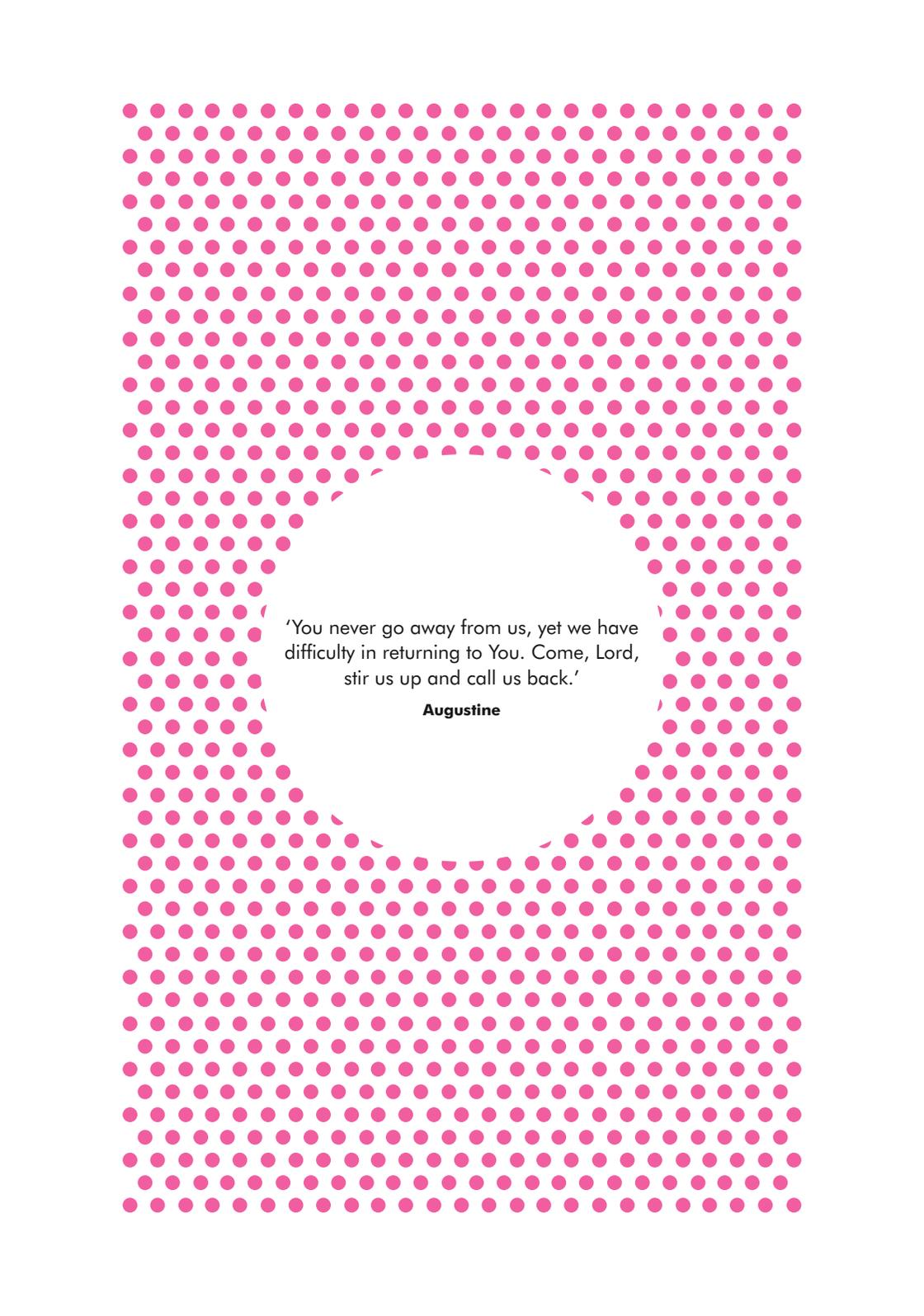


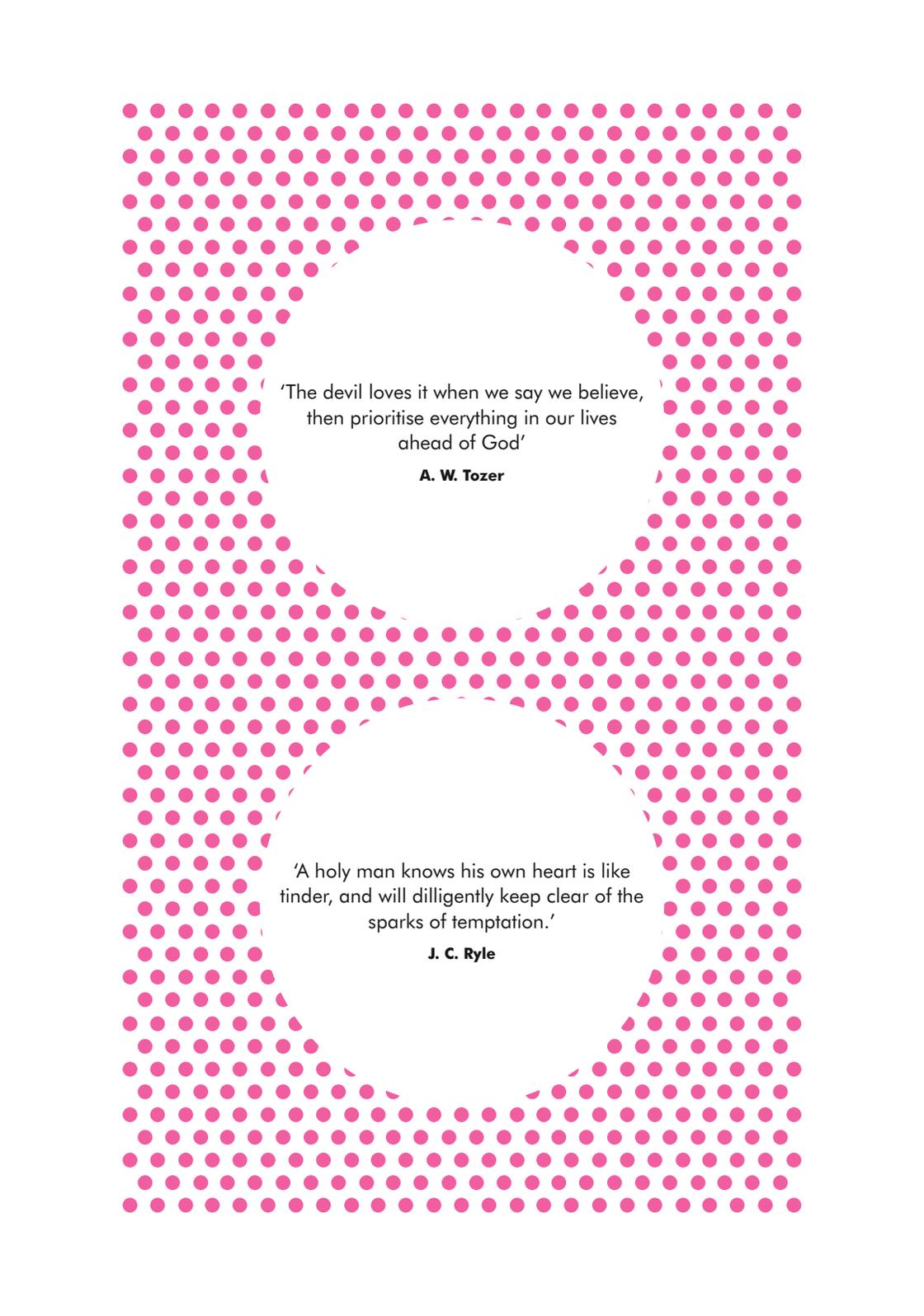
# SENT





'You never go away from us, yet we have  
difficulty in returning to You. Come, Lord,  
stir us up and call us back.'

**Augustine**



'The devil loves it when we say we believe,  
then prioritise everything in our lives  
ahead of God'

**A. W. Tozer**

'A holy man knows his own heart is like  
tinder, and will dilligently keep clear of the  
sparks of temptation.'

