

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY
WELCOME + GROW + SEND
EMPOWERING DISCIPLES

Week 1: INTRODUCTION

1 Peter 3:13-22

¹³Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you;

¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil.

¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Mark 1:9-15

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." ¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

- What in these texts are most compelling?
- Repentance is an important part of Lent. What does it mean to Repent?
- What might it look like if you were to repent? What would change in your life? Remember this is more about becoming empowered disciples and less about behaving to please God.
- What does it mean to “believe in the Good News?”
- How does repentance get us ready not only for Easter but for being empowered disciples in the world?

Week 2: “Welcome”

Lenten Verse: **Romans 4:13-25**

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us,

¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”) —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.”

²³Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

- Based on this text, what do we welcome each other into?
- What does it mean to belong to a “family of faith?”
- What does it mean to be welcomed into a family built on grace?

- What does it mean to be empowered to “welcome?”

Week 3: Grow

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

¹⁸For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” ²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. ²⁶Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

- What do you think this text is saying? What catches your attention?
- According to this text, should we strive to grow more “foolish” in regards to the world? If so what would that growth look like?
- What does it mean to be empowered to “grow” as Christians?

Week 4: Send

Ephesians 2:1-10

2You were dead through the trespasses and sins² in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient.³ All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else.

⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us⁵ even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast.¹⁰ For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

- What does it mean in general to be empowered to “Send” one another into the world as transformed Christians?
- What does it mean to send one another out “alive... with (or in) Christ?”
- Why is it important that we carry grace to the world?

Week 5: Review

Hebrews 5:1-10

5Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.² He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness;³ and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people.⁴ And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.⁵ So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”;⁶ as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”⁷ In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.⁸ Although he was a Son, he learned

obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him,

¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

- How might this text help us better prepare for Easter?
- Martin Luther taught that “all who are baptized are priests” AKA “Priesthood of all Believers.” What do you think this means?
- As baptized “priests” we are entrusted with the Gospel and empowered to share it. How can we be better priests in all three situations as we:

Welcome-

Grow-

Send-