

Discover the meaning

EMPTY

&

FILLED

and power of Lent

‘Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.’

- Luke 4:1-2 -

Lent 2022

Empty & Filled

Each season of the Church's year invites us to participate and follow along the well-worn road of the saints who have gone before us. But at the same time, the road we travel today looks different to when they pilgrimed these seasons all those years ago. Each season is familiar, but it also brings with it something new and fresh. The season of Advent is filled with such excitement as we build together – yes towards Christmas Day – but ultimately towards the second coming of our Lord and King. I find the season of Epiphany rich and beautiful as we settle into routine and take a long journey together through big chunks of the scriptures and delve into their challenging depths.

But there is something particularly special about this season of Lent. Yes, there is journey. Yes, there is expectation. Yes, there is excitement. But Lent invites us to not only participate on the journey – but to go deeper and truly engage with what it means to take up our cross and follow and follow Jesus.

This Lent, we will be exploring the theme of Empty & Filled. We will be invited to intentionally examine the way that we are each pilgriming along this well-worn road. We will be invited to dwell deeply on the themes of Christian discipleship and welcome their development in our lives. We will be invited to engage in the perpetual process of emptying ourselves before the cross and inviting the Holy Spirit to fill us afresh to overflowing. Not only for our benefit, but as cities on a hill who are filled with the life-giving fruit of the Spirit; we pray that we may share this abundant life in Christ with those around us.

Forty days in Lent. How will you spend them? May we use this time wisely as we seek to live as faithful disciples and glorify Christ with these fragile lives that we have so graciously been given.

Every blessing,

Rev'd Scott Windred
St Barnabas' Sunnybank

EMPTY & FILLED

WEEK 1 - WHAT IS LENT?

Warming up: When you hear about Lent, what is your initial reaction and why?

Read: Luke 4:1-15

1. What sticks out to you in this passage?
2. In vv.1-2 (compare with Matthew 4:1), what do you think about the Spirit leading Jesus into a place to be tempted? Why would the Spirit do that?
3. What temptations does Jesus face in vv.3-12? What makes each of them significant? How did Jesus walk away from each temptation?
4. Think about an area of your life in which you regularly find yourself tempted. What can you learn from Jesus' example?
5. Why is Jesus' obedience in the wilderness good news for us?
6. What tests your relationship with God most?
7. Why is the desert an important and a necessary place in our Christian journey?
8. What does this passage teach us about the season of Lent and its purpose?

Rubber hits the road:

In the 'Notes' section provided, take some time every day this week to reflect on and describe what Lent means to you.

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

O Lord, who for our sake fasted forty days and forty nights: give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the spirit, we may ever obey your godly will in righteousness and true holiness; to your honour and glory, who lives and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

EMPTY & FILLED

WEEK 2 - WHAT IS FASTING?

Warming up: What's the longest time you've ever gone without food? Why did this happen?

Read: Isaiah 58:1-8

1. In this section of Isaiah, God is speaking to his people. What does this passage tell us about how God feels about the people in this moment?
2. At the time, the people fasted often. What does this passage tell us about their fasting?
3. What kind of fasting does God approve of and why (see vv.5-8)?
4. Is it a good idea for Christians today to fast? Why/why not?

Read: Matthew 6:16-21

5. How are Jesus' words different from Isaiah's and how are they similar?
6. Is fasting optional for Jesus? Why/why not? What type of fasting does Jesus call for?
7. How can fasting help to develop your relationship with Jesus?

Rubber hits the road:

In the 'Notes' section provided, take some time every day this week to reflect on and describe what fasting means to you.

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Remember, O Lord, what you have wrought in us and not what we deserve, and, as you have called us to your service, make us worthy of our calling, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EMPTY & FILLED

WEEK 3 - WHAT IS PRAYER?

Warming up: How important is prayer in your life? How does prayer help you grow in your relationship with God?

