

Reflections on Lent - 2021 - (Week 1)

As we get started I wanted to offer a few thoughts on lent:

I've noticed in life that preparation tends to make things more meaningful. For instance, a meal must be prepared before it can be enjoyed. Even if you were not the one who prepared it, it was prepared by someone! This preparedness applies to vacations, exams, presentations, projects, parenting, farming, and a whole host of other things!

Lent is about preparing our hearts, slowing down our pace a bit in order to listen more intently to our Maker. The motivation for Lent is not to pursue self-righteousness or a better standing before God. Rather, the value of entering into Lent is for us to more fully grasp and more clearly see the righteousness that we already have in Christ through what he alone could accomplish on our behalf!

Lent is also not primarily about self-sacrifice. If the most important question becomes "*What are you giving up for Lent?*" then the whole point, which is greater intimacy with Christ, is lost. In light of this, let's look at our scripture for this week.

In **Psalm 51:16-17** David says this - "***You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.***" The prayer in today's reflection video was the prayer of a "broken and repentant heart." Let's take a moment to reflect again on the words from this week's video...

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Dear God,

I really blew it this time. I fell and pulled the rug out from under everyone around me. If forgiveness is given with a drink of water, then I need a pool of it, an ocean. I messed up and I deserve whatever you decide to send my way. I accept it. Wait for it. I will take what's coming to me. Clean the junk out of my head. Clean the trash out of my heart and soul. Can My slate be clean? God let the page be turned. I need to start over. Let me feel Your joy. Give me the determination to follow you with all I've got, wanting only what You want. I've been the beggar.

Let me tell others and show them where the food is. I know You don't want loud shouts of hollow repentance. Or long nights on my knees begging. You want my heart to change. To get still before You, to realize ... You are all I need.

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Reflection Questions for Journaling

How can a “broken and repentant heart” be like a blank canvas, or a clean slate in God’s eyes?

“Giving something up” during Lent is not the ultimate goal of this season, although many find it helpful. How can abstaining from, or giving up something for a period of time create room in your heart and mind to potentially hear more clearly from the Lord?

Has there been a time in your life when you felt like you needed a fresh start? Have you even taken the time to even ask if you are in need of a fresh start? Use the space below to offer a prayer inviting God’s illuminating Spirit to shine on all corners of your heart and give you the humility needed to ask for a fresh start.