!” “Show us more signs from heaven!” This was the crowd’s response after witnessing Jesus deliver a demon-possessed man. The Jews in Jesus’ day believed that an exorcist could only cast out a demon if he knew its name. Yet, Jesus could expel the demon without asking its name. Thus, they accused Jesus of being in cahoots with Beelzebub, and demanded that He give more proof of His authority.

Jesus replied, *“Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall ... But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”* This recalled how Pharaoh’s magicians responded to the plagues in Egypt: *“This is the finger of God”* (Exodus 8:19). Similarly, Pharaoh’s hardened heart was mirrored by the hardened hearts of the crowd before Jesus.

As “*someone stronger*”, Jesus delivered the man from Satan’s clutches. He has also, by the sign of Jonah (Luke 11:29-30), delivered us from the kingdom of darkness. Rather than evidencing Jesus’ purported ties to Beelzebub, this proved who He really was – God incarnate.



*What do people around you think of Jesus?  
How about you? Are you with or against Jesus,  
and why?*



Lord, I desire to be with You, not against You.  
You have the words of eternal life. Help me persevere  
in faith in times of unbelief and doubt. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [Luke 1:26-38](#)

## SON OF THE MOST HIGH

*"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.  
The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David ..."  
(Luke 1:32)*

Day  
**21**  
Friday  
25 March 2022

This passage is all too familiar to us. Yet, it still sends shivers through us whenever we read it because of the deep truth and impact it has on our souls.

Jesus' birth was the fulfilment of God's promise to King David that the Davidic kingdom would endure forever, and that his throne would be established forever (2 Samuel 7:12-17; Psalm 89:3-4). But why "Son of the Most High"? Interestingly, Julius Caesar was deified as *Divus Julius* ("the divine Julius") and Augustus, his adopted son who succeeded him, declared himself *Divi Filius* – Son of the Divine (or "son of a god").

Jesus, however, is the only true and beloved Son of God, as affirmed by His Father at His baptism and transfiguration, as evidenced by His sinless life of obedience, and as resoundingly proven by His resurrection and ascension. Jesus is the Son of the Most High, not any Caesar. Jesus established God's Kingdom on earth, not any other empire. And it is through Jesus that we are made "sons of God" by faith (Galatians 3:23-29).



*Do you acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God? Do you see Christians (including yourself) as sons of God in Christ? Will you trust God, just as the Son of God did?*



Jesus, help me reckon with the truth of Your Sonship and the everlasting Kingdom You have established, that I may also learn to live as a child of God. Amen.





□ Bible Reading: [Luke 15:1-10](#)

## REPENT! A CALL TO CHANGE

*“Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (Luke 15:10; ESV)*

Day  
**22**

Saturday  
26 March 2022

In these two parables, Jesus portrays a unique aspect of God in relation to sinners, in stark contrast to the Jewish understanding of God, and the ancient world's beliefs about the pantheon of so-called gods. Jesus, who is *“the exact imprint of God's nature”* (Hebrews 1:3; ESV), shows us that, instead of waiting for sinners to come crawling to Him, God sets out to seek out the lost.

This is the beautiful nature of God in Christ. Here in Jesus' parables, notice that both the shepherd and the woman (representing God) first seek out the lost sheep and coin, followed by joyous celebration upon discovery. Only *then* does Jesus talk of repentance.

This tells us that repentance is the right response to God's grace. Sin led us astray; by God's grace we were found. Repentance means changing our way of life in response to being found by God; it is to turn 180 degrees from sin to righteousness, from darkness to light. This gladdens God's heart!



*What are some hidden sins in your life? Do you know God is seeking for you in love? Would you repent in response to His grace and love?*