**J. C. Ryle**

# LENT.

## AN INTRODUCTION

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace...”

...But I just need to check this text first... and send this Instagram post... and update my status... then I can focus on Him with no distractions... until the next vibration goes off in my pocket and my attention is drawn to the overwhelming desire to know who needs me, or every detail of life that I could be missing out on.

Our lives have become cluttered, noisy and full of unnecessary commotion. If we layer this on top of the responsibility of family, relationships, work and ministry, we are lucky to give Jesus a quick glance, never mind turning our eyes to look upon Him fully.

The hymn writer was absolutely right; the face of Jesus is wonderful and we hear echoes of David's psalm, in which he sings of his one desire – to behold the beauty of the Lord and enjoy Him forever (Psalm 27:4), because God's presence is where light, salvation, protection and hope are found. In light of this truth, everything else pales into insignificance.

What is seen when we look full in the face of Jesus is His glory and His grace. In His face we see the glory of the One in whom we have been created to image, God Himself. We see the meaning for humanity, why we were created and how we are to live, which moves us to glorify Him.

We see in His face grace; mercy displayed in the incarnate Lord Jesus, who left the throne room of heaven in obedience to His Father, to restore the broken relationship between God and humanity. We see in His face One who stepped into our place, taking what we deserve and giving us all that was rightfully His.

We see the fullness of His glory and grace in the cross and resurrection.

# A TIME TO MAKE SPACE

Much like Advent to Christmas, Lent gives us the opportunity to intentionally focus, remember and celebrate the cross and resurrection of Jesus as we move closer toward Easter.

We want to allow God's Word and Spirit in this time to expose the things in our hearts and lives that we hold higher and give more value to, than Jesus and the Gospel.

We want to encourage one another to lay aside and unplug from the things that distract, so that we can again see the wonder, glory and grace of Jesus.

The season of Lent within the church calendar begins on Ash Wednesday (this year, 1<sup>st</sup> March) and continues for 46 days, ending in Holy week. It is marked by periods of fasting and feasting, traditionally fasting during the week and feasting together on Sunday.

As a church we want to help you make space in the noise and commotion, to realise our great need for Jesus. It is our hope that at the end of this season we will see afresh that Jesus has met our every need. We will see His glory and grace as we gaze upon His wonderful face and the things of earth will be but a dim light, not just for the next 46 days, but every day.

## DEVOTION & FASTING

Each week we have suggested an area of fasting. These weekly fasts give us an opportunity to grow in our communion with Jesus, as we read through and reflect on the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

Some of the fasts are traditional (food, caffeine, chocolate, alcohol), while others may be novel for many of us (social media, television, shopping, going to the gym). Each area of fasting has been chosen because it represents a common comfort to which our culture runs for distraction and fulfillment.

Our hope is that this will not simply subtract something from our lives, but rather provide an opportunity to add something greater. Therefore we would encourage everyone to use these times of fasting to intentionally spend more time praying, in God's Word and in God's community.



'Fast From, Feast On'

Fast from the swelling darkness, feast on  
the power of His light  
Fast from discontentment, feast on the  
joy that He brings

Sustainer, Protector, the Well of Life  
My Helper, my Comfort, the Bread of Life  
is You

Fast from the Fear that haunts us, feast  
on the power of His might  
Fast from the trap of judgment, feast on  
all that's been redeemed

From the sorrow's shadow to perfect light  
From the darkness of our doubt to a  
cleansing white  
From the sorrow's shadow to perfect light  
From the blindness of our sin to healing  
sight

**Lyrics by Latifah Phillips & David Wilton,  
inspired by William Arthur Ward**

# FASTING SCHEDULE

- **Week One - Food**

Please be wise, for health reasons this may not be possible for all people. Foregoing one meal a day, fasting sunrise to sunset, picking specific things like caffeine, sweets and alcohol are also options. Drink lots of water.

- **Week Two - Entertainment**

Television, movies, radio, music, video games e.t.c.

