

I AM JESUS



A WHOISGRACE RESOURCE

Seven times in the gospel of John Jesus uses the words “I am,” to reveal important aspects of His identity to the world. These phrases paint for us a profound picture of Jesus; His character, His motives, His interactions, and His priorities. And since I AM was a title reserved only for God Himself, it was also Jesus’ not-so-subtle way of letting the world know that He was One with the Father.

This devotional book will flow out of our “I AM Jesus” sermon series, but it will also guide you as a Christian to enter into the spiritual disciplines and to practice acts of self-sacrifice as we commemorate this season of Christ’s suffering, and death and eventual resurrection.

We pray that this journey will deepen your intimacy with Jesus as well as strengthening your faith as his follower.

FIRST | Introductory Devotional

Title: Before You Begin

Text: John 20:30-31

Week 1 | Feb 21-27

Title: I am the Door

Text: John 10:9

Week 2 | Feb 28- Mar 6

Title: I am the Good Shepherd

Text: John 10:11

Week 3 | Mar 7-13

Title: I am the Light of the world

Text: John 8:12

Week 4 | Mar 14-20

Title: I am the Bread of life

Text: John 6:35, 48

Week 5 | Mar 21- 27

Title: I am the true Vine

Text: John 15:1

Week 6 | Mar 28- Apr 3

Title: I am the way, the truth,
and the life

Text: John 14:6

BONUS CONTENT:

Week 7 | Easter Sunday

Title: I am the resurrection
and the life

Text: John 11:25

Personal Reflection | Solitude and Fellowship

Disciplines | Learn more about Spiritual Disciplines

About Lent | A quick look at this 40-day time of remembrance

I AM Jesus 2.0 | Take your study to the next level

DON'T MISS THESE:

WHOSGRACE SERMON RECAP: Join host, Pastor John Tiernan, for a weekly in-depth conversation with each preaching pastor after their I AM Jesus sermon. They will cover everything from theological topics to special content that didn't make it into the sermon. Approx 30mins. Released Monday mornings. Available on Spotify, Apple, and YouTube.

"MY CHAIR" DAILY PODCAST: Join host, Pastor Sarah Burt, as she explores the daily readings and devotional content through the I AM Jesus series. This is a great podcast to listen to on your commute, a quick drive to the store, or in the morning after your own chair time. Approx 5mins. Released daily at 5:00am EST. Available on Spotify and Apple.

GRACE APP: Download the Grace App ([Apple](#)) ([Android](#)) and opt in for push notifications to receive alerts during Holy Week that mark the significant moments in Jesus' last days. Be sure to allow the app to send you notifications! This has been a very popular tool in years past!

SPOTIFY PLAYLIST: Special curated songs to help you walk through this Lenten season. [Spotify Link](#)

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK:

1. Attend church weekly, either online or in-person and take notes
2. Complete the daily reading plan:
 - Read Scripture
 - Reflect
 - Days 1-4 provide questions.
 - Day 5 is the practice of *Lectio Divina*, an ancient church tradition that invites you to *listen* to God's word to you in that moment.
 - Pray: We provide the prompts. You bring your heart to the feet of Jesus. Remember, don't do *all* the talking. Listen for Him!
3. Commit to a spiritual discipline. We are giving suggestions for SOLITUDE and FELLOWSHIP during this season, but you can also choose any disciple you want.

INTRODUCTORY DEVOTION: BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Each day's devotion will follow a similar pattern: something to read from the scriptures, something to reflect on, a prayer prompt and a practical way for you to respond depending on your chosen spiritual practice, solitude or fellowship.

Before you begin your Lenten journey, let's understand a bit more about John's gospel and the seven "I AM" statements of Jesus.

Read: John 20:30-31

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Reflect: The gospel of John was written by one of Jesus' closest disciples, making it an eyewitness account of the teaching and practices of Jesus. As he writes in chapter 20, John wrote his gospel for the purpose of revealing the truth about Jesus- that He is the Son of God and that eternal life is found in Him. As you read you will discover "signs" (miracles) and "I AM" statements revealing that Jesus is who He says He is. Will you read and reflect, pray and practice through this Lenten season, drawing nearer to the One who said and did so much in order that you would believe and be saved?