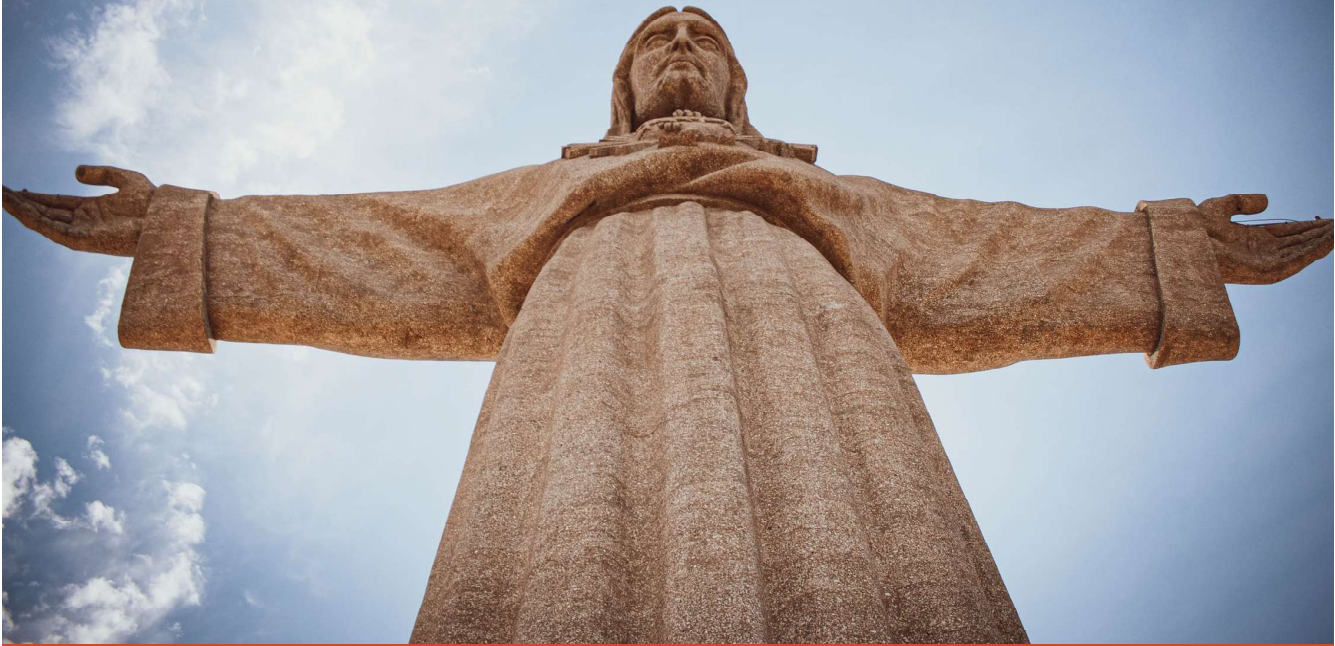


Father, thank You for the blood of Christ which has brought me forgiveness of sins, and His death on the cross through which I have freedom from slavery to sin and death. Amen.



# GOD WELCOMES REPENTANT SINNERS

*'But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'* (Luke 15:32)



## COME, YE SINNERS, POOR AND NEEDY

*Joseph Hart, 1759; © Public Domain*

*Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/lentsun4>*

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love, and power.

Refrain:  
I will arise and go to Jesus;  
He will embrace me with His arms;  
In the arms of my dear Saviour,  
Oh, there are ten thousand charms.

Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome,  
God's free bounty glorify;  
True belief and true repentance,  
Every grace that brings you nigh.

Come ye weary, heavy laden,  
Lost and ruined by the fall;  
If you tarry till you're better,  
You will never come at all.

Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream;  
All the fitness He requires  
Is to feel your need of Him.

□ Bible Reading: [John 4:43-54](#)

## TRUE OR SUPERFICIAL FAITH

*"Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live."*

*The man took Jesus at his word and departed. (John 4:50)*

Day  
**23**

Monday  
28 March 2022

The royal official was probably in the service of King Herod and, in a legal sense, he had authority over Jesus. But rather than sending his servants to bring the Lord to his house, this humble official himself made the 20-mile journey from Capernaum to Cana under the scorching Galilean sun. His humility was further demonstrated in the deferential way he addressed Jesus as "Sir".

When Jesus did not do what the official asked of Him, he chose to trust in Jesus, and in the process, his faith grew. Firstly, he believed in Jesus sufficiently to make the journey himself to ask Jesus for help. Then, when Jesus told him that his son would live, he believed and acted upon his belief by going home. Finally, having experienced the miracle of his son's healing, he and his entire household believed and put their faith in Jesus.

Contrast the official's faith with the superficial faith of the Galileans, who refused to believe in Jesus unless they saw signs and wonders. Our faith will grow when we take Jesus at His word, and act upon it even when we find it difficult to really believe.



*Are you more like the officer, who humbly chose to take Jesus at His word, or the Galileans who demanded that Jesus prove Himself to them through signs and wonders?*



God, help me develop a growing faith where I choose to take You at Your Word, believe in what it says and act upon it. In Jesus' name. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 5:1-18](#)

## A ONE-TRACK MIND

... [Jesus] asked him, "Do you want to get well?"  
"Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into  
the pool ..." (John 5:6b-7a)

Day  
**24**  
Tuesday  
29 March 2022

In the eyes of the paralyzed man, there was only one way to get healed: be the first one to get into the pool when the water was stirred. He was so taken up with his own chosen way that he neglected the true Way, so fixated on the promise of the pool's waters that he failed to see that there was One who was far greater than the healing powers of the pool ... and he almost missed out on the healing grace of the Messiah.

As John Calvin noted, "This diseased man does what almost all of us are wont to do; for he limits the assistance of God according to his own thought, and does not venture to promise to himself anything more than he conceives in his mind" (*John Calvin's Commentaries on the Gospel of John*).

