



Chosen

A LENTEN REFLECTION GUIDE

CHRIST LINCOLN



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Matthew 25 Challenge



MATTHEW 25:1-46

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

"'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

"Later the others also came. 'Lord, Lord,' they said, 'open the door for us!'

"But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I don't know you.'

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

The Parable of the Bags of Gold

"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,[a] each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

"So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The Sheep and the Goats

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"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.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

"He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."



**Sign up for the
daily challenge**

Text **211SUMNERM25** to **56170**

-OR-

Text **SANCTUARYM25** to **56170**

-OR-

Text **211YANKEEHILLM25** to **56170**



Matthew 25 Challenge



Day 1

Skip lunch and break your fast tonight with rice and beans



Day 2

Give up all drinks except water



Day 3

Sleep on the floor tonight



Day 4

Wear the same clothes you wore yesterday



Day 5

Reach out to someone going through a difficult time



Day 6

Take a 30 minute prayer walk



Week One

CHOSEN SUNDAY



Day 7

 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

The Collection for the Lord's People

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in

this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you[a]—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Generosity reshapes our idea of the “good life,” helping us share in God's joy, loosen our grip on greed through contentment, and reflect God's compassion for those in need.



What are some ways you practice generosity in your life currently?



Day 8

 Colossians 3:12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members

of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.




Challenge

Make a list of 7 random acts of kindness you can do throughout this week.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____



Day 9

 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Request for Prayer

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

This week, a team of four from our church will be traveling to Ecuador to learn more about the work of World Vision and to attend a Chosen Party, where children will have the opportunity to choose their sponsors from our congregation. **Please join us in praying for the village, for the children and families, and for safe travel and meaningful connections for those who are going.**



Prayer

Heavenly Father, we lift up the village in Ecuador that our church is preparing to sponsor. Thank You for every child, every parent, and every family who lives there—each one known and loved by You.

Lord, we pray for protection, provision, and hope. Bring daily bread to those in need, healing to the sick, strength to the weary, and comfort to those carrying heavy burdens. Open doors for education, clean water, safe housing, and opportunities for families to flourish.

We also pray for the pastors and leaders traveling to Ecuador. Grant them safe flights, good health, and smooth travel. Give them listening hearts, wisdom, and humility as they learn, build relationships, and represent our church with love. May their time be filled with meaningful conversations, encouragement, and a deeper understanding of the work You are doing.

As we partner in this mission, shape our hearts with compassion and generosity. Help us to serve faithfully, remembering that true and lasting transformation comes from You. Use this sponsorship to lift children and families out of poverty and to make Your love known in powerful and personal ways. Amen.



Day 10

 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Generosity Encouraged

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written:

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever.”[a]

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.



Why does God call us to be generous? With what does He call us to be generous?



Day 11

 1 John 3:16-18

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.


Christian love is not merely something we feel or say—it becomes something we do. Jesus' sacrificial love sets the standard, and we are called to reflect that same open-handed love toward others, especially when we see real needs in front of us. **This passage teaches that generosity is more than giving money; it is a willingness to share what we have—our time, resources, and compassion—so that others may be cared for in tangible ways.**



Think of one resource, aside from money, that you may be holding onto tightly. How could you offer it more freely in love this week?



Day 12

 Luke 21:1-4

The Widow's Offering

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."



In Luke 21:1-4, the widow gives out of her poverty, trusting God more than her resources. **What is the biggest fear, attachment, or uncertainty that keeps you from practicing that kind of radical generosity and trust?**



Day 13

Ephesians 1:11-14

In him we were also chosen,[d] having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in

Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.



Journal

God's generosity toward us is radical and intentional. He chose us, called us His children, and gave of Himself completely for our sake. **Reflect on what it means to be chosen by God and welcomed into His family by grace. How does that truth shape the way you view generosity in your own life?**




Week Two

ABRAM DIDN'T PICK THIS

Abram didn't pick Yahweh. Abram was chosen to leave his homeland and travel across the desert. Yahweh chose him to be the father of nations, yet it was also in a way Abram didn't pick.



Day 14

 Genesis 12:1-8

The Call of Abram

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.[a] I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."[b]

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they

had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring[c] I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Reading Scripture is the intentional practice of engaging in God's Word where we find His voice, are shaped by His truth, and grow in faithful living. As we return to Scripture day by day, God forms our hearts, renews our minds, and guides us to live more like Christ.



