

MT. ZION
BAPTIST CHURCH

LENT

DEVOTIONAL

40 DAYS OF BREAKTHROUGH

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What is Lent?

The Lenten season is a 40-day season of prayer, fasting, sacrifice, devotion, and discovery beginning Ash Wednesday (March 5, 2025) and ends on Easter Sunday (April 20, 2025). It is a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's resurrection; the most climatic moment in history. During this time, we seek to know the Lord more intimately by devoting time to prayer, reading scripture, fasting to demonstrate self-control. All of this is done to reflect the example of Jesus as he prepared to die for our sins and expecting to encounter God. Jesus prayed, so we will pray. Jesus engaged scripture, so we will engage scripture. Jesus sacrificed, so we will sacrifice. And when this period is over, we will celebrate our Risen Savior.

What To Do During Lent?

During Lent, we Read, Fast, and Pray. This devotional was designed to aid you in directed reading and prayer for this season. Every day you will have daily verses to read to yourself, with a spouse, a friend, or family. I encourage you to partner with someone and walk the next 40 days together. This devotional will share our church's theme, "The Year of Breakthrough." We'll survey moments where God facilitates a breakthrough for the benefit of His children. From this study, we'll be encouraged with how God will do the same for us. I pray these 40 days will be inspiring, invigorating, and illuminating to your faith. Let's journey these next 40 days together.

How to Fast During Lent?

How you fast is completely up to you. You are challenged to give up something of significance, so make it personal. Consider what's commonly done: fasting for certain hours of the day, giving up fried foods, giving up sweets, fasting from social media, fasting from certain behaviors or habits, negative thinking...etc. The purpose is to remove something from your routine that you regularly need or do and replace it with God. For instance, if you give up sweets and feel a craving...PRAY! Ask God for strength in that moment and force yourself to lean on God in your sacrifice. This is a process. If this is your first Lent season, ease into it, but take it seriously. The objective is to experience God in your sacrifice.

Wednesday March 5, 2025

Day

1

"Nowhere to go but THROUGH!"

READ - Exodus 14: 26 – 31

Our faith journey will inevitably lead us to moments where we feel stuck. Stuck between not knowing how to go forward and having no desire to go backward. However, the lack of forward direction may illuminate the pseudo-desire to return to where you just came from. Listen, God's desire for your life is not to return to where you came from, what you survived, and what you overcame. You will never hear the Lord have you abandon that path you've traveled. So, where do you go from here? The answer is THROUGH!

When you find yourself stuck with no plan to backtrack and no path forward because of roadblock, step aside and let God be God. When you don't have the power to create a path forward, rest assured that God does! When the Lord divinely leads you to a blocked road anchor yourself in in these assurances. 1) This block in the path is part of the plan. 2) Your destination is on the other side of the block. 3) If God leads you to it, God will lead you through it. It's up to God to take care of what's in the way. It's up to you to go through when that way is made!

Prayer Focus: Give me the confidence to know that God will open doors, make ways, and move waters when I feel stuck with nowhere to go.

Thursday March 6, 2025

Day

2

“Standing in Uncertainty”

READ – Matthew 14: 22 – 33

When we keep our focus on the Lord in the midst of uncertainty, a breakthrough is bound to happen. Our focus scripture shows Peter walking on water towards Jesus at His command. Peter was successful until he took his eyes off his Savior and “noticed the wind.” Immediately he began to sink. Eventually Jesus saved him, but if we read straight to the salvific moment of the story we overlook the first miracle...Peter actually *was* walking on water.

The miracle here is how Peter was momentarily able to stand in the middle of an unstable, uncertain environment. Water was never created to be stood upon. The moment you step on its surface you surrender to its embrace. But when your attention remains arrested by the Lord, you’ll see how God will have you participate in the unimaginable. No matter what you find yourself up against, you’ll stay on top of it when your focus remains on the Lord. Divine focus will facilitate the breakthrough in your situation where you will be able to stand in circumstances that were designed to take you under. You will stand successfully in situations that were designed to make you drown. Where you look in times of trouble will determine whether or not you succumb to the unknown or stand in the uncertain.

Prayer Focus: I pray for the power to focus on Jesus no matter what circumstance I’m faced with.