The Jewish religious leaders chose to ignore the miracle and took offence at Jesus because He violated their human interpretation of God's Law. To them, their scrupulous attempts to follow their 613 interpretations of the Law provided the only roadmap to righteousness. Because of their closed minds, they forfeited God's grace of salvation through faith in the very Person they were persecuting.



*God is always prepared to work in our lives. Do you shut out what He wants to do in your life by limiting your views about how He works?*



Lord, help me to always keep an open mind towards You because Your ways and Your thoughts are so much higher than my ways and my thoughts. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [Luke 9:10-17](#)

## ONLY FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH

*He replied, "You give them something to eat." They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish ..." (Luke 9:13)*



The disciples must have been horrified when Jesus asked them to give the enormous crowd something to eat. They saw the task as impossible because they approached it as if everything depended on them, and probably could not even envision how Jesus could miraculously feed the crowd. By asking for a human solution, Jesus highlighted the fact that He could take the little they had and miraculously multiply it into something beyond their wildest expectations.

God will shatter our microscopic expectations of what He can do through us if we are willing to humbly offer to Him whatever He has given us. When we are willing to relinquish our hold on all that we consider to be ours (be it time, talent or treasure), and offer it to Him, He can and will use whatever we present to Him for His glory. We must never believe that what we have is inadequate or too insignificant for God to use. If we offer nothing to God, He has nothing to use. But He can take what little we offer to Him and turn it into something great. Little is much when God is in it.



*Do you consider your resources inadequate or too insignificant for God's use? Do you think God would ask you to do something that you and He together cannot handle?*



Lord, help me not to focus on my perceived inadequacies, but be willing to offer my "five loaves and two fish" to You to be used for Your glory. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 5:30-47](#)

## TRUST & OBEY – THE ONLY WAY

*“By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgement is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.” (John 5:30)*

Day  
**26**  
Thursday  
31 March 2022

Even as we continue our journey through the season of Lent, we must remember that Jesus had begun His journey much, much earlier. The pre-eternal Son of God knew, even before the foundation of the world, what His earthly mission in history would be. Yet, He resolved to do nothing except the Father’s will. That was why He could pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, “... yet not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). This focus on obedience was the mark of His humility and self-emptying (Philippians 2:7; ESV).

Jesus could do His Father’s will because He was secure with His self-identity, even as He sought to bear witness to the love of God for the world. He told the people that His mission was authenticated by three totally reliable witnesses:

- the work that the Father had given Him to finish,
- the Father Himself who had sent Him,
- the Scriptures that God had given and the Jews had trusted.

He even emphasised that He did not depend on human witnesses – not even the ones the Jews recognised: John the Baptist and Moses. And He was constrained to challenge them on their unbelief.



*In what ways have you really begun your journey in obedience and submission to the Master’s will? How do you deal with your struggles with self-emptying or your own self-importance?*



Lord Jesus, You gave up so much to do Your Father’s will. Grant me the grace to trust and to follow after You. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30](#)

## WHO IS THE REAL JESUS?

*"I am not here on my own authority, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, but I know him because I am from him and he sent me." (John 7:28b-29)*

Day  
**27**  
Friday  
1 April 2022

The Feast of the Tabernacles was one of the three major feasts in the Jewish calendar when all Jewish men were expected to assemble in Jerusalem. At first, Jesus delayed going because it was not the right time for Him.

But later, Jesus did go to Jerusalem and started to teach. The people's opinions were divided; He was just a common man, and could not possibly be the Messiah or Christ who was to come. Jesus' challenge to the people was simple and direct – they thought they knew who He was and where He came from, but they really did not. Neither did they know who really sent Him, nor what His mission was. He alone truly knew who He was and who sent Him.

"The Feast of the Tabernacles points to the truth that Israel's life rested upon redemption which, in its ultimate meaning, is the forgiveness of sins" (*New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed., 1996). The Feast was a thanksgiving to God for His provision, and was meant to point to His ultimate redemption plan for His people. This had yet to be revealed because the time for Jesus' sacrifice had not yet come.



*Ask yourself: Do I trust in Jesus Christ for this life and for the life to come? In what ways is Christ helping me to truly know God?*



Dear Lord Jesus, help me not to presume to know You, but to learn to wait for You to reveal Yourself to me more and more clearly. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 7:37-52](#)

## THE MAN WITH THE LIVING WATER

*"Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." (John 7:38)*

Day  
**28**

Saturday  
2 April 2022

The Gospel of John is full of references to the Holy Spirit. Already in chapters 3 and 4, Jesus had emphasised, to both Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, the need for the Holy Spirit for regeneration and true worship. In Chapter 7 we now have a reference to the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer. This would be followed by a more detailed discourse, in chapters 14-16, on the work of the Holy Spirit who imparts faith and gives life, like water that satisfies.