Respond: Commit to the spiritual practice of either Solitude or Fellowship. Both will require intentionality, discipline, and grace. Begin today by looking at your calendar for the first week of Lent- when will you schedule regular time in your chair to engage with this devotional? When will you schedule an extended time of solitude? When will you schedule fellowship with another believer, or group of believers?

My weekly SOLITUDE plan:

Find peace and quiet

When?

Where?

My weekly FELLOWSHIP plan:

Find encouragement & company

Who?

When?

Week 1 | I AM the Door

USE THIS SPACE FOR SERMON NOTES AND ANYTHING ELSE DURING THE SERVICE THAT YOU WANT TO RECORD AND REMEMBER. LATER TODAY, TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON TODAY'S EXPERIENCE.

Practice SOLITUDE: Make time on your calendar this week for 15 minutes of solitude. Choose a place that gives you peace- a car ride, a walk in the woods, a bath, a spot cleared out of a closet. Take a few deep breaths and briefly pray- "God, You are with me." Just enjoy God's presence with you in the stillness.

Practice FELLOWSHIP: Reach out to a friend or family member who loves Jesus. Ask them to schedule 30 meaningful minutes with you this week. Decide how you will use that time- praying together, worshiping together, sharing something from the Scriptures, encouraging one another, etc.

MONDAY | WEEK 1

Read the 7 I AM statements of Jesus

John 6:35; 48 I AM the Bread of Life

John 8:12 I AM the Light of the World

John 10:9 I AM the Door

John 10:10 I AM the Good Shepherd

John 11:25 I AM the Resurrection and the Life

John 14:6 I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life

John 15:5 I AM the True Vine

Reflect

In John's gospel Jesus uses the phrase "I am" on many occasions when speaking about himself. The significance of this was not lost on the pharisees, the Jewish leaders, and it made them angry. Though it may not be obvious to us just why they reacted so strongly, the repetition of the phrase draws our attention. In Exodus 3:14 God reveals His name to Moses, saying "I AM" and it is this exact phrase that Jesus is using on himself. He is clearly declaring His divinity. As you read the seven I AM statements above, without yet studying further, what are your first learnings about God the Son?

Pray

Jesus, You are God the Son...

TUESDAY | WEEK 1

Read John 10:1-10

"I AM the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved." (John 10:9)

Reflect

Notice that this passage has two parts. In the first (:1-5), but people were confused, so Jesus spoke again (:7-10). How did Jesus clarify His own words with His declaration, "*I am the door*"?

One aspect of a door is that it is both an exit and an entrance. Reflect on your life with Jesus- how has He invited you *in*? Where has He led you *out*?

Pray

Use the prompts below to lead you into prayer.

Begin: Jesus, You are the Door...

Conclude: Because you are the door, I am protected. Amen

WEDNESDAY | WEEK 1

Read Psalm 103

Reflect

Like sheep, we are often afraid. Write down a couple of things that jump into your mind that bring fear or anxiety to your heart. But 365 times in the Bible we are told not to be afraid. Make a list of all the ways the Lord blesses His people in Psalm 103. Now ask yourself, can I trust the Lord with my life?

Pray

Jesus, You protect me...

THURSDAY | WEEK 1

Read John 10:10; Matthew 6:33; Romans 5:17;

Reflect

The definition of *abundant* is over and above, more than is necessary, superadded. Note that Jesus is not talking about a life overflowing with *stuff*. He is speaking of a life overflowing with *Him*. Where do you see His abundance in your life? Where is your focus on your lack, rather than His fullness?

Pray

Jesus, you lead me to abundance...

FRIDAY | WEEK 1

Read Romans 5:1-11

Reflect (Lectio Divina)

Step 1 - Read the passage out loud, slowly and gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for God's "still, small voice" to focus you on a word or phrase that's particularly relevant to your life.

Step 2 – Take that word or phrase and slowly repeat it to yourself – allow it to interact with your inner world of concerns, ideas, memories.

Step 3 – Interact with God and ask Him to begin to transform you with this insight that He has given you through His word.