- **Week Three - Social Networking and Recreational Internet**

Facebook, twitter, instagram and the like.

- **Week Four - 'Me Time'**

Areas of life that we believe enable us to function, have control or offer a sense of peace and clarity. Examples include, regular exercise, obsessive housework, watching/playing sport, getting lost in a book/entertainment.

- **Week Five - Shopping for Non-Essentials**

Shopping for leisure, or for anything you don't need.

- **Week Six - Sleep**

Not a full night or a week, but waking up an hour or two earlier, going to bed an hour or two later to spend time reading God's word and praying.

- **Week Seven - FEAST**

Feast on God's word individually, as families and Gospel Communities. Additional reading for this week includes: Exodus 12, Leviticus 16, Isaiah 53, John 1:1-34, John 17, Mark 14:1-50, Matthew 26 & 27.

'Only after all of the noise  
has spent itself do we begin  
to hear in the silence of our  
hearts, the voice of God.'

**A. W. Tozer**

# CHURCH EVENTS

## Maundy Thursday Service

8pm at Cornerstone Church Liverpool  
8pm at Cornerstone Church Wirral

## Good Friday - The Cross Reflection Experience

11am-4pm at Cornerstone Wirral

The Cross Reflection Experience is a meditative, sensory journey for both congregations (Liverpool and the Wirral) through the cross and cruxifixion. Come as families, Gospel Communities or individuals to this open-house style, self-guided and kid-friendly service. Please allow 30 minutes for the whole experience.

## Resurrection Sunday

10.30am at Cornerstone Church Liverpool (followed by church picnic)  
10.30am at Cornerstone Church Wirral (baptism service)



**LENT WEEKLY  
DEVOTIONALS**

# WEEK ONE.

## TEMPTATION

**Suggested Weekly Fast: Food**

**Reading: Luke 4:1-13**

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, He was hungry.

The devil said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, '*Man shall not live by bread alone.*'" And the devil took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to Him, "To You I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If You, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "*You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.*"

And he took Him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "*He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,*" and "*On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.*" And Jesus answered him, "It is said, '*You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.*'" And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

### Additional weekly readings:

Hebrews 2:14-18 & 4:14-16  
1 Corinthians 10:6-13  
James 1:12-15

## **Prayer**

Jesus the Christ, You refused to turn stones into bread. Save us from using our power, however little, to satisfy the demands of selfishness in the face of the greater needs of others.

Jesus the Christ, You refused to leap from the temple top. Save us from displaying our skills, however modest, to win instant popularity in the face of nobler calls on our abilities.

Jesus the Christ, You refused to bend the knee to a false god. Save us from offering our devotion, however weak, to cheap or easy religion in the face of the harder path on which You bid us to follow You.

Jesus the Christ, give us wisdom to discern evil, and, in the face of all that is deceptively attractive, help us to choose the will of God.

Amen.

## **The Worship Sourcebook**

# WEEK TWO.

## GREAT FORGIVENESS, GREAT LOVE

**Suggested Weekly Fast: Entertainment**

**Reading: Luke 7:36-50**

"One of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him, and He went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that He was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind Him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed His feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And He said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet.

You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with Him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

## **Prayer**

○ Lord, great God, all holy, Father most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, we are embarrassed to come before you, for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways, for we have rebelled against your wisdom and we have gotten into trouble, for we have rejected your fatherly guidance and have gotten lost altogether.

To you belongs righteousness, ○ Lord, and to us confusion of face. ○ Lord, great God, all holy, filled with awe, Father, most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, incline your ear to our troubles.

Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you. Forgive us, not on the ground of our own righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercy.

On the ground of your great mercy in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. It is in his name that we pray, for he is our Saviour and the mediator of the covenant of grace.

Amen.

## **The Worship Sourcebook**

**Additional  
weekly readings:**

Romans 6:1-14 & 12:1-2

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Galatians 5:15-24

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## **Reflection**

'O Lover to the uttermost, may I read the meltings of Thy heart to me...