Friday March 7, 2025

Day

3

“Don’t Forget to Look Up”

READ – Genesis 22: 1 – 14

Most believers claim they will do anything for the Lord but pray that God won’t dare test them on their word. This is because they know the test will likely come at the expense of something desired. It’s difficult serving the Lord when you have the feeling that you’ll be giving up something you really want. When obedience feels like a burden, it’ll cause you to look down in your serving. If you feel burdened as you service to the Lord, a breakthrough is needed and it can be found when you look up.

There’s no denying Abraham’s disappointed feelings of sacrificing his son to display his obedience to God. Abraham and his wife prayed fervently for this blessing and had no intentions of giving him up. He was obedient, but burdened. As we serve the Lord, we are sometimes called to give up what we want or desire. These habits, people, and wants leave us feeling burdened as we are obedient to the Lord’s direction. Sometimes we want to give up serving altogether because we’re tired of the constant work and limited reward. But as Galatians 6 records, “Let us not become weary in well-doing, at the proper time we will reap a harvest.” The reward is found when we look up in our work. In verse 13 of this story, Abraham “looked up” and found the source of solace. He found pause for peace. He looked up and spotted the “ram in the bush.” If you are tired from your continued labor in the Lord, look for your breakthrough as you serve. Serve faithfully, fervently, and fully...but don’t forget to look up! Your blessing is right above you!

Prayer Focus: Give me the confidence to know that God will open doors, make ways, and move waters when I feel stuck with nowhere to go.

Saturday, March 8, 2025

Day

4

“One More Step”

READ – Joshua 6: 15 – 20

Have you ever been given a promise by God, only to see that promise in someone else’s possession? Perhaps God promised you a position, a health status, a financial opportunity, but at the time of the promise it did not belong to you. Such is the position of Joshua and the Children of Israel as they looked upon Jericho; a city that was “delivered to them.” God instructed Joshua to take this city, however, the task proved difficult because of Jericho’s high, fortified walls. We encounter walls and barriers when we approach goals and promises given to us by God. Sometimes the barriers are so big that we give up on our pursuit of the promise altogether. Here’s a recommendation when you’re ready to give up on your God-ordained promise...don’t! Your breakthrough is literally a few steps away.

Joshua and the army of Israel were instructed to march around the city for several days and on the last day, shout and sound the trumpets. When they did as instructed, the walls collapsed and the Israelite army took control. We learn from this story that God’s promises for our lives come with an appointed time and instructions. Don’t get discouraged if our promise is not in our immediate possession. Don’t forget, every day that passes means you’re a day closer to what’s promised to you. In the meantime, stay within close proximity of the goal. Take the steps needed to occupy that promised position. As long as you stay close to the goal, you’ll have a front row seat to the breakthrough leading you to that promised position.

Prayer Focus: I pray for the power to focus on Jesus no matter what circumstance I’m faced with.

Monday, March 10, 2025

Day

5

“Closed Mouths Don’t Get Fed”

READ – Daniel 6: 16 – 23

There are times when we find ourselves in situations that don’t mean us well. To make matters worse, sometimes we end up in these situations against our own will and best intentions. So, what do we do in situations like this? The short answer is...nothing.

Daniel is the poster child for someone being thrown into a bad situation. The people that conspired to have Daniel thrown in the den had every intention of him not making it out of the den. That is the case for us. We’re thrown in something we’re not supposed to come out of; leaving us in desperate need for a breakthrough. But when you know you’re innocent and have preserved your integrity, trust that God will see it and honor it. Your integrity has prepared you for the den. And a breakthrough has been prepared for you when you get there.

In all seasons, operate with integrity. Live, act, and speak with virtue in both public and private spaces. So, when you’re thrown into a space of adversity your critics will have to keep their mouths shut. They will have nothing of substance to say...and can’t open their mouths. The breakthrough that we witness is God will handle your adversity divinely because of how you handled yourself privately. We’ve heard the adage, “closed mouths don’t get fed.” In our case, “closed mouths won’t get fed.” God has made it where our opposition has no appetite for integrity.

Prayer Focus: I pray for the confidence to trust God in challenging situations and act with integrity in every season.