In spite of all that Jesus had taught and done, the people still could not believe, though they were suitably impressed, and wondered if Jesus was the Prophet or the Christ. Even the soldiers recognised He was no ordinary man. But the leaders continued to reject Him, except for Nicodemus, whom they thoroughly ridiculed.

This was John's way of saying that the Jews were not able to believe because they did not have the Spirit of God in them. Until the coming of the Spirit, they would remain faithless. Belief could only happen after Jesus had died, had risen from the dead and had been glorified, and the Holy Spirit poured out from on high.



*Are you fully convinced that the faith and hope you have in Jesus Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit abiding in you? What further proof might you need?*



Heavenly Father, I thank You that You have always loved me, revealed Your Son Jesus to me, saved me and poured out Your Holy Spirit into me. Amen.



## AN EXTRAVAGANT ACT OF LOVE

Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me." (John 12:7-8; ESV)



### JESUS, THE VERY THOUGHT OF THEE

Attr. to Bernard of Clairvaux, Latin, 12th cent.; trans. by Edward Caswell, 1849;  
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Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/lentsun5>

Jesus, the very thought of Thee,  
With sweetness fills my breast;  
But sweeter far Thy face to see,  
And in Thy presence rest.

O hope of every contrite heart,  
O joy of all the meek,  
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!  
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah, this:  
Nor tongue nor pen can show;  
The love of Jesus, what it is,  
None but His loved ones know.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,  
As Thou our prize wilt be;  
Jesus, be Thou our glory now,  
And through eternity.



□ Bible Reading: [John 8:12-20](#)

## THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)*

Day  
**29**

Monday  
4 April 2022

Another recurring theme in John's Gospel is "light". Jesus proclaimed that He was the light of the world that enabled the blind to see. "*I am the light*" is one of seven commonly acknowledged sayings in John's Gospel that point to Jesus' true identity – He is God. Today's reading leads into the following passages on the disputes with the Jews regarding the authority of Jesus, and also the healing of the blind man and the issue of spiritual blindness.

When challenged over His claim, Jesus said that both He and His Father were His witnesses. Thus according to the Law, His testimony was valid. The Jews, however, could neither believe nor acknowledge His testimony because they did not have the Spirit or the light of truth in them. Worse, they could not know who Jesus really was because they did not know the Father either. They were blind and did not know it.

Note that the word for witness/testimony used in this passage (vv. 13, 14, 17, 18) is based on the Greek word "*martur*", from which we have the English word "martyr". This term was first applied to those who witnessed for Jesus Christ and gave up their lives.



*Jesus came to be a witness to the love of God and gave His life for you. In what way have you become a witness/"martyr" for Him?*



Lord Jesus, I thank You for coming into my life and giving me Your light. Help me to be a true witness and to shine for You day by day. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 8:21-30](#)

## WHO ARE YOU?

... [Jesus] continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.” (John 8:23)



The Jews were puzzled and could not understand when Jesus plainly said that He was not of this world, and that He came from above. They responded by asking Jesus, “Who are you?” The answer? He is the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

Jesus told the Jews that they would die in their sins if they did not believe that He was Christ the Saviour. Scripture is very clear: *For the wages of sin is death ...* (Romans 6:23), and “*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved ...*” (Acts 16:31). The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truths to our hearts and convicts us of sin. Unlike those Jews who questioned Jesus, many that day listened to Jesus with open hearts; they believed in Jesus and were saved.

Jesus went on to say that the Father who sent Him was trustworthy, and was with Him wherever He went; the Father never left Him. We know that sin separates us from God, but when we believe in Jesus as Lord and Saviour, we belong to God and nothing “*will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Romans 8:39b).



*Think about this: Those who reject Jesus will die in their sins. How does this truth impact you? Will you tell others of Jesus?*



Dear God, may we listen with open hearts to what Jesus says, that we may truly know that Jesus is the Christ and the Saviour of the world. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 8:31-42](#)

## ABIDING IN THE WORD

*"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,  
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."  
(John 8:31-32; ESV)*



True discipleship involves abiding or dwelling in Jesus' word. Since Christ is the Word (John 1:14), to abide in His word is to abide in Christ. We abide in Jesus' word by following and obeying His teachings. Then we are true disciples of Jesus; we will know the truth and true freedom.

Jesus says, *"I am the way and the truth and the life"* (John 14:6). Knowing Jesus as Saviour – and surrendering our lives to Him as Lord – is knowing the Truth. When we abide in Christ, He abides in us, and the life of Christ renews and sustains our lives.