...in the manger of Thy birth,  
...in the garden of Thy agony,  
...in the cross of Thy suffering,  
...in the tomb of Thy resurrection,  
...in the heaven of Thy intercession.

Thou has loved me eternally and unchangeably, may I love Thee as I am loved by Thee. Thou has given Thyself for me, may I give myself to Thee. Thou has died for me, may I live to Thee...

...in every moment of my time,  
...in every movement of my mind,  
...in every pulse of my heart.'

**'O Lover to the Uttermost' - Valley of Vision**

# WEEK THREE.

## CONFESSION AND COST

**Suggested Weekly Fast: Social Networking and Recreational Internet**

**Reading: Luke 9:18-27**

'Now it happened that as He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him. And He asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" And they answered, "John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen." Then He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

And He strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

And He said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

### Additional weekly readings:

Philippians 3:7-16  
Colossians 3:1-4  
Hebrews 12:1-11

# WEEK FOUR.

## ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

**Suggested Weekly Fast: 'Me Time'**

**Reading: Luke 11:1-13**

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." And He said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."

And He said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"



**Additional  
weekly readings:**

Ephesians 3:14-21  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Matthew 6:25-34  
James 5:13-18

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## **Prayer**

Our Father in heaven, You indeed are our Father, adopting us into an eternal family. As an earthly father has compassion on his children, so You show compassion on those who fear You. You know how we are made, and remember us in our weakness. Hallowed be Your name. You alone are holy, there is none like You; Your glory is above the heavens. Yet You stoop down to lift up the needy. We exalt and worship You, for You are holy. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

In Christ Your kingdom has already come, even though rulers of this earth gather together against You thinking they can thwart Your purposes. They cannot, for You have installed Christ, Your Anointed One, the everlasting, all powerful King over all creation.

Give us this day our daily bread. All creatures look to You for their food at the proper time; when You provide, they are satisfied with good things. When You hide Your face, they are terrified. Lord, help us be good stewards of the gifts of food You have given us so that all may have their daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we also forgive those who sin against us. Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin is covered, and who know the joy of forgiveness. As we have been forgiven, help us to become like Christ, forgiving those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. In mercy, O God, answer the prayers of all who are in deep distress. Hear their cries especially when they are tormented by those who deny You and act as if You do not care. At the same time, save us from sinning in our anger. Let the light of Your face shine upon us, O Lord. For the kingdom, the power, and glory are Yours, now and forever.

Amen.

# WEEK FIVE.

## THE HUMBLE HEART

**Suggested Weekly Fast: Shopping for Non-Essentials**

**Reading: Luke 18:9-17**

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Now they were bringing even infants to Him that He might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

### Additional weekly readings:

James 4:1-10  
1 Peter 5:5-8  
Philippians 2:1-3  
Matthew 5:3-12

## **Reflection**

“O Holy of holies, Lord my God, incline Your ear to the prayer of Your poor servant: “Help me, and I shall be saved, and I will meditate always on Your justifications.” Oh that I deserved to be one of the least of Your servants, in the kingdom You have prepared for those who are humble and who love You. I love You then, O Lord my strength, with all my heart, as You, Yourself, have commanded by Your sacred mouth.

You are my hope, and my salvation, and my desire is ever toward You. Keep me from all error by a perfect understanding; from all impurity by a clean heart; from all kind of doubt by a right faith; from all distrust by a steadfast hope; from all disgust and negligence by a burning charity; from all disquietude by great patience; from all unclean thoughts by holy meditation; from the attacks of the devil by continual prayer; from frequent distractions by a sustained attention in reading; from listlessness and drowsiness by useful occupation, and from thinking of satisfying my vices, by the remembrance of Your holy passion.

Come with all these graces, O Lord, and confirm me in all Your holy words. Amen.”

**Thomas A Kempis**

# WEEK SIX.

## 'DEATH, LIFE'

**Suggested Weekly Fast: Sleep**

**Reading: Luke 18:18-34**

And a ruler asked Him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But He said, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." And Peter said, "See, we have left our homes and followed You." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."