Day 15



Genesis 15:1-6

The Lord's Covenant With Abram

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.
I am your shield,[a]
your very great reward.[b]"

But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit[c] my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no children;

so a servant in my household will be my heir."

Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring[d] be."

Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.



Challenge

7-day Scripture reading challenge

Read at least one chapter in your Bible each day and record it here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____



Day 16

 Hebrews 11:8-16

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she[a] considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the

stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.



Prayer

Faithful God, You called Abram to step away from what was familiar and to trust Your promise, even when the way forward was unseen. As You did then, call us now to live by faith and not by sight. Teach us to trust Your Word, to seek the better country You have prepared, and to follow wherever You lead. Strengthen us when the journey feels uncertain, and fix our hearts on the hope You have promised through Christ. Amen.



Day 17



Romans 4:1-8

Abraham Justified by Faith

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”[a]

Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts

God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”[b]


In Genesis, Abram believes first, then obeys by leaving his homeland and following God’s call [Gen. 12]. Romans 4 reinforces this order: Grace comes before works; obedience flows from faith, it does not create it.



What ways has your faith been tested like Abram? Pray that God would equip you to handle each challenge that comes your way.



Day 18

 Romans 4:13-17

It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace

and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." [a] He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.



Abraham trusted God's promise even when circumstances made it seem impossible. **What promise of God feels difficult for you to trust right now, and what might it look like to place that situation fully in God's hands?**



Day 19



Psalm 119:33-40

Teach me, Lord, the way of your decrees,
that I may follow it to the end.[a]
Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law
and obey it with all my heart.
Direct me in the path of your commands,
for there I find delight.
Turn my heart toward your statutes
and not toward selfish gain.
Turn my eyes away from worthless things;
preserve my life according to your word.[b]
Fulfill your promise to your servant,
so that you may be feared.
Take away the disgrace I dread,
for your laws are good.
How I long for your precepts!
In your righteousness preserve my life.

Just as Abram listens and responds to God's promise, this psalm highlights the posture of a believer shaped by Scripture—seeking understanding, walking in God's ways, and receiving life in His Word.



What attachments, fears, or comforts might be competing with your willingness to follow God as Abram did, and how can Scripture reshape your desires toward faithful obedience?



Day 20



Psalm 105:8-11

He remembers his covenant forever,
the promise he made, for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac.
He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant:
"To you I will give the land of Canaan
as the portion you will inherit."

In Psalm 105, we read that God remembers His covenant forever. A covenant is a promise God makes to His people. God's covenant has endured forever, and we see it today in the Gospel when we hear about Jesus' death and resurrection and when we hear and receive God's forgiveness for our sin.



Journal

Reflect on a time when God invited you to let go of comfort, certainty, or control. **What fears or hopes surfaced as you listened? Where do you find comfort in God's covenant today, even when the path ahead is unclear?**



Week Three

THE WOMAN DIDN'T PICK THIS

The Samaritan Woman didn't pick to be the first one to share the Good News. Jesus chose her to be the first hearer of His clear proclamation of "I am He [the Messiah]." This troubled woman was a unique choice to proclaim Jesus to the people she was trying to avoid.



Day 21

 John 4:5-26

So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" [His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.]

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" [For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.[a]] Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't

get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back.""I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

"Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" [called Christ] "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."



Day 22

 John 4:27-30

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” They came out of the town and made their way toward him.



What assumptions, discomforts, or unspoken questions might keep you from fully engaging in the work Jesus is doing?



What we run from pursues us, and what we face transforms us.
How does this phrase connect with you as Jesus looks to work in your life?



Day 23



John 7:38-39

Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”[a] By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.



Journal

Jesus offers “living water” to someone who comes to the well thirsty and weary. Reflect on where you feel spiritually dry or burdened right now. **What would it look like to receive what Jesus offers instead of relying on what has never fully satisfied? Write honestly about what you long for and how Jesus meets you in that place.**



Day 24



Isaiah 55:1-5

"Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.
Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.
Give ear and come to me;
listen, that you may live.
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love promised to David.
See, I have made him a witness to the peoples,
a ruler and commander of the peoples.
Surely you will summon nations you know not,
and nations you do not know will come running to you,
because of the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
for he has endowed you with splendor."

Though written long before Jesus' ministry, this passage anticipates Christ's invitation. God calls the thirsty to receive freely what satisfies, pointing forward to Jesus as the fulfillment of that promise.



Prayer

Pray that God would fill you with His living water and gently draw your heart toward Him whenever you feel weary, empty, or thirsty. Ask for eyes to recognize your need and for trust to come to Him, believing that He alone satisfies.