Step 4 – Return to the text and read it again several times and savor the context of the word or phrase that God has given to you.

Pray

Jesus, you invite me to your great salvation...

Week 2 | Good Shepherd

USE THIS SPACE FOR SERMON NOTES AND ANYTHING ELSE DURING THE SERVICE THAT YOU WANT TO RECORD AND REMEMBER. LATER TODAY, TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON TODAY'S EXPERIENCE.

Practice SOLITUDE: Make time on your calendar this week for 15-30 minutes of solitude. Consider finding a new space if last week's held too many distractions. Take some deep breaths and pray, "God, You are with me..." Consider this question- how have you experienced God's presence this week?

Practice FELLOWSHIP: Reach out to a friend or family member who loves Jesus. Ask them to schedule 30-60 meaningful minutes with you this week. Ask each other two questions- How have you experienced God's presence this week? What do you need most from me as your friend this week?

MONDAY | WEEK 2

Read John 10:1-18

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.

Reflect

Jesus claims to be both the Door for the sheep and the Good Shepherd. Read these words and bring the images to mind. Look up pictures of sheep and pens and shepherds if necessary. What did the people learn about Jesus when He spoke these words to them- what do you learn? How does this expand your understanding of Jesus as Savior?

Pray

Use the prompts below to lead you into prayer.

Begin: Jesus, You are the Good Shepherd...

Conclude: Because you are the Good Shepherd, I belong to You. Amen

TUESDAY | WEEK 2

Read Psalm 23

Reflect

There are two large metaphors in the psalm: the shepherd (vv. 1-4) and the host (vv. 5-6). Read the psalm again and visualize the two settings. What do you notice about each?

How do the Shepherd and the Host offer care and provision? What does it mean to you that you are both a sheep in the Good Shepherd's care and a guest at the Father's table?

Pray

Jesus, you satisfy me with every good thing...

WEDNESDAY | WEEK 2

Read John 10:2-5; John 6:66-69

Reflect

What do you learn about the voice of the Shepherd? In what ways do you hear His voice? The words of Jesus are not always easy to understand or to obey. What is the significance of Peter's response to other walking away from Jesus in John 6?

What are some of the "voices of strangers" that distract you from listening to your Good Shepherd?

Pray

Jesus, you guide me with truth...

THURSDAY | WEEK 2

Read Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 139:1-24

Reflect

Each of these Old Testament passages speak to God's intimate knowledge of His people, collectively and individually. You are neither lost in the crowd nor lost in your isolation. He sees You. He knows you. He loves you. Truly and without ceasing. Read these passages and write your reflections- How do these words reveal who God is? How do they describe His relationship to you?

Pray

Jesus, you know me inside and out...

FRIDAY | WEEK 2

Read Luke 15:3-10

Reflect (Lectio Divina)

- Step 1 - Read the passage out loud, slowly and gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for God's "still, small voice" to focus you on a word or phrase that's particularly relevant to your life.
- Step 2 – Take that word or phrase and slowly repeat it to yourself – allow it to interact with your inner world of concerns, ideas, memories.
- Step 3 – Interact with God and ask Him to begin to transform you with this insight that He has given you through His word.
- Step 4 – Return to the text and read it again several times and savor the context of the word or phrase that God has given to you.

Pray

Jesus, you sacrificed all to find me...

Week 3 | Light of the World

USE THIS SPACE FOR SERMON NOTES AND ANYTHING ELSE DURING THE SERVICE THAT YOU WANT TO RECORD AND REMEMBER. LATER TODAY, TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON TODAY'S EXPERIENCE.

Practice SOLITUDE: Make time on your calendar this week for 30 minutes of solitude. Take a passage of Scripture to meditate on or a journal to write your thoughts and impressions during your time with the Lord. Take a few deep breaths and pray, "Jesus, You are with me..."

Practice FELLOWSHIP: Reach out to a friend or family member who loves Jesus. Ask them to schedule a meaningful hour with you this week. Share with one another what spiritual practices have been life-giving to you.