And taking the twelve, He said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For He will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging Him, they will kill Him, and on the third day He will rise." But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

**Additional  
weekly readings:**

Matthew 13:44-46  
Hebrews 13:5-6  
1 Timothy 6:6-12  
Matthew 6:19-24

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**Prayer**

Let us contemplate Jesus the Lord:

Instead of the joy meant for Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its disgrace. We worship You, Lord.

O Jesus Christ, born in humility to confound the proud and to raise the humble: We worship You, Lord.

You lived among us, healing the sick, proclaiming good news to the poor and freedom to prisoners. We worship You, Lord.

You came to unbind the chains of every slavery, O friend of the humble, bread of hungry hearts. We worship You, Lord.

Jesus, full of patience and goodness, You showed forgiveness and kindness to the very end. We worship You, Lord.

Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, You call to yourself all who are weary and burdened. We worship You, Lord.

Jesus, You came into the world to serve and to give your life; You were betrayed for money, dragged before judges, and nailed to a cross. We worship You, Lord.

Jesus, Lord of the universe, by Your resurrection from the dead You are alive at the Father's side, and there You prepare a place for us. We worship You, Lord.

Amen.

# WEEK SEVEN.

## CELEBRATION AND GRIEF

### Feast on God's Word

#### Reading: Luke 19:28-44

And when He had said these things, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" And they said, "The Lord has need of it." And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as He rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.

As He was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

And when He drew near and saw the city, He wept over it, saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

**Additional  
weekly readings:**

Exodus 12, Leviticus 16,  
Isaiah 53, John 1:1-34,  
Mark 14:1-50, Matthew  
26 & 27

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**Prayer**

From Bethlehem to Nazareth,  
From Jordan to Jericho,  
From Bethany to Jerusalem,  
From then to now,  
Come, Lord Jesus.  
To heal the sick,  
To mend the brokenhearted,  
To comfort the disturbed,  
To disturb the comfortable,  
To cleanse the temple,  
To liberate faith from convention,  
Come, Lord Jesus.  
To carry the cross,  
To lead the way,  
To should the sin of the world,  
And to take it away,  
Come, Lord Jesus.  
Today,  
In this moment,  
To me,  
Come, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

**The Worship Sourcebook**

# MAUNDAY THURSDAY.

## REMEMBRANCE

### Reading: Luke 22:7-23

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it." They said to Him, "Where will You have us prepare it?" He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there." And they went and found it just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

And when the hour came, He reclined at table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

And He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

## Reflection

Christ, You call the bread Your body  
And the cup the new covenant in Your blood,  
You have good reason for these words.  
You want to teach us that  
Just as bread and wine nourish the temporal life,  
So too Your crucified body and poured-out blood  
Are the true food and drink of our souls for eternal life.  
But more important,  
You want to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge,  
That we, through the Holy Spirit's work,  
Share in Your true body and blood  
As surely as our mouths  
Receive the holy signs in your remembrance,  
And that all of your suffering and obedience  
Are as definitely ours as if we personally  
Had suffered and made satisfaction for our sins.  
Thanks be to God!

Amen.

**Based on Heidelberg Catechism, 79**

# GOOD FRIDAY.

## THE CUP

### **Reading: Luke 22:39-46**

And He came out and went, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. And when He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

And when He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

## Reflection

O Lord,  
I hang on Thee; I see, believe, live,  
When Thy will, not mine, is done;  
I can plead nothing in myself  
In regard of any worthiness and grace,  
In regard of Thy providence and promises,  
But only Thy good pleasure.  
If Thy mercy make me poor and vile, blessed be Thou!  
Prayers arising from my needs are preparations for future mercies; help me to  
honour Thee by believing before I feel, for great is the sin if I make feeling a cause  
of faith.  
Show me what sins hide Thee from me  
And eclipse Thy love;  
Help me to humble myself for past evils,  
To be resolved to walk with more care.  
Help me to pray in faith and so find Thy will,  
By leaning hard on Thy rich free mercy,  
By believing Thou wilt give what Thou hast promised;  
Strengthen me to pray with conviction  
That whatever I receive is Thy gift,  
So that I may pray until prayer be granted;  
Teach me to believe that all degrees of mercy arise  
From several degrees of prayer,  
That when faith is begun it is imperfect and must grow,  
As chapped ground opens wider and wider until rain comes.  
So shall I wait Thy will, pray for it to be done,  
And by Thy grace become fully obedient.