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Day

6

“Which WAY Will You Go”

READ – Acts 9: 1 – 20

The story of Saul’s conversion includes a breakthrough that doesn’t originate with the Lord, but within the heart of Saul. As you’ve read, Saul was once a professional at persecuting people who belonged to the Way (believers of Christ, verse 1). Long story short, after his brief blind experience he decides to follow Christ and transitions from persecuting to preaching. The breakthrough of interest here is how he decides to follow the Way and not continue his own way. His heart transformed for the greater good.

Keep in mind, Paul’s condition was blindness which is a condition that people can live productive lives with. He didn’t have to change despite the condition Jesus placed him in. He chose to change. In the wake of a transformative moment in his life, he chose to turn away from the hardened persecutor to the compassionate preacher. Consider how God permits transformative events to happen in our lives such as a loss of a loved one, sudden change in employment, unexpected health challenge, or something else catastrophic. Sudden life changes have the capacity to harden people’s hearts. You can likely think of someone who left church after a loss or changed how they interact with family. You can choose to go your own way after difficult life events. This is what it looks like when your heart gets hardened. Whenever life deals a blow, you can choose the toughened response or experience the breakthrough by submitting to God’s will through it. Your heart will dictate which way you go.

Prayer Focus: I pray for the heart to follow Christ through the situations that are hurtful and painful.

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Day

7

“You’re Still In Earshot”

READ – Jonah 2: 1 – 10

Have you ever experienced the frustration of trying to speak to someone on the phone and they couldn’t hear what you were saying? With all the advancements found in modern day telecommunications we are still subject to dead zones where communication can’t be made. Depending on the proximity to a cell tower or signal-blocking obstructions, sometimes connections aren’t made. However, there is no obstructions that are too great where God cannot breakthrough the barrier. Our calls to Him will always connect.

Understand the breakthrough that Jonah’s story shows us. Jonah found himself inside the belly of a great fish. From this precarious, problematic position he prayed that God would deliver Him. His prayer began with him acknowledging that the Lord heard his cry from the belly. This single prayer informs us that God’s power withstands the breakdowns that we encounter; His reach will always breakthrough. Whenever you find yourself where you feel pressed from every side and feel as though your prayers go unheard, rest assured you’re still in earshot of God’s hearing. There is no concern that goes unnoticed. There is no prayer that goes unheard. God’s power will always clear the channels for your petitions to reach his attention. You can pray with confidence, because His power permits our prayers to always breakthrough.

Prayer Focus: I pray for the continued confidence to pray through challenging moments and know that God hears my prayers.

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Day

8

“A Break From the Old”

READ – Isaiah 43: 14 – 21

Sometimes we find ourselves gripped with long-term suffering to the point where it affects our long-term outlook. For example, you may deal with a problem for so long that you believe the problem will never go away. Or you may be stuck in a condition so long you feel as though your situation will never change. When you begin to feel long-term situations having a long-term effect on your spirit, remind yourself of what the Lord has shown us. A break from the long-term situation is on the way.

None of us are immune from challenging circumstances in life. However, God will provide a break from the long-term issues that try to suffocate our spirits over time. As he shared with the children of Israel as they transitioned out of exile. After extended suffering at the hands of Babylon, God sent word that a “new thing” is on the agenda. This new thing was a break from the old conditions that caused the unsettled spirits. Likewise, God is challenging us to be of good cheer during our challenges. Every situation is merely a pit stop. Tough days are only temporary stays. God will breakthrough the hardships with a break from the old. Be Encouraged!

Prayer Focus: Lord, grow in me the spirit of long-suffering and hold onto my faith until I see the break from the thing has tried to break me.

Friday, March 14, 2025

Day

9

“A Blessed Connection”

READ – Matthew 8: 14 – 15

Sometimes Jesus will bless your life with a breakthrough and other times Jesus will allow you to witness a breakthrough because of you. In these two passages we see how someone is blessed with a much-needed breakthrough due to a divine connection. Peter’s mother-in-law is found at the opening of this passage immovable because of a fever. Prior to this moment, we don’t see a connection between Jesus and this mother, but we do see one between Jesus and Peter. As soon as he steps into Peter’s house Jesus heals the bedridden mother-in-law with a divine touch. This divine healing was facilitated because of the divine connection.