The Jews believed they were spiritually free because they were Abraham's descendants, and they called Abraham their father. Romans 3:23 states, however, that *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*. Without Jesus, we will live as slaves to sin. Only Jesus, the Son of God, can set us free from sin's clutches. Once set free by Jesus, we will be free to belong to God's family. Christ alone brings true freedom from sin and true belonging in God's family.



*Has your life become enslaved to work/studies, family  
and the pleasures of life? Take time now to open your  
heart and make room for Jesus and His word.*



Heavenly Father, we belong to You. Give us a hunger  
to read and meditate on Your Word, and help us to  
hear and obey Your Word. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [John 8:51-59](#)

## NO “SECOND DEATH”

*“Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.” (John 8:51)*

Day  
**32**  
Thursday  
7 April 2022

Jesus states with absolute certainty – “*Very truly I tell you*” – that we will not see or taste death when we obey His word. Jesus is not referring to physical death, which we will all experience, but to eternal death. The Bible refers to eternal death as the “second death” (Revelation 20:14). As sinners, we bring upon ourselves the penalty of eternal death (Romans 6:23); but when we repent and accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour, we are forgiven and freed from the penalty of eternal death, receiving eternal life instead: *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16).

“*Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am!*” Again, Jesus states with absolute certainty that before Abraham was born, He existed. In saying “I am”, Jesus was identifying Himself as God (cf. Exodus 3:14).

The Jews rejected all that Jesus said. They were so furious that they picked up stones to stone Him. We can either choose to ignore what Jesus says or we can acknowledge Him as the eternal Son of God, the Saviour of the world.



*Jesus may be your Saviour, but is He Lord of your life? Pause to reflect and bring all aspects of your life (work, studies, family, church, etc.) under His Lordship.*



Father, thank You for saving us from second death through Christ Jesus. Grant us grace and strength to let Jesus be Lord in every area of our lives. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 10:31-42](#)

## UNBELIEF

*"... even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." (John 10:38)*

Day  
**33**  
Friday  
8 April 2022

Two different groups of people had two different reactions to Jesus. The educated and elite wanted to kill Him because they considered Him a liar and blasphemer. Others believed Jesus.

Our preconceived ideas often affect our judgement of others. Many of the religious class could not accept the idea that God could come as a human being. We must not put God in a box regarding what He can or cannot do. What would have been our reaction if Hosea told us that God had instructed him to marry a prostitute (Hosea 1:2)? Or, if Mary told us that she was pregnant, but still a virgin (Matthew 1:18, 19)?

Unbelief is probably behind our inability to see many miracles (Matthew 13:58). We often do not believe that God can do the impossible (Matthew 19:26). Jesus says His Father is still at work until this day (John 5:17). We need to stop limiting God by our unbelief and preconceived ideas, and adopt the Berean way of examining with Scripture to determine truth (Acts 17:11). God will not go against His written Word!



*We all have imperfect belief systems, often believing in our heads, not our hearts. Our actions reflect our hearts' beliefs. What areas of life have you allowed unbelief to rule?*



Lord, I confess my unbelief. Open my eyes to see where unbelief has taken root in my life. Amen.



□ Bible Reading: [John 11:45-53](#)

## OUR GOD IS SOVEREIGN

*... being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God ... (John 11:51-52; ESV)*

Day  
**34**  
Saturday  
9 April 2022

An “unconscious” prophecy, as termed by commentators, reflects how God is able to achieve His will in any situation. His plan for Jesus’ sacrifice to receive the ultimate punishment for our sins cannot be thwarted by man’s free choice or will.

Caiaphas, as the designated high priest, uttered the words, “... *it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish,*” without realising that he was making a prophecy that would come true, but not in the manner that he intended. Scriptures have shown God using ungodly people to achieve His purposes – Balaam (Numbers 22), Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 22), Pharaoh (Exodus 9:16) and Pilate (John 19:19).

God is sovereign. ALL things are under His control even if the world around us looks chaotic, messed up and getting worse. Nothing can happen to us without God’s permission (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and He is able to turn around evil for good (Romans 8:28).



*Do you get discouraged or lose hope when things do not go as expected? When evil seems to triumph, or injustice rules? Be reminded that our sovereign God is in control of EVERYTHING.*



Lord, open my eyes to see and know that only You are in complete control of everything. You are my Hope, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.



# HOSANNA!

*... the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God  
in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen ... (Luke 19:37b)*



## ALL GLORY, LAUD, AND HONOUR

*Theodulph of Orleans, Latin, 8th–9th cent.; trans. by John Mason Neale, 1851;  
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*Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/lentpalm>*

Refrain:

All glory, laud, and honour,  
To Thee, Redeemer, King,  
To whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring!

Thou art the King of Israel,  
Thou David's royal Son,  
Who in the Lord's name comest,  
The King and Blessed One.