MONDAY | WEEK 3

READ JOHN 8:12; EXODUS 13:17-22

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

Reflect

Jesus was using a festival, the Feast of Tabernacles, to talk about his true identity. The feast was celebrated for seven days and there were enormous lamps lit in the temple courts as a reminder of how God led them in the wilderness. But at the end of the festival, when Jesus spoke these words, the lamps had been extinguished. Imagine the significance of His words in that darkened space.

What is your experience with physical and/or spiritual darkness? What does darkness feel like?

Contrast that with physical and/or spiritual light. What is different about light?

Pray:

Use the prompts below to lead you into prayer.

Begin: Jesus, You are the Light of the World...

Conclude: Because you are the Light of the Word, I live in the light. Amen

TUESDAY | WEEK 3

READ ISAIAH 42:1-9; John 1:4-10

Reflect

The prophet Isaiah's words of promise and hope would have been familiar to Jesus' listeners. And, in fact, these words are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. How is the promised Messiah described? What does God say He will do for His people? What do these verses reveal about Jesus as the Light of the world?

Pray

Jesus, you reveal your light to me...

WEDNESDAY | WEEK 3

READ Psalm 51:1-19

Reflect

You probably prefer light to darkness, but when it comes to sin, we like to keep that hidden in the dark. Exposing sin to the light feels awful in the moment, but it is like removing a cancer from your soul. You are profoundly better off when it is gone! All of us try to hide our ugly sin, even David, a man after God's own heart. Imagine him face down as he cries out to the Father. How does he describe God's character in this chapter? What does David ask God to do in him?

Pray

Jesus, your light exposes my sin...

THURSDAY | WEEK 3
READ Matthew 5:14-16

Reflect

In Matthew 5 Jesus is teaching His followers about living in the Kingdom of God. If you are a follower of Christ, His light is in you! In that time, a lamp needed oil in order to keep burning and needed a stand or table of some sort in order to best illuminate a space. How do you keep the light of Jesus burning in you- what is your source of "fuel?" How visible is your light to those in your sphere of influence- family, friends, classmates, coworkers, etc?

Pray

Jesus, shine your light through me...

FRIDAY | WEEK 3

READ 1 John 1:1-10

Reflect (Lectio Divina)

- Step 1 - Read the passage out loud, slowly and gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for God's "still, small voice" to focus you on a word or phrase that's particularly relevant to your life.
- Step 2 – Take that word or phrase and slowly repeat it to yourself – allow it to interact with your inner world of concerns, ideas, memories.
- Step 3 – Interact with God and ask Him to begin to transform you with this insight that He has given you through His word.
- Step 4 – Return to the text and read it again several times and savor the context of the word or phrase that God has given to you.

Pray

Jesus, you are my light...

Week 4 | Bread of Life

USE THIS SPACE FOR SERMON NOTES AND ANYTHING ELSE DURING THE SERVICE THAT YOU WANT TO RECORD AND REMEMBER. LATER TODAY, TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON TODAY'S EXPERIENCE.

Practice SOLITUDE: Make time on your calendar this week for 30-45 minutes of solitude. Take a passage of Scripture to meditate on or a journal to write your thoughts and impressions during your time with the Lord. Take a few deep breaths and pray, "Jesus, You are with me..."

Practice FELLOWSHIP: Reach out to a friend or family member who loves Jesus. Ask them to schedule a meaningful hour or two with you this week. Share with one another how you see Jesus transforming your life.

MONDAY | WEEK 4

Read John 6:1-71

"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." John 6:35

Reflect

Imagine yourself as someone in the crowd following Jesus through the events of this entire chapter. What do you find remarkable about Jesus' words and actions? What are your thoughts and questions as you move from the mountain (:1-14), across the sea (:22-25) and to the synagogue (:26-59)? Do you, like Peter, believe that Jesus is who He says He is?

Pray

Begin: Jesus, You satisfy...

Conclude: Because You are the Bread, I am spiritually satisfied. Amen.

TUESDAY | WEEK 4

Read John 6:25-40

Reflect

Jesus repeats the phrase “truly, truly” many times in John’s gospel. It is the word *amen* and it emphasizes the authority with which He is speaking truth. These followers were looking for more bread and more miracles. What is it that you are looking for? Bring your need and bring your heart and imagine Jesus looking in your eyes, seeing your heart and responding to you with love and truth, “Truly, truly you are seeking me because...I AM the bread of life”

Pray

Jesus, you give me all I need...