You should be encouraged to know that you could be the key component for someone else’s breakthrough. A family member, close friend, or special someone will feel the divine touch of God due to your faithful service and connection to the Lord. Continue to make yourself available to the Lord as He calls you to serve him. Continue to intercede for those that desperately need to see the Lord’s hand in their life. One day, you will open the door and the Lord will be there to answer prayers for the people you are connected to. Your blessed connection to God will facilitate a breakthrough for your brother or sister.

Prayer Focus: I pray to be spirit for that God uses to spread His love and facilitate a breakthrough for my loved one.

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Day

10

“A Clean Start”

READ – John 13: 1 – 17

This text begins with a dirty situation but ends with a divine session. Jesus prepares for the evening meal with his disciples and realizes that everyone at the table is dirty. When they all arrived at the house to eat there was no door servant to wash the feet, so everyone sat at the table with all the filth they picked up from their journey. In an act of servanthood by example, Jesus gets up to clean the feet of his followers. Peter protests Jesus cleaning their feet, but Jesus pushes back because he knows what's at stake. 1) Jesus knows that this moment will demonstrate what Jesus is truly capable of, and 2) Jesus wants to show them that a clean start is at stake. While they may not be deserving of it (none of us are), they are worthy of it.

All of us journey through life and we tend to collect dirt along the way. This dirt is found in our habits, actions, words, and thoughts. And if we can be honest with ourselves, some of our dirt is hard to shake off. We've been traveling with it for so long, we feel comfortable bringing it to places it doesn't belong. Our dirt doesn't belong near the dinner table. This is dysfunctional. But we serve a Lord who loves us so much that he'll work through the dirt we bring to Him. He'll breakthrough our hang ups so that we can hang closer to him. Don't ever allow your issues to convince you that you can't bring Him your cares and concerns. Don't be discouraged by the fact that life has brought you dirty moments but be encouraged because dirt comes off at his hands. Jesus will give you a clean start.

Prayer Focus: God give me a sense of value despite the experiences I've endured. Give me the chance to start all over.

Monday, March 17, 2025

Day

11

“He's In Complete Control”

READ – Matthew 8: 23 – 27

The miracle of Jesus calming the storm is a rare moment in scripture where He asserts His power in a moment of pure chaos and shows us what a breakthrough looks like before it was given. Jesus is the only character at peace in the text while the disciples, the winds, and the waves were acting erratic. Whenever life shows us crazy, out-of-control moments, peace is the only breakthrough that makes sense. Jesus is sleeping peacefully while everyone and everything else acts in the complete opposite manner. Here, Jesus shows us what breakthrough to expect and the source of our breakthrough.

As we live our lives we should certainly expect moments that appear out-of-control. Sometimes we reciprocate our environment and act out-of-control ourselves. During these moments I encourage you to pause long enough to remember that the only appropriate response to external chaos is peace. And that peace doesn't come from us, it comes from Jesus. Allow the Lord to speak peace to your situation. Don't let your spirit respond to the presence of your circumstance. Instead let your spirit respond to the presence of you omnipresent Savior. Peace will show up as your breakthrough. Jesus shows us what it looks like and then he gives it to us and our circumstance. Don't ever forget, Jesus is in complete control.

Prayer Focus: God give me the constant reminder that you are sovereign and always in control, especially in the moments when I'm out of control.

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Day

12

“Binding What’s Broken”

READ – Luke 7: 11 – 17

Have you ever dealt with relationship issues? The woman of today’s devotionals dealt with several. Within two verses we learn that this nameless woman lost a son and lost a husband. Yes, they are literally dead, but they also represent dead relationships in her life that she can do nothing about. Death is a part of life that applies to every area of life...including relationships. Sometimes relationships die. However, where we see death, God sees an opportunity to breakthrough with resurrecting power according to his will.

As Jesus revives the young boy back to life, He also restores a connection that once was dead. His power informs us that Jesus can speak life back into the broken relationships that we mourn over. We are also informed that every relationship isn’t meant to be revived. Keep in mind that the woman was a widow – meaning her husband was dead also. Jesus did not revive him. What God resurrects is subject to His will and every breakthrough has purpose.