The people of the Hebrews  
With palms before Thee went;  
Our prayer and praise and anthems  
Before Thee we present.

To Thee, before Thy passion,  
They sang their hymns of praise;  
To Thee, now high exalted,  
Our melody we raise.

Thou didst accept their praises;  
Accept the prayers we bring,  
Who in all good delightest,  
Thou good and gracious King!



□ Bible Reading: [John 12:1-11](#)

## PUTTING FAITH INTO ACTION

*Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. (John 12:3)*



A dinner was held in Jesus' honour by a family that was close to Him. They had been His followers, listened intently to His teachings, seen and heard of His many miracles, including Lazarus' resurrection, which would still be fresh in their minds.

Mary took a jar of expensive perfume (worth a year's salary) to wipe Jesus' feet with her hair as an act of thanks and devotion for all that Jesus had done for them. It also showed that she believed Jesus' teachings, including what He said about His impending death (John 7, 8, 10). Mary demonstrated her faith with a tangible act – buying probably the most expensive perfume available in preparation for His death.

We often say we believe in Jesus and His teachings, but do not back our beliefs up with actions. James says that faith by itself is dead if it is not accompanied by action, i.e. as good as not having faith or belief (James 2:17). Jesus also taught about the vanity of our pursuit for perishable earthly treasures, instead of indestructible eternal heavenly treasures (Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:32-34); this is so true of many of us today.



*Do your actions reflect your faith and belief in Jesus?  
Are grace and truth seen in your life? What are your  
goals in life?*



Lord, open my eyes to see the lies I have believed, which are not consistent with Your Word, so that I may repent and follow You. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 12:20-36](#)

## WHO ARE YOU?

*“... unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” (John 12:24)*

Day  
**36**  
Tuesday  
12 April 2022

Once the wheat kernels have been fertilised, the plant begins to wither and eventually dies. The kernels fall to the ground, awaiting the right conditions to germinate and bring forth new life. The original plant dies, but in the process, releases the kernels to start many new plants.

Jesus taught that His death was planned from the beginning, as it was from His death that new life would be given to all who believed in Him (John 10:10). Adam lost his spiritual life when he sinned, but Jesus came to restore it to those who believed in Him. Jesus' death resulted in many new lives.

As followers of Jesus, we, too, must die to self – in giving up our own goals, plans and desires (Luke 9:23-25) to do the good works that God has prepared for us in advance (Ephesians 2:10). These good works are ministry opportunities or seeds that God has created for us. Through this process, we will find ourselves living in the centre of His will, and shall experience joy, fulfilment, success, happiness and satisfaction.



*Our minds constantly battle between submitting to our own goals and desires, or to the Spirit and doing God's will. Do you want to lay up for yourself heavenly or earthly treasures?*



Lord, I seek Your strength and courage to make the right decisions to deny myself and follow You. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 13:21-32](#)

## FOLLOWING CHRIST, SHARING IN HIS GLORY

*When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him." (John 13:31)*



John recorded for us that Jesus indicated who His betrayer was – Judas, one of the twelve He chose. Jesus knew what Judas was going to do next. Judas led some religious officials and soldiers to the place he knew Jesus frequented with His disciples.

Jesus knew what awaited Him. After His arrest, His disciples deserted Him. They, with whom He had spent three years, were scattered and thrown into great fear. Peter, one of His closest, denied his association with Him as predicted. The evil plotting of His enemies, who were determined to get rid of Him, would come to pass.

His humiliation, diminishment and, finally, crucifixion were before Him. Yet, Jesus said, *"Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him."* How could that be glory, we ask.

His suffering atoned for our sins and His resurrection overcame the wages of our sins, that is, death. Jesus knew He was fulfilling what His Father had sent Him to do. Jesus' obedience glorified the Father; the Father glorified Him. That was His glorification.



*Consider – what kind of glory motivates your worship and service? We cannot serve Jesus without obeying our Heavenly Father, nor share in His glory without sharing in His suffering.*



Heavenly Father, bless me with a clearer vision of the path Christ walked. May I follow Him and worthily join Him to glorify You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 13:1-17, 31-35](#)

## NO SERVANT IS GREATER THAN HIS MASTER

*“Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.” (John 13:16)*



Peter rebuked Jesus when Jesus spoke about the plot to kill Him (Matthew 16:21-22). Peter refused Jesus' washing of his feet, but upon Jesus' explanation, Peter asked that all of him be washed. Peter motioned to John to find out who Jesus' betrayer was. Peter declared his readiness to die for Jesus. He tried to stop Jesus' arrest. Yet, Peter's denial of Jesus is heartbreaking and sobering. In the Gospel accounts, Peter gives the impression that he held himself to be the "Alpha of the pack of disciples". Occasionally, he even told his Master what to do. We get the sense that he wanted to be the "top dog".