WEDNESDAY | WEEK 4

Read Matthew 6:19-34

Reflect

Jesus speaks of your treasure (:19-24) and with a “therefore” transitions into speaking of living without anxiety (:25-34). How are the two ideas connected? What areas of your life cause you anxiety? Are you more content with eternal treasure or earthly treasure? How does Jesus’ statement, “I am the Bread of Life” speak to your anxiety and fear vs security and contentment?

Pray

Jesus, you know what I need...

THURSDAY | WEEK 4

Read Philippians 4:11-13

Reflect

What is the evidence in this passage that Jesus had become the Bread of Life to Paul? What is the evidence that Jesus is the Bread of your Life?

'Paul said these words as he sat in Roman dungeon, in chains, for telling others about salvation in Jesus Christ. Paul expressed contentment regardless of his circumstances. But how many of us have thought, I would be content if I just had a little more money...if I could just land that promotion... if I could get married... if I could only afford that BMW. But somehow, we never quite reach that place of contentment. We're always looking for something just a little beyond what we have. But our contentment doesn't come from what we have. It comes from Whom we know.' –Greg Laurie

Pray

Jesus, you give me strength...

FRIDAY | WEEK 4

Read Matthew 6:9-13

Reflect (Lectio Divina)

- Step 1 - Read the passage out loud, slowly and gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for God's "still, small voice" to focus you on a word or phrase that's particularly relevant to your life.
- Step 2 – Take that word or phrase and slowly repeat it to yourself – allow it to interact with your inner world of concerns, ideas, memories.
- Step 3 – Interact with God and ask Him to begin to transform you with this insight that He has given you through His word.
- Step 4 – Return to the text and read it again several times and savor the context of the word or phrase that God has given to you.

Pray

Jesus, you are my daily bread...

Week 5 | True Vine

USE THIS SPACE FOR SERMON NOTES AND ANYTHING ELSE DURING THE SERVICE THAT YOU WANT TO RECORD AND REMEMBER. LATER TODAY, TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON TODAY'S EXPERIENCE.

Practice SOLITUDE: Make time on your calendar this week for 30-45 minutes of solitude. Take a passage of Scripture to meditate on or a journal to write your thoughts and impressions during your time with the Lord. Take a few deep breaths and pray, "Jesus, You are with me..."

Practice FELLOWSHIP: Reach out to a friend or family member who loves Jesus. Ask them to schedule a meaningful hour or two with you this week. Share with one another how you see Jesus transforming your life.

MONDAY | WEEK 5

READ JOHN 15:1-11

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser." John 15:1

Reflect

It is always helpful to close your eyes and visualize as Jesus uses allegory to teach His disciples. Take it a step beyond visualizing and sketch a picture of the vine and some branches as you read the passage. What are the roles of the Father and Jesus in relation to the branches? Where is your place in the picture? What must you *do* to fulfill your role as a branch?

Pray

Begin: Jesus, You are the source...

Conclude: Because You are the True Vine, I can bear fruit. Amen.

TUESDAY | WEEK 5

READ John 15:1; Isaiah 5:1-7

Reflect

Who is the vine in John 15:1 and who is named as the vine in Isaiah 5? Why was the Old Testament vine unable to bear good fruit? What does it mean for the world that Jesus is the *true* vine? What does it mean to you?

Pray

Jesus, You are the True Vine...

WEDNESDAY | WEEK 5

READ 1 John 2:1-6; Hebrews 12:7-11

Reflect

From John 15 and 1 John 2, what does it mean to abide in Jesus? How are “pruning” and discipline part of a life of abiding? Is something holding you back from surrendering yourself to the True Vine and to the Vinedresser?

Pray

Lord, You teach me and correct me...