Day 25

 Acts 1:6-11

Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Witness is the spiritual discipline of sharing what we have seen, heard, and experienced of Jesus through our words and actions. It is living with courage and humility so that others can see God's love, truth, and hope through our lives.



Challenge

Think of someone you can share the Gospel of Christ with, whether through a phone call, a letter, a simple text, or a meeting for coffee and conversation.



Day 26

 Psalm 66:16-20

Come and hear, all you who fear God;
let me tell you what he has done for me.
I cried out to him with my mouth;
his praise was on my tongue.
If I had cherished sin in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened;
but God has surely listened
and has heard my prayer.
Praise be to God,
who has not rejected my prayer
or withheld his love from me!



In Psalm 66:16-20, the psalmist invites others to hear what God has done and praises Him for listening to prayer. **What is one way God has answered, sustained, or shown His faithfulness in your life, and who might need to hear that story this week?**



Challenge

To help you start to share your story, use this outline. Our witness is always tied to what Jesus has done for us. Big or small, every story points back to Him!

I once was... _____

Now I am... _____

It's all because... _____



Day 27

 Psalm 105:1-7

Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.
Look to the Lord and his strength;
seek his face always.

Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,
you his servants, the descendants of Abraham,
his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.
He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.



**List 5 wonders and praises of God's work in your life.
Share a wonderful act of God with another person today.**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Week Four

THE BLIND MAN DIDN'T PICK THIS

The blind man didn't pick to be born with this disability. He didn't pick to have these struggles. Jesus chose the man to show the mighty works of God. He also chose him to show God's judgment on sin and corruption is accomplished in and through Jesus.



Day 28

 John 9:1-11

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. “Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” [this word means “Sent”]. So the man went

and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” Some claimed that he was.

Others said, “No, he only looks like him.”

But he himself insisted, “I am the man.”

“How then were your eyes opened?” they asked.


He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could



In this passage, Jesus refuses to blame the man’s suffering on personal sin. **Where are you tempted to assume there must be a reason or someone at fault when hardship happens—and how might Jesus be inviting you to see suffering differently?**



Day 29

 John 9:35-38

Spiritual Blindness

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.



The blind man comes to a knowledge of Jesus and he worships Him. **How has the knowledge of Jesus shaped your worship life?**




Journal

Jesus meets a man in his brokenness and brings light where there has only been darkness. Reflect on an area of your life where you feel limited, discouraged, or unseen. What might it look like to bring that honestly to Jesus today and invite Him to work—whether through healing, patience, or a new perspective? **Write about where you need God's light, and what it could mean to trust Him one step at a time.**



Day 30

 Mark 1: 35-39

Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!”

Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.” So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus’ ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Solitude is the intentional practice of withdrawing from noise, distraction, and constant activity in order to be alone with God.



Prayer

God often works in quiet, attentive spaces where His purpose is made clear and His power is revealed. Pray that God would reveal Himself to you today in the quiet moments of your day. Ask Him to teach you to seek out solitude when life feels overwhelming. Trust that He promises to meet you there.



Day 31



Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.[c]

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields[d] with fire.
He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.



Challenge

Find a quiet place and meditate on a Bible passage. Find a single sentence in the passage to repeat in your mind and focus on what God is saying.



Day 32

 Mark 6:45-46

Jesus Walks on the Water

Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

After performing a miracle, Jesus sends His disciples away so that He can spend time in prayer.



Jesus shows us the importance of solitude to connect with God. What comfort or challenge does that bring you in your practice of solitude?



Journal

Reflect on how Jesus balanced moments of intensity with intentional silence and solitude. **Where in your life do you feel overwhelmed, hurried, or stretched thin? What would it look like to step away, even briefly, to sit in God's presence and let Him steady your heart before you move forward again?**



Day 33



Psalm 62:1-5

Truly my soul finds rest in God;
my salvation comes from him.
Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

How long will you assault me?
Would all of you throw me down—
this leaning wall, this tottering fence?
Surely they intend to topple me
from my lofty place;
they take delight in lies.
With their mouths they bless,
but in their hearts they curse.[b]

Yes, my soul, find rest in God;
my hope comes from him.

This psalm emphasizes waiting in silence before God. In Jesus, we find our soul's true rest.



Where in your life do find rest for your soul?



Day 34

 Philippians 1:3-6

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.