Three years with Jesus, yet the disciples did not understand His mission. They quarrelled over who was the greatest amongst them. To these, Jesus demonstrated the full extent of His love by stepping into the place of a servant – He stooped to wash their feet.

Re-read John 13:1-5. Look carefully at Jesus and what He was doing.

Re-read John 13:6-17. Listen carefully to what Jesus said in verses 12-17, *“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so ... Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master ...”*



*It feels holy to observe Lent season. It is nice to reenact the feet-washing. Yet, it is important to ask for whom we are doing these and why.*



Lord, I did not understand what You were doing, but I do now. Please give me grace to follow You. May I always be Your servant. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 18:1–19:42](#)

## PUT YOUR SWORD AWAY!

*Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?” (John 18:11)*

Day  
**39**  
Good Friday  
15 April 2022

It was a plot to kill Jesus by those feeling threatened by Jesus, and those disappointed with Jesus. Threatened, because Jesus highlighted their hypocrisy. Disappointed, because Jesus did not lead the rebellion to overthrow Roman colonialism. No charge could be found against Jesus except false accusations. Who could blame Peter for drawing his sword to strike the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear, when the mob advanced to arrest Jesus? Was this not a right and just act? Peter must have been surprised by Jesus' response to his gallant act.

Jesus was resolute to fulfil His mission not by “sword”, or assertion of rights, or worldly powers and positions. Isaiah 53:6 states that, *“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* According to Paul, *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23), and that *“the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 6:23). Jesus was resolute to drink the cup the Father gave Him. “Swords” could not do what only Christ's drinking of the cup could.



*Ponder deeply Christ's mission. Are there “swords” you need to put away, although they seem right and just? Let heartfelt thanks flow for Christ's disarming and saving act for you.*



Lord, help me put away my “drawn sword” that You have disarmed by the cross whereupon You died for me and for all. Amen.

□ Bible Reading: [John 19:38-42](#)

## THEY LAID JESUS THERE

*Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. (John 19:42)*

Day  
**40**  
Holy Saturday  
16 April 2022

It was a long night that preceded the long painful day when Jesus cried “It is finished” and died on the cross. Was that the end of Jesus? What would Jesus’ followers do? If He could raise Lazarus from the dead, why could He not stop His own death? Would anyone avenge His death? Why such evil? There were many questions in the air, but Jesus had died. Silence.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, Jesus’ secret disciples, took His body down from the cross, wrapped Him in linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb. Their actions may have seemed a mundane necessity, a picking up of the broken pieces – insignificant chores in the midst of the power play and loud unanswered questions. Carefully, they did the needful for the moment. They acted faithfully. Importantly, they let Jesus be – they laid Him in the tomb.

At times, we may question the significance of following Christ. What we do or say seem inadequate answers to the questions of our times; we get caught up in their noisy din, leaving undone what the Lord assigns to us. Let us faithfully, for each given moment, accomplish what is given us to do and say.



*Can we faithfully do and say what is given to us? Are we able to let God be God? For we are the servants, and He the Master of all.*



Lord, let me honour and glorify You in all my life, even in my insignificance, inadequacies and helplessness. For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.





## GOD COMES TO US

*While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. (Luke 24:15; ESV)*



### ABIDE WITH ME

*Henry F. Lyte, 1847; © Public Domain*

*Let's worship together: <https://bit.ly/easterhymn>*

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour.  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

## Contributors

The Board of Worship and Music would like to thank all our contributors (one of whom wishes to remain anonymous) for their prayerful contributions and thought-provoking insights.

**Rev. Peggy Seow** believes very much in the power of the written word to convey “things unspeakable”, and believes passionately in the power of God’s divine compassionate presence during spiritual direction and prayer retreats.

**Kiew Sieh Jin** is a member of Taman Ujong Methodist Church, Seremban, where he serves as a lay preacher, worship leader and Captain of the Boys’ Brigade. He is happily married to Chen May and has two often endearing, sometimes naughty, but always beloved, children.

**Rev. Christopher Rao** is the pastor in charge of Wesley Methodist Church, Kuantan, and is also currently the Chairman of the TRAC Board of Evangelism. He enjoys spiritual retreats and the ministry of the Word. He is married to Rhema and they are blessed with two children, Yohanen and Rania.

**Goh Kim Guat** worships in Taman Ujong Methodist Church, Seremban. She has always found much joy in helping people to grow in their journey of faith, even as she herself continues to learn how to live a life that pleases God. In this season of her life, she is trying to slow down and appreciate some of the simple blessings of life more – family, friendships and good health.

