



## THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Luke 9: 51-56, Psalm 39:4 , 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2, Luke 4:18-19, 1 Corinthians 9:10

## REFLECTION AND STUDY

### DAY 1

The season of Lent is a time for us to lay aside any and all distractions in life and begin to lift to the surface the areas of our life where we've compromised ourselves. We are challenged to move beyond a lukewarm faith, to fully authenticate who we are and determine what or whom it is we have chosen to follow.

- How have you compromised yourself to secular culture?
- Remember the wheel Pastor Bob described on Sunday. What is at the center of your wheel?

**Prayer:** Lord, as we journey to the cross help us to divest ourselves of the distractions and excuses, and allow us to discover you anew, to hear your voice more clearly that we have courage to follow you as faithful disciples. In Jesus' name. Amen.

### DAY 2

Pastor Bob gave us a scripture on Sunday that he wanted us to remind ourselves of every day. **Psalm 39:4, "Show me, Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting it is."** When we remember our mortality and remind ourselves how short our time on this earth really is, our priorities and what we should be focused on each day become clear. This life is temporary and we need to be preparing for what's next: heaven, our permanent home.

- You've heard the expression, "Live every day like it's your last." If this was your last day, what would you do? What would you be focused on? Is this the same thing you focus on in your day to day life?
- If you were to go on to heaven tomorrow, would you be proud of the life you've lived? What would your "mission report" say when you delivered it to God?

**Ask God to help you remember that we live this life in preparation of the next. Ask Him to guide your focus.**

### DAY 3

In Luke 4:18-19 Jesus said, **"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."** This is what we, as followers of Christ, are also called to do. We are here so we can engage the ministry of Jesus, to assemble as the church and complete God's work and create the Kingdom of God here on earth. But many in the church today want to go along with Jesus only up to a certain point. We're followers of Jesus up to the place it's reasonable for us; we follow as long as it is not inconvenient. True commitment requires more than doing what's easy. At times it requires sacrifice.

- What are you doing to help create the Kingdom of God on earth?
- Have you ever drawn back from making a deeper commitment to God? What is holding you back?

**Pray and ask God to help you follow Him completely, to take your faith beyond what it easy or convenient.**

## DAY 4

Have you developed a God mission statement? If you haven't, pray and ask God to guide you as you write out at least two or three concrete "God goals" that you are pursuing, or want to pursue in your life. If you're having trouble thinking of anything ask yourself:

- What is the basis for your faith?
- What is God calling you toward?
- What work are you doing for the Lord?
- What goals are you pursuing for the Lord?
- How does your faith play into your day to day life?

If you don't currently have any goals, think about what you want to do for the Lord. Think about ways that you can focus on living out your faith.

If you want to, share your goals with your family or with a friend in Christ. Ask them to help you stay accountable to fulfilling these goals. If you would rather not share them, pray over them and ask God to help you keep these goals at the center of your life. Keep the paper you wrote them on and review them often during this Lenten season. Continue to ask yourself how you are working to fulfill these goals.

## DAY 5

One of the Lenten disciplines we focus on at St. Paul is fasting. Maybe that means choosing one day of the week that you set aside to abstain from food, and replace the time you would have spent eating with prayer and reflection. Maybe that means giving up something else: some people give up a leisure activity or a single food like chocolate. The goal is to let something go so you can replace it with something else that is God centered. Think about the answers you gave on day one as you decide how you will fast for Lent. If there is something that has become more important than God in your life, think about how you can set it or a part of it aside during Lent and refocus on the Lord.

- What will you set aside during Lent?
- What will you replace it with?

**Pray and ask the Lord to help you commit to letting something go during Lent. Listen to His guidance as you choose what it will be.**

## DAY 6

Lent is not just a season of preparation, it is also a season of expectation. To expect is "To look forward to, anticipate, watch or look for, wait for, count upon, hope for; believe, trust." Do you expect God to show up in your life in a great and mighty way? If you do, it will show itself by your actions as you live in expectation of His blessings, His presence, His promises fulfilled.

**Pray today expecting an answer.**

## DAY 7

Today is your "Sabbath" and a time for reflection. How has God been speaking to you over the week? Use what the Lord has said to you to remold and reshape your life. If you are having trouble hearing God's voice, slow down or even stop what you are doing so that the busyness of life's demands do not squelch the whispers of God's language of love upon your heart.