Journal

Paul thanks God for the people in his life and trusts that God will finish the good work He started in them. Take a moment to reflect on the relationships and community that have supported your faith journey. **Who are you grateful for, and why? Then consider your own story. Where have you seen God shaping you over time? Write about one area in which you're still growing. Ask God for the trust to believe He will continue His work in you, even if you aren't where you want to be yet.**



Week Five

LAZARUS DIDN'T PICK THIS

Lazarus didn't choose to die [or choose to come back!]. Jesus chose to raise Lazarus from the dead to demonstrate His authority over even death. Jesus also chose Lazarus to be the straw that broke the Pharisees' back, leading to His arrest and crucifixion. Jesus chose Lazarus to put the final steps of the plan in motion.



Day 35



John 11:1-16

The Death of Lazarus

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. [This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.] So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

"But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?"

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not

stumble, for they see by this world's light. It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light."

After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

Then Thomas [also known as Didymus[a)] said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."



In John 11, Jesus delays coming even though He loves Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. **Where in your life are you struggling with God's timing, and what might it look like to trust that His love is still present even when His answers feel delayed?**



Day 36

 John 11:17-37

Jesus Comforts the Sisters of Lazarus

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles[a] from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

"Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept.

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"


But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"



In John 11, Jesus enters into the grief of Mary and Martha, offering His presence before offering answers. Reflect on a time when you experienced God's comforting presence—through His Word, through music, or through the care of others—during a season of sorrow or uncertainty. **How did that presence shape your grief, your hope, or your trust in Him?**



Day 37

 John 11:38-44

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."



Context

Waiting is intentional. Jesus intentionally waits two extra days after hearing Lazarus is sick. This delay ensures Lazarus has been dead four days—removing any doubt about the reality of death and emphasizing that what follows is unmistakably an act of God, not healing but resurrection. In Jewish thought, there was a belief that the soul lingered near the body for three days. By the fourth day, hope was completely gone. John includes this detail to underline the finality of death and the totality of Jesus' power over it.



Day 38

 John 12:9-11, 17

Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.



Even though people were plotting to kill Lazarus and Jesus, the crowds who saw it happen couldn't help but tell everyone what they had seen. **Can you think of a time when you've shared Jesus with someone?**



Day 39

 Psalm 116:1-7

I love the Lord, for he heard my voice;
he heard my cry for mercy.
Because he turned his ear to me,
I will call on him as long as I live.

The cords of death entangled me,
the anguish of the grave came over me;
I was overcome by distress and sorrow.
Then I called on the name of the Lord:
"Lord, save me!"

The Lord is gracious and righteous;
our God is full of compassion.
The Lord protects the unwary;
when I was brought low, he saved me.

Return to your rest, my soul,
for the Lord has been good to you.



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Prayer invites you to be with God in both the good times and the bad. It is an opportunity to remember who God is and to cry out to Him.



Challenge

Spend 10 minutes talking to God. Don't be worried about getting the words perfect. God wants to know your heart, the good, the bad, and the ugly.



Day 40



Psalm 37:3-7

Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:
He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.

Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.



Journal

Write a prayer based on what God is teaching you this week regarding trusting His timing over your wants and desires.



Day 41

 Romans 8:18-27

Present Suffering and Future Glory

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that[a] the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we

ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.



Mary and Martha bring their pain honestly to Jesus, even when His timing and actions do not make sense. Romans 8 reminds us that in our suffering, we often do not know how to pray—but the Spirit intercedes for us and holds our waiting within God's promise of future glory. **Reflect internally on a situation where you are still waiting, still hoping, or still wrestling with unanswered questions. How might God be inviting you not simply to seek comfort, but to trust that your prayers—spoken or unspoken—are being carried by the Spirit who has brought you redemption?**




Week Six

JESUS PICKED THIS PATH

Jesus picked this path to enter into Jerusalem. He picked this public entrance to cheers and accolades. Cries of “Hosanna” which means “Save us!” He picked this path to start His journey to the cross.



Day 42

 John 12:12-16

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

"Hosanna[a]" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"[b] "Blessed is the king of Israel!"

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

"Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."[c]

At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Worship is our response to God, giving our thanks and praise because He first loved us. God delights in giving gifts to His people. The gift given on Palm Sunday was Jesus. And He still is a gift to us today!"



Challenge

The crowds called out to Jesus for salvation, directing their worship and praise towards Him. **This week, choose one simple, public way to worship Jesus outside of our church services. Pray publicly, read God's Word out loud, sing praise music loudly with your windows down.**



Day 43

 Luke 19:28-40

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"

Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

They replied, "The Lord needs it."