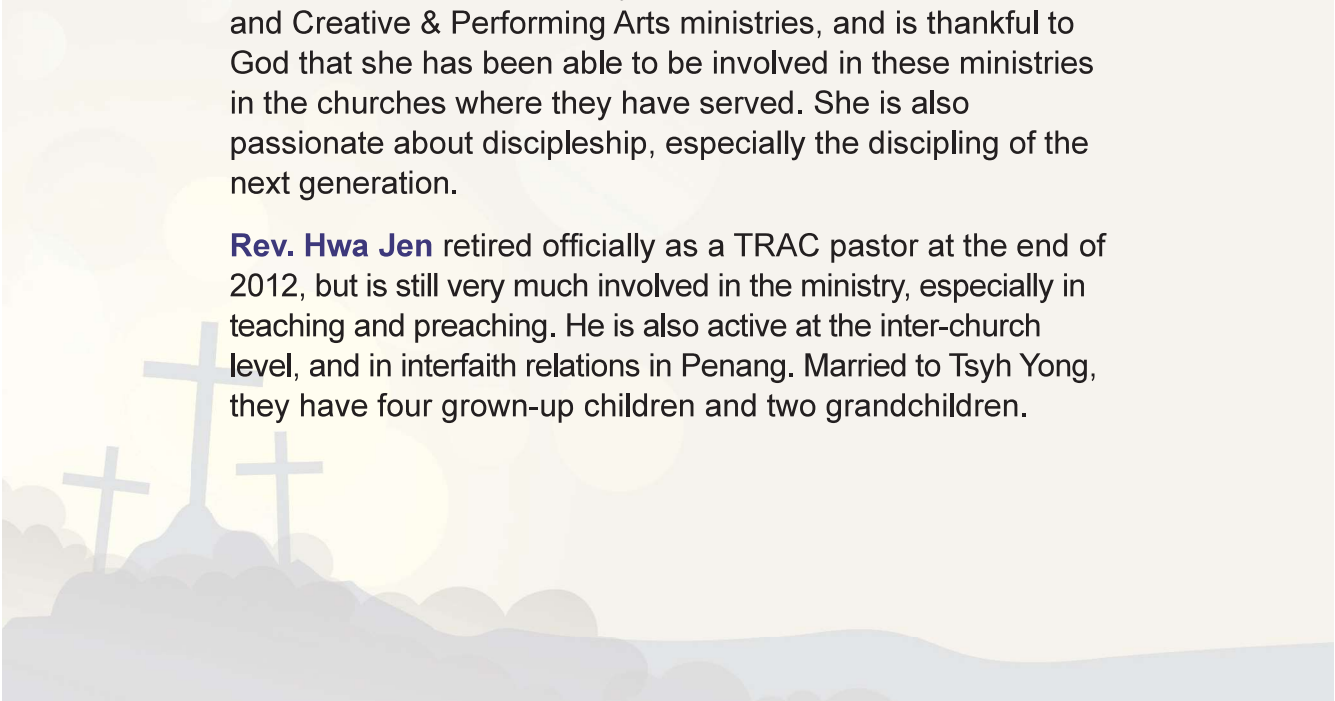
**William Lim** is currently serving in Wesley Methodist Church, Penang, as a Ministry Staff in charge of Discipleship and Nurture. He is married to Foong Yeng and blessed with three grown-up children, Joshua, Jocelyn and Joanna. William loves the outdoors and aspires to be a better cook at home. He also cherishes the times he has with others, talking about and striving to live out what is taught in the Bible.

**Angie Seow (Mrs.)** and her husband, Peter, are with Wycliffe Malaysia, and have lived and worked in Papua, Indonesia, since December 2004. They have three children: David (27), Daryl (23), and Hannah (19). Currently, Angie is the SIL Asia Bible Translation coordination team facilitator. When in Malaysia, the Seows worship at Canning Garden Methodist Church, Ipoh. Even though coffee and dark chocolate are her preferred addictions, Angie has a deep and abiding passion for the music and worship ministry.

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**Jane Tan** is married to a pastor and enjoys her role as a pastor's wife. She has always been interested in the Worship and Creative & Performing Arts ministries, and is thankful to God that she has been able to be involved in these ministries in the churches where they have served. She is also passionate about discipleship, especially the discipling of the next generation.

**Rev. Hwa Jen** retired officially as a TRAC pastor at the end of 2012, but is still very much involved in the ministry, especially in teaching and preaching. He is also active at the inter-church level, and in interfaith relations in Penang. Married to Tsyh Yong, they have four grown-up children and two grandchildren.



**Kwan Swee Ching** is a retired Form Six teacher and a founder member of Taman Ujong Methodist Church, Seremban, where he continues to worship and serve to this day as a lay preacher, teaching and sharing God's Word.

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*All photos used for Sundays are from <https://unsplash.com>*



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