Read: Luke 11:1-13

1. What sticks out to you in this passage?
2. Have you ever asked someone to teach you to pray (Luke 11:1)? If so, who was your teacher and when was your last lesson in prayer?
3. What can you learn about Jesus' concerns for prayer in vv.2-4? Does this reflect in your prayer life?
4. How does God's title of 'Father' affect our attitude to prayer?
5. Why is prayer so essential to our relationship with God?
6. What can vv.5-13 teach us about prayer and our relationship with God?
7. Why is it sometimes good for us not to have our prayers answered as we desire?
8. Why is the Father's gift of the Holy Spirit the ultimate gift that can be received by those who ask him for anything?
9. How does this passage teach us about how our lives should be characterised by prayer?

Rubber hits the road:

In the 'Notes' section provided, take some time every day this week to reflect on and describe what prayer means to you.

EMPTY & FILLED

WEEK 4 - WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Warming up: Do you find it easy to say sorry when you've done something wrong? Or would you rather sweep it under the rug?

Read: Philemon 1:1-25

1. What sort of language does Paul use when he speaks to Philemon and those with him? Is it positive or negative? What does he call them? Why is Paul thankful for Philemon?
2. Paul says that he is 'bold enough to command' Philemon but says that he'd prefer to 'appeal' to him. What reason does Paul give for this preference?
3. Who is Paul appealing for? What does Paul say about this man in vv.10-11?
4. What do we find out about the relationship between Philemon and Onesimus?
5. What is Paul appealing to Philemon for? In vv.13-20, what is he asking of him regarding how he might treat Onesimus?
6. It's thought that Onesimus – the runaway slave, carried this letter of recommendation all the way from Rome back to his master Philemon in Colossae. Under Roman law, a master was permitted to kill a runaway slave. Yet still, Onesimus was willing to repent, offer himself back to his master Philemon, and seek forgiveness. How might Onesimus have felt as he sought forgiveness with a repentant heart?

Rubber hits the road:

In the 'Notes' section provided, take some time every day this week to reflect on and describe what repentance means to you.

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Almighty God,

in Christ you make all things new:

transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EMPTY & FILLED

WEEK 5 - WHAT IS SACRIFICE?

Warming up: Describe a time in your life when you've had to sacrifice something you loved to receive something better.

Read: Genesis 22:1-14

1. What sacrifice is Abraham called to make in this passage? Does he make that sacrifice?
2. How does this passage make you feel?
3. Who do you identify with most in the passage?
4. What does this passage have to show us about sacrifice and trusting God?

Read: John 12:1-8

5. Why is Jesus at this dinner and what happens at the party?
6. Who makes a sacrifice in this passage and why?
7. How does Jesus' death relate to Abraham's sacrifice in Genesis 22:1-14?
8. What do these two passages teach us about God and sacrifice today?

Rubber hits the road:

In the 'Notes' section provided, take some time every day this week to reflect on and describe what sacrifice means to you.

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WEEK 6 - WHAT IS RENEWAL?

Warming up: What is your favourite day in the Easter week? Why?

Read: Luke 19:28-48

1. Where had Jesus been before he rode into Jerusalem?
(see Luke 17:11, 18:35, 19:1, 19:28-29)
2. How does Jesus enter Jerusalem? What does his transport tell us about him?
3. How does the crowd react to seeing Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem? Why do you think they act this way?
4. What do you think it would have been like to be part of the crowd that day?
5. What does Jesus mean in v.40: "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out"?
6. How do Jesus words in vv.41-44 make you feel? What is Jesus saying and why?
7. What does Jesus do when he enters the temple? What would it have been like to be in the temple that day?
8. Jesus confronts the people in the temple with stern words. How can we ensure that we don't go astray in our churches?
9. How does Jesus' entry into Jerusalem draw us into the Easter story? How does it challenge the way we worship?

Rubber hits the road:

In the 'Notes' section provided, take some time every day this week to reflect on and describe what renewal means to you.

“Blessed is the king who comes
in the name of the Lord!”

“Peace in heaven and glory in
the highest!”

- Luke 19:38 -



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