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put

Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"[a]

"Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."



Context

Jesus entered Jerusalem through an area known for its tombs, and while He doesn't explicitly mention graves, His words carry deeper meaning. Even silent stones can't stay quiet in the presence of the true King. Luke reminds us that worship is unavoidable. The crowd's praise reflects God's faithfulness as salvation history reaches its climax in Jerusalem.



Day 44



Mark 11:1-10

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"

They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna! [a]"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" [b]

"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"



The owner of the colt releases it simply because the disciples say, "The Lord needs it." **Where might God be asking you to release control or offer what you have without fully understanding how it will be used?**



Day 45



Zechariah 9:9-10

The Coming of Zion's King

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and victorious,
lowly and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
I will take away the chariots from Ephraim
and the warhorses from Jerusalem,
and the battle bow will be broken.
He will proclaim peace to the nations.
His rule will extend from sea to sea
and from the River[a] to the ends of the earth.



This prophecy was spoken centuries before Jesus entered Jerusalem. **What does it mean to you that God's plan of salvation was unfolding long before the events of Holy Week? How does that shape your trust in God's faithfulness today?**



Maundy Thursday

JESUS PICKED THIS CUP

Jesus chose to dine with His disciples during the Passover meal. He picked the bread and the cup and called it His body and His blood.



Day 46

 Matthew 26:26-29

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the[a] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."



Context

Maundy Thursday gets its name from the Latin word *mandatum*, meaning "command." On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus gave His disciples a new command: to love one another as He loved them [John 13:34]. Maundy Thursday remembers both Jesus' command to love and His humble service to His disciples on the night of the Last Supper.

Having a meal with others is an intimate way of circling up and sharing life together. In the Lord's Supper, we're invited into an even deeper intimacy, gathering with our Savior to receive His grace and love.



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Community is sharing life with a committed circle of people. Just as Jesus gathered close friends around Him, we grow in love, healing, and joy when we gather together.



Challenge

If you're not already part of a circle at Christ Lincoln, find your circle today at christlincoln.org/circles.



Good Friday

JESUS PICKED THIS CROSS

Jesus was fully human and fully God. He knew the pain, torture, and death that was coming. He prayed that there might be a different way to save all people. He chose to continue with the will of the Father and face death by crucifixion. In doing so, He paid the penalty of our sin.



Day 47

 Mark 14:36

"Abba,[a] Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."



How does knowing that Jesus willingly chose the cross shape your understanding of His love and commitment to saving creation?



Jesus freely chose the path of the cross, embracing suffering for the sake of the world. Reflect on what it means that your salvation was intentional and costly. **How does this truth invite you to trust more deeply, surrender more fully, or respond more faithfully to Christ's love in your daily life?**




Holy Saturday



Day 48

 Matthew 6:16-18

"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

 Mark 2:18-20

Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.



Spiritual Discipline

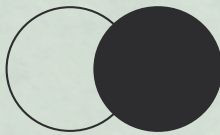
A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Fasting is an ancient practice Jesus modeled that many believers today rarely explore. This discipline helps us intentionally go without so we can turn our attention to God and let both body and spirit be shaped by dependence on Him.



Challenge

Consider fasting from sunup to sundown. Focus on prayer and reflection anytime you feel the desire to eat.



Easter Sunday

Jesus picked the women to show Himself to first. Then He chose the disciples and the Church, which is YOU, to go and make disciples of all nations.



Day 49

 Matthew 28:1-10

Jesus Has Risen

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.

He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."



In Matthew 28:1-10, the women meet the risen Jesus and are filled with both fear and great joy as they're sent to share the Good News. **Where is Jesus calling you to move from fear to faith today, and how might you live differently in the joy of His resurrection?**



Matthew 28:16-20

The Great Commission

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth

has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."



Spiritual Discipline

A spiritual discipline is a consistent practice that helps us grow closer to God by taking the characteristics of Jesus' ministry and applying them to our daily lives through the Holy Spirit.

Feasting is another ancient practice Jesus modeled. This spiritual practice is especially meaningful because of its contrast to the fasting which precedes Easter Sunday. We celebrate the resurrection with other people, we celebrate with food and laughter, and we celebrate in an endless variety of other ways.



Challenge

Over the season of Lent you have spent time fasting, reflecting, and being challenged. Now it is Easter, a time to feast and celebrate. **Take a moment to write two or three ways you like to celebrate and feast.**