THURSDAY | WEEK 5
READ Galatians 5:22-25

Reflect

What is the fruit born of a life connected to, and abiding in, the True Vine? Every believer, including you, has the ability to bear this fruit because you are connected to the Source. Write down each of the fruit and consider what each looks like, acts like, sounds like. How do you see these in the life and ministry of Jesus? Do you see these reflected in friends or family? (Consider writing them a short note of encouragement!)

Pray

Jesus, You bear fruit in me...

FRIDAY | WEEK 5

READ John 15:12-17

Reflect (Lectio Divina)

- Step 1 - Read the passage out loud, slowly and gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for God's "still, small voice" to focus you on a word or phrase that's particularly relevant to your life.
- Step 2 – Take that word or phrase and slowly repeat it to yourself – allow it to interact with your inner world of concerns, ideas, memories.
- Step 3 – Interact with God and ask Him to begin to transform you with this insight that He has given you through His word.
- Step 4 – Return to the text and read it again several times and savor the context of the word or phrase that God has given to you.

Pray

Jesus, Your love is greater...

Week 6 | Way, Truth, Life

USE THIS SPACE FOR SERMON NOTES AND ANYTHING ELSE DURING THE SERVICE THAT YOU WANT TO RECORD AND REMEMBER. LATER TODAY, TAKE 5-10 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON TODAY'S EXPERIENCE.

Practice SOLITUDE: Make time on your calendar this week for 45-60 minutes of solitude. Take a passage of Scripture to meditate on or a journal to write your thoughts and impressions during your time with the Lord. Take a few deep breaths and pray, "Jesus, You are with me..."

Practice FELLOWSHIP: Reach out to a friend or family member who loves Jesus. Ask them to schedule a meaningful hour or two with you this week. Share with one another something you are learning about Jesus and something you are learning about yourself.

MONDAY | WEEK 6

READ JOHN 14:1-6

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life." John 14:6

Reflect

In John 13, the disciples gather with Jesus for what will be the Last Supper. There, Jesus washes their feet and talks about how He will leave them. John 14:1 then says, "Let not your hearts be troubled." Why do you think it was important for Jesus to say that?

What are the troubles of your heart? What comfort do you find in Jesus' words to you today?

Pray

Begin: Jesus, You are the One...

Conclude: Because You are the Way and the Truth and the Life, I am home. Amen.

TUESDAY | WEEK 6

READ John 14:6; ISAIAH 43:15-21

Reflect

The Old Testament consistently points to Jesus as the fulfillment of God's many promises. Reflecting on the passage in Isaiah, how does this passage point to Jesus? What does it mean to you that Jesus is the Way? How does He lead you through the wilderness?

Pray

Jesus, You are the Way...

WEDNESDAY | WEEK 6

READ John 1:1; John 8:31-32; John 14:6; John 17:17

Reflect

What is revealed in these verses about the Word and the Truth? These are bold statements. In fact, this is precisely why so many people cannot accept Christianity- because Jesus claims to be *the* Truth. He is either a crazy man or He is right. And believing that He is who He says He is, what are the implications for your life? What is your primary source of Truth? How will you allow the Truth to sanctify you (make you more like Jesus)?

Pray

Jesus, You are the Truth...

THURSDAY | WEEK 6

READ John 1:1-5; 1 John 5:11-12; Romans 6:22-23

Reflect

What is the life clearly promised in these verses? And what is the one way to obtain this life? There is a *now* and *not yet* component to the life Jesus gives. He gives abundant life to us now, on earth (John 10:10), and we are also waiting for life in eternity. How does it shift your perspective on day-to-day living knowing both of these promises are true every day?

Pray

Jesus, You are the Life...

FRIDAY | WEEK 6

READ Romans 5:1-11

Reflect (Lectio Divina)

- Step 1 - Read the passage out loud, slowly and gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for God's "still, small voice" to focus you on a word or phrase that's particularly relevant to your life.
- Step 2 – Take that word or phrase and slowly repeat it to yourself – allow it to interact with your inner world of concerns, ideas, memories.
- Step 3 – Interact with God and ask Him to begin to transform you with this insight that He has given you through His word.
- Step 4 – Return to the text and read it again several times and savor the context of the word or phrase that God has given to you.

Pray

Jesus, I will follow You...