Managing relationships is complicated work and they need God’s direction. In the event that they die, don’t forget that Jesus has the power to bind together that brokenness between people...according to his will. There is no death in Christ. The death we witness is simply an opportunity for a breakthrough.

Prayer Focus: Allow me to trust your will in all my relationships. Take control in which relationships are restored and which remain dead.

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Day

13

“Cut Complaining from your Diet”

READ – Exodus 16: 2 – 9

When things don’t go your way, it is natural for you to complain to someone who can change what you dislike. For instance, if you are unhappy with food that you ordered from a restaurant, you’d complain to the person who served the meal or the manager. With this considered, it makes perfect sense to complain to God whenever situations aren’t ideal in life. However, complaining to God requires no faith on your part. The Lord is constantly aware of what you need and committed to providing your needs...even when you complain.

Complaining rarely makes anything better; it’s more likely to make situations worse. They originate from a place of frustration and loss of hope in a moment. While complaining has the capacity to make a bad situation worse, we should be grateful to serve a God who doesn’t hold our grumblings against us. From the text, God heard the grumblings, but listened through the filter of grace. The breakthrough in this moment is how God can pinpoint our specific need even when we poorly articulate what we need. It serves no purpose in our communication with God. Before we can ever complain about food, He’s already prepared manna for our diet. Complaining is not good nutrition for the spirit; it should be cut from our spiritual diets altogether.

Prayer Focus: God give me a sense of contentment in all situations. Help me to keep the faith that you will take care of my needs before I ever realize I need them.

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Day

14

“He Hears Your Wildest Thoughts”

READ – Joshua 10: 12 – 14

Imagine having the creator of the known universe having the ability to hear your wildest thoughts. Further, imagine that same creator delivering on those dreams as soon as they are articulated. Now, consider how this thought is not limited to your imagination...it's your reality!

During a time where Joshua and the Israelites were in the midst of battle, Joshua communicated a request like never before to the Lord. He spoke that the sun remain still...and the Lord listened! The bible shares that this had never happened before. Joshua spoke and God accommodated his request. This story informs us to consider why God will honor our incredible requests. Joshua's request aligned with God's vision for Israel. God listened because His display of power showed everyone that the Lord fights for Israel. God fought for those who fought for Him.

Our obedience to the Lord will facilitate a breakthrough that has never been seen before. God will hear our wildest dreams and accommodate according to His will. In both wartime and peacetime, Joshua obeyed the Lord. And when the time mattered, the Lord heard Joshua. Be encouraged to walk the will of the Lord in times of peace and problems, and the Lord will hear your wildest thoughts...and honor them.

Prayer Focus: God help my thoughts stay focused on you and in alignment with you. Allow me to desire the things for my life that you desire for me to have.

Friday, March 21, 2025

Day

15

“Another Letdown”

READ – Luke 5: 1 – 11

Feeling letdown is among the most sobering and painful feelings of the human experience. Letdown can come at the hands of our mistakes or when others fail to meet our expectations. No matter the source, feeling letdown is not a welcome experience. However, a letdown can be changed through the power of our Lord.

The fisherman felt the weight of letdown and disappointment after many failed attempts of trying to catch fish to make a living. Jesus arrives to encourage them let down their nets once more and experience another result. The bible declares that the catch was so mighty that their nets almost broke from the weight. Jesus worked through one more “let down” to facilitate a breakthrough for those who believed.

Jesus has the power to literally use the letdowns that we experience in our lives as a platform for His power, grace, mercy, love, and favor. While letdowns come from our hands and the hands of others, the uplift comes only at the hands of the Lord. Please don't take live in the letdown. It is a temporary residence and could be the setup for God's turnaround in your life. Trust and believe that a breakthrough is on the upside of life's letdowns.

Prayer Focus: Lord, I pray to feel your presence in challenges and not the weight of disappointment in the middle of it all.

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Day

16

“You’re In The Number”

READ – Matthew 14: 14 – 21

Have you ever felt as though you were overlooked, ignored, or passed over? The feeling of being excluded is not something anyone looks forward to. While it may happen in a number of settings in life including family, professional spaces, in the community, or even at church, it will never happen with God. You are always seen, heard, and valued. Your voice always matters and your presence is appreciated. And the breakthrough that we experience is knowing that God will include us whenever we were meant to be excluded.