### **'The Divine Will' – Valley of Vision**

# HOLY SATURDAY.

## THE DEATH OF DEATH

### Reading: Luke 23

Then the whole company of them arose and brought Him before Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a king." And Pilate asked Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "You have said so." Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place."

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about Him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by Him. So he questioned Him at some length, but He made no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing Him. And Herod with his soldiers treated Him with contempt and mocked Him. Then, arraying Him in splendid clothing, he sent Him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining Him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against Him. Neither did Herod, for he sent Him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. I will therefore punish and release Him."

But they all cried out together, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas"—a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify Him!" A third time he said to them, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found in Him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release Him." But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that He should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. And there followed Him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for Him. But turning to them Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with Him. And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide His garments. And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save himself, if He is the Christ of God, His Chosen One!" The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up and offering Him sour wine and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over Him, "This is the King of the Jews."

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked Him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And He said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

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It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this He breathed his last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. And all His acquaintances and the women who had followed Him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

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## Reflection

Out of the depths we cry to You, O Lord.

From our brokenness that brought about Good Friday, we cry to You, O Lord.

Your ears have been attentive to the voice of your people. You have answered our pleas for mercy.

O Lord, if you kept a record of our wrongs, we would have a reason to be afraid.

O Lord, if you kept a record of our wrongs, who would dare stand before You?

But with You there is forgiveness.

Because of Jesus, there is forgiveness.

Now we do not live in fear, but in holy awe of You.

Our souls wait for You. All our hope is in You.

We hope in Your Word. Your Word made flesh.

As surely as He has come, He is coming again. And our souls eagerly await His return.

Oh people of God, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love and plentiful redemption - He has redeemed us from all of our sins.

**Based on Psalm 130**

# EASTER SUNDAY.

## RISEN TO LIFE

### **Reading: Luke 24**

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how He told you, while He was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." And they remembered His words, and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognising Him. And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad.

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Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered Him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find His body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but Him they did not see."

And He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So He went in to stay with them.

When He was at table with them, He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognised Him. And He vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?" And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem.

And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and He took it and ate before them.