NOTES

Easter | Resurrection and Life

Read John 11:1-57

"I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25

Reflect

In John's gospel there are 7 "signs"- miracles that clearly show Jesus is the Messiah. Raising Lazarus is the 7th sign and it clearly points to Jesus' greatest miracle, His own death and resurrection. Yet, this wasn't merely one more stop on Jesus' road to the cross. This was personal. Lazarus, Mary and Martha were His friends. Imagine yourself at the scene, put yourself in the sisters' shoes. What do you feel? Remarkably, Jesus knows what He is about to do for Lazarus and yet, He weeps. Jesus feels the deep sorrow of loss. And He knows that will be what His disciples feel as He hangs on the cross. But here, while He still walks among them, He demonstrates in the most awesome of ways that death is not and will not be the end. What do you think Mary and Martha learned on this day and how do you think that shaped their perspective as Jesus was put in the grave?

Return to verse 25 and read it out loud several times. How does the truth of Jesus' words cut through the hard things of this life and raise you to hope, to life?

Pray

Begin: Jesus, You raise me...

Conclude: Because You are the Resurrection and the Life, I am truly alive. Amen.

Worship

He is risen! He is risen indeed!

Gather in person or online with the church, the body of Christ, to celebrate and rejoice that He is risen!

Personal Reflection | Solitude & Fellowship

What did you learn about the practice of solitude/fellowship?

What did God teach you in those moments?

What did you discover about yourself?

How will you make solitude/fellowship a rhythm of your life?

Spiritual Disciplines | Focus on Solitude & Fellowship

Practice Solitude:

- Solitude is simply a voluntary retreat from the company of others and from the distractions of everyday life. It is not just being alone – it is being alone and attentive to the voice of God. Jesus modeled this for us many times in the gospels- he withdrew to quiet places to be with His Father.
- There is not much “doing” in the discipline of solitude. It is more about *not doing* and mindfully *being* in the presence of God, listening for His voice.
- Mark 1:35 *And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.*

Practice Fellowship

- Fellowship is an important spiritual discipline. It involves purposefully engaging in true community with other believers for the purposes of encouragement and spiritual growth. This is best done in a smaller group where you can know others well and be known by them.
- The activities of biblical fellowship include aspects of the following- worship, celebration, prayer, confession, accountability, service, Bible study, and more.
- Matthew 18:20 *For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.*

A more complete look at the Spiritual Disciplines (free PDFs):

1. Timberline Church: http://www.timberlinechurch.org/img/site_specific/uploads/Spiritual_Disciplines.pdf
2. St. Stephen Lutheran Church: <http://www.ststephenlutheranchurch.org/pdf/Disciplines%20of%20Lent-%20Handbook.pdf>

About Lent | A Quick Look

Lent is one of the oldest observations on the Christian calendar. Early church father Irenaus of Lyons (c.130-c.200) wrote about this season in the earliest days of the church.

In the ancient church, Lent was a time for new converts to be instructed for baptism and for believers caught in sin to focus on repentance. But in 325 A.D., the Council of Nicea discussed a 40-day Lenten season of fasting for all Christians. The number forty has a long biblical history: The forty day fasts of Moses, Elijah and especially Our Lord in the desert. Traditionally the Lenten season has started on Ash Wednesday and concluded on Good Friday.

In those early days, the observance of fasting was very strict. One meal was allowed per day and, even in that meal, meat and fish were forbidden.

Much has changed over the years and some religious traditions have emphasized the observance of Lent more than others. However, its purpose remains relevant to us today. During the Lenten season and in preparation for Easter, the faithful are to 1) grow in their love of Jesus and His sacrifice, and 2) practice penance for their sins in the form of self-examination, self-denial, and personal sacrifice.

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- Lenten Practices: <http://servantchurchaustin.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Lenten-Practices.pdf>
- I AM Bible Study: <http://cdn.greatlakescru.com/glr-media/wblob/53DBC98E4BFE98/166/1E8D/rrMFHIDzdx5SijlEoHfWQw/I-AM-Studies.pdf>
- A.W. Tozer Devotionals: <https://www.cmalliance.org/devotions/tozer>