Consider the “Miracle of the Magnitude.” The bible had a subheading over this text that reads, “Jesus feeds the Five Thousand.” Given the context of the culture during this time, it is important to note that only the men were counted in that five thousand mentioned. However, both women and children were present during this feeding...and they ate too. When the women and children were intentionally overlooked in the count, Jesus made sure they had a plate. Be encouraged to know that even when you feel among the ostracized, outcasts, and overlooked, you serve a God who is looking right at you. Your needs will never go unnoticed.

Prayer Focus: God allow me to remain confident that my presence is always recognized by you. You see all things and you see me in all things.

Monday, March 24, 2025

Day

17

“Where Do Broken Hearts Go?”

READ – Matthew 5: 4

In 1987, the late vocal phenomenon, Whitney Houston, posed the question, “Where do broken hearts go?” The question was lyrically articulated as she described the hurt experienced from a romantic breakup. Throughout the song the audience is left to wonder if there is a place or a plan for hurting hearts. The sad reality is that hearts break for more simply romantic reasons. People mourn many tough moments in life. But the good news is that there is an answer for Whitney’s question; they go to the Lord for repair. God has a plan for the brokenness that we experience in life. For those that mourn any form of brokenness, the plan is for you to be blessed.

Matthew 5 introduces us to The Beatitudes – a series of eight blessings that Jesus pronounces on people enduring different hardships, emphasizing the rewards of living in accordance with God’s will. Jesus speaks a blessing over the people who find themselves mourning over a life event. There is a breakthrough in knowing that the brokenness that we experience in life will end in repair. That is part of God’s plan for us. With this in mind, we should hold onto the assurance that brokenness is only for a moment in time. He will handle our mourning heart because that is the plan that he established for our lives.

Prayer Focus: Lord, I pray to feel remain secure in your plan for all of my emotions, conditions, and experiences.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Day

18

“An Appetite for Seconds”

READ – 2 Kings 2: 1 – 15

Elijah was a prophet who was faithful to God, and Elisha was faithful to serving this prophet. God performed mighty miracles through the service of Elijah. So, it comes to no surprise that Elisha would ask for a double portion of Elijah’s spirit before he went to be with the Lord. The bible tells us that both men approached the Jordan River, and Elijah struck it so that the waters would stand upright, and the pair could cross on dry ground. The breakthrough here is not that they crossed on dry ground, but that God would give his Elisha exactly what he asked for. He repeated his power for another. As the story reads, Elisha later returned to the Jordan and struck the Jordan in the same fashion as Elijah. Again, the water stood up and Elisha crossed on dry ground. What God has done before he is able to do again.

Over time God has not lost His power. It is still as mighty today as he was yesterday. We should draw encouragement from knowing that God will not withhold blessing us today in the same manner he blessed us before. If He healed you 30 years ago, He could heal the same way today. If He comforted you through a loss 20 days ago, He could do the same again today. If He bailed you out yesterday, God can bail you out again today. There is a breakthrough in knowing that God’s power is greater than our appetite for a second helping of what we need from Him.

Prayer Focus: God, I pray to remain thankful in how you have already blessed my life and keeping the faith that you will do what’s needed for my life again and again.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Day

19

“Overtime Not Approved”

READ – Luke 13: 10 – 17

The word “overtime” can refer to the employment status where someone works more than their assigned time. Sometimes a workload can exceed the time and talent available, so workers will spend extra time on the job while getting paid extra money. Because overtime work costs employers’ extra money, they’ll have a process of approving overtime work before allowing someone to do it. In the instance of our faith, we serve a God (and boss) who refuses to approve overtime in our labor.

The scripture for today shows us how Jesus healed a woman who working through an “out-of-shape” situation for over a decade. The synagogue leader had an issue with Jesus because he healed her on a sabbath (they believed in not working on the sabbath). However, the breakthrough that we witness is how Jesus refuses to allow us to labor or suffer a single moment beyond our allotted time. He’s a boss who will not approve overtime because our time is up. Be encouraged to know that any hard labor that you’re going through has a predetermined time to “clock out.” Your time will not exceed what the Lord has not approved.