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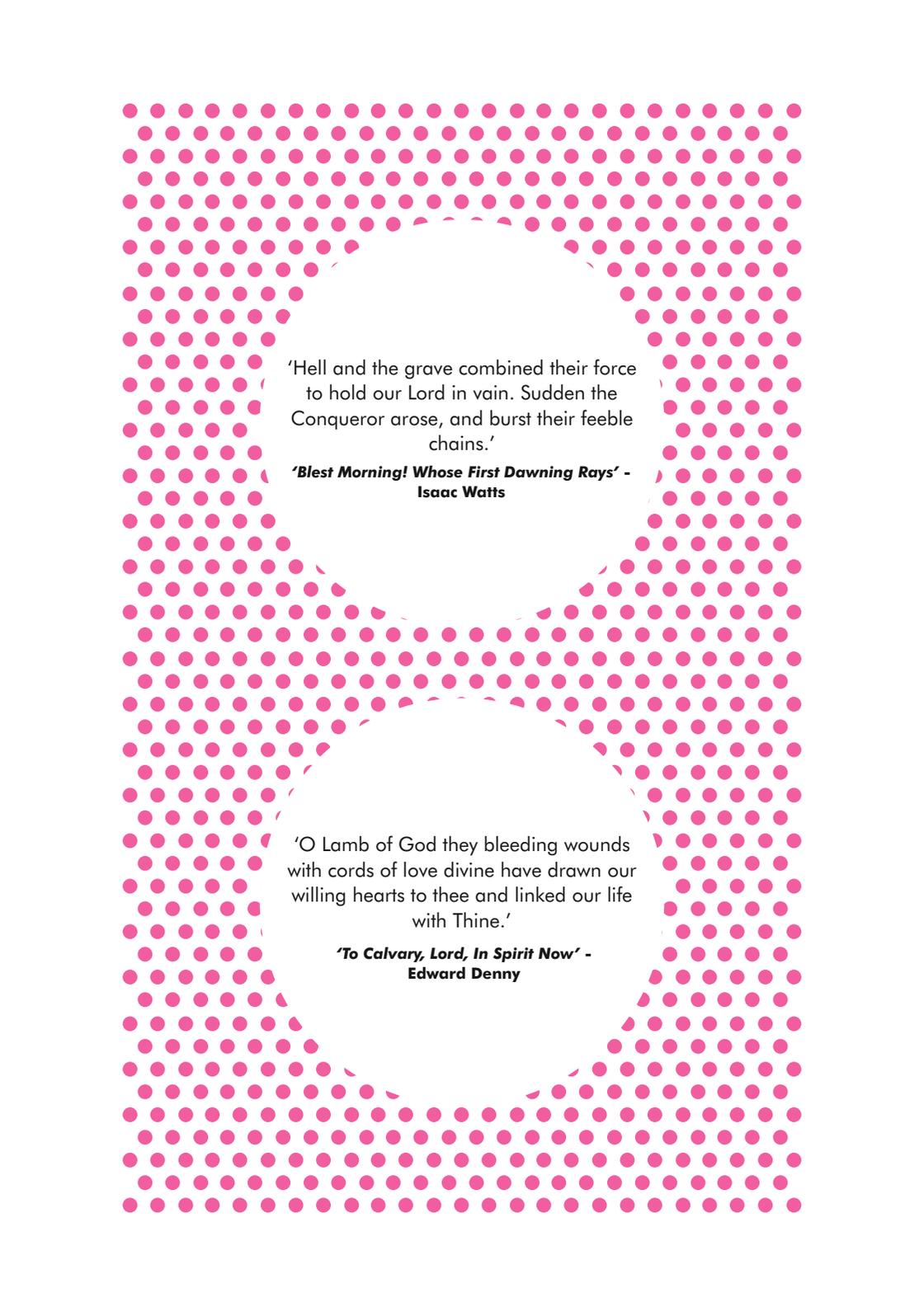
Then He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

And He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father,  
Thou hast led me singing to the cross  
Where I fling down all my burdens and see them vanish,  
Where my mountains of guilt are levelled to a plain,  
Where my sins disappear, though they are the greatest that exist,  
And are more in number than the grains of fine sand;  
For there is power in the blood of Calvary  
To destroy sins more than can be counted  
Even by one from the choir of heaven.  
Thou hast given me a hillside spring that washes clear and white,  
And I go as a sinner to its waters.  
Bathing without hindrance in its crystal streams.  
At the cross there is free forgiveness for poor and meek ones,  
And ample blessings that last forever;  
The blood of the Lamb is like a great river of infinite grace  
With never any diminishing of its fullness  
As thirsty ones without number drink of it.  
O Lord, forever will Thy free forgiveness live  
That was gained on the mount of blood;  
In the midst of a world of pain  
It is a subject for praise in every place  
A song on earth, an anthem in heaven,  
Its love and virtue knowing no end.  
I have a longing for the world above  
Where multitudes sing the great song,  
For my soul was never created to love the dust of earth.  
Though here my spiritual state is frail and poor,  
I shall go on singing Calvary's anthem.  
May I always know  
That a clean heart full of goodness  
Is more beautiful than the lily,  
That only a clean heart can sing by night and by day,  
That such a heart is mine when I abide at Calvary.

### Valley of Vision - 'Calvary's Anthem'



'Hell and the grave combined their force  
to hold our Lord in vain. Sudden the  
Conqueror arose, and burst their feeble  
chains.'

**'Blest Morning! Whose First Dawning Rays' -  
Isaac Watts**

'O Lamb of God they bleeding wounds  
with cords of love divine have drawn our  
willing hearts to thee and linked our life  
with Thine.'

**'To Calvary, Lord, In Spirit Now' -  
Edward Denny**



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