Prayer Focus: God help me to stay secure in your divine timing for my life. Allow me to stay faithful that every challenge in life has a divine deadline.

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Day

20

“There is a Reason”

READ – John 9: 1 – 12

I remember in Middle School being very excited about joining the outdoor track team. To my surprise, I was ready to quit after the 3rd day because we didn't do any running for the first few practices; we spent the entire practice doing sit-ups and other abdominal exercises. On day 3 I approached the coach and asked, “why are we doing sit-ups for the entire practice?” The coach responded, “We're doing sit-ups now because running is 70% core strength and 30% leg strength. If you have a weak core, you won't last long on the track.” I never complained again about the work I was doing because I understood the reason for it all. Knowing the reason gave me incentive to continue with the work.

Knowing the reason for why we encounter different experiences in life is a breakthrough from God. Without it, we question every move that God makes at the risk of our faith taking a hit. Our study scripture for today showed us how Jesus gave the reason for the man's blindness. It was customary to believe that a parent is at fault if a child is born with defect. The disciples asked Jesus for the reason why this man was born blind because they believed one parent had sinned. Jesus said the reason is so God can be revealed to him, in him, and through him when he's healed from the condition. Be encouraged. If you feel as though you are going through something that is not your fault; consider that the reason is because God's glory will be revealed to you, in you, and through you. Keep this knowledge in your core so you can run your race.

Prayer Focus: God, give me the tenacity to endure hardship and circumstances while being encouraged by the reason for it all. You will get the glory from it all.

Friday, March 28, 2025

Day

21

“Redirecting the Ravens”

READ – 1 Kings 17: 2 – 6

Elijah was one of the most faithful prophets who ever served the Lord. His faithfulness often placed him in precarious and problematic situations. Our study scripture highlights how he had to retreat to the refuge of the Kerith Ravine to escape the threats on his life. And while he was camped out at the ravine he was fed by ravens. This feat is a mind-blowing breakthrough on behalf of Elijah.

By all accounts, ravens are ravenous birds (hence the name) due to their stingy nature. They are known to scavenge the landscape to eat whatever they can find for themselves. Sharing food is not on their radar. They have an aggressive temperament in comparison to a messenger bird. They tend to only look out for themselves. And yet, God rewires their nature for the sake of his prophet. He orchestrates the stingiest creature to bring him food daily. Our Lord rewired the ravens for Elijah's favor and His glory.

Likewise, there are times where God will rewire the situation surrounding you for your favor and His glory. You may have situations where no one and nothing is cooperating with your needs, yet God will orchestrate cooperation around you for your benefit. God doesn't need your input to make it happen, he just needs your cooperation too. As you submit to His will, you position yourself to see who...or what else has submitted also. Don't ever forget that every force opposing you must submit to God's authority. Just because things don't want to work with you, they must work with Him. And God will rewire some things (or people) if He has to.

Prayer Focus: Lord, give me the patience to see your possibilities in all things. Redirect, Redefine, and Renew as you see fit.

Saturday, March 29, 2025

Day

22

“Limitless Lord”

READ – Matthew 8: 5 – 13

The Centurion of this story showed us what it looks like to take God out-of-the-box. He approached Jesus with a dire need in his life, his servant was suffering unbearably. There’s no mistake that Jesus is a miracle-worker, so he asks the Lord for his healing help. Jesus asks whether he should make a house-call to help, and the centurion responds with a limitless answer. He articulates how all Jesus needs to do is say the word and it shall come to pass. He reiterated what he believed about the Lord; he believed that Jesus has unlimited power.

That type of wisdom is the major breakthrough of this story, among other miracles of this text. He knows that Jesus can do anything and everything in any way. We should glean from this type of faith. There are times where we’ll miss our blessing because we have God’s methods of deliverance trapped in a box. Our shortsighted faith is only satisfied if God works in the ways that we imagine. If this is our mindset, we’ll rob ourselves of the many ways that God can move in our lives. God’s unlimited power positions us to see God work through unlimited means. If we are open, we can see how truly amazing God is. We can see how truly limitless our Lord is.

Prayer Focus: Lord, give me the confidence to take the mental and spiritual limits off your power so your glory can truly be revealed in my life.