

MESSAGE OUTLINE

AGAIN AND AGAIN: REPENT AND BELIEVE

Mark 1:9–15 (NIV)

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." ¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³ and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. ¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

1. _____ from *Repent*

Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;
according to your love remember me, for you, Lord, are good.
Psalms 25:7

2. _____ to *...and believe the good news!*

Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth
and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day
long. **Psalms 25:4–5 (NIV)**

3. The _____ and prayers of lament. *He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him*

For Jesus said to let Him restore the brokenness of our family,
For restoration redeemed the broken soul. —**Eirene by Rachel, *Fury and Grace: 40 Days of Paintings and Poetry from Prison***

My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long? **Psalms 6:3 (NIV)**

- We will turn to God with confident praise. We trust you...
- We will open our hearts to God with honesty. We cry to you...
- We will ask God to intervene. We seek you...
- We will lift our voices with praise and worship. While we wait, we are in awe of you...

Jesus redeems the 40 years in the wilderness of wandering, the 40 days of flood to cleanse the world of sin. Lent is 40 days of wilderness to identify with brokenness and turn our lament into praise and trust of God and empathy, compassion and justice with one another.

Again & Again we are reminded of the journey Jesus makes to the cross. We are reminded again and again of the suffering and brokenness of the world that Jesus came to redeem and rescue. We are reminded again and again of the impact of our own sin and the sin of others has in the world that results in broken hearts, broken communities, broken families, broken systems. So, Lent is a time for us to identify with that brokenness and bring before God our prayers of praise and prayers of lament. Praise for God's faithfulness for us in the cross. Lament for the waiting, the impact of sin, the grief, loss, disappointment; cries from the heart to a God who loves us and does not turn his face from us, even while our prayers are not yet answered. But God is near. God is listening. We can pour out our hearts to God and turn our lament into trust and praise. We can pour out our hearts to one another and respond with empathy and mercy, compassion and justice. In our time together during lent, we will engage the Psalms, and allow the Psalms to help us cry out to God, share the circumstances and emotions of our lament, and declare our praise to God, because God is faithful, trustworthy, loving, and compassionate on all God has made. And we will walk with the disciples to the cross in the gospel stories, remembering the sacrifice, humility and surrender of following Jesus. Join us this Lent as again and again, we bring all of who we are to God and trust that God will meet us, time and again, along the way.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS WEEK OF FEB. 21, 2021 AGAIN AND AGAIN: REPENT AND BELIEVE

CONNECT

- What is something you learned as a child by doing it again and again?
- Community Serve Day: Share any ideas to encourage the group in places we can serve.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE – Prayer of Lament

In this season of Lent, we will offer Prayers of Lament as a way to empty ourselves of ourselves: our pride, our sin, sorrows, frailty, anger or grief and open ourselves to receiving all that God desires for us and our world. This simple 4-step model will be our guide as we reflect on the weekly Psalm. Our desire is to deepen our understanding of lament as we walk with Jesus to the cross. Review the instructions before you begin.

Prepare our hearts: Read Psalm 25:1-10, 16-22 aloud twice, using two different versions of the Bible. Listen and write down any words that stand out to you.

Individual Reflection: Spend time in silence responding to the prompts. We will turn to God with confident praise. We put our trust in God's character revealed in scripture and God's faithfulness to us in the past. Our confidence in the goodness of God leads us to trust God with the present and future.

Reflect: I trust you God because I have seen your faithfulness in...

Silently Pray: Lord, help us now to honestly open ourselves to you.

We will open our hearts to God with honesty. We share ourselves with God freely without fear or shame by naming all our emotions, fears, complaints, sadness or anger that arise within us because of the impact of a broken world and our own broken lives.

Reflect: I cry out to you for...

Silently Pray: Lord, help us empathize with those who are suffering and need your intervention.

We will ask God to intervene. Because our hearts break for all that is not right, we will lay our requests before God. Boldly we will seek God's justice, truth, and mercy to come on earth as it is in heaven.

Reflect: Please Lord, we seek you to...

Silently Pray: Lord, we worship you and trust you in all things, your glory is all we desire.

We will lift our voices in praise and worship. We will stand in awe, overwhelmed with the greatness of who God is as sovereign and who we are as his beloved children. We will welcome his plans, receive his love, and offer our praises again and again, even before our requests are granted.

Reflect: While we wait, we are in awe of your ...

Silently Pray: Lord, send us out to re-engage the world with our confidence and trust in you.

Group Sharing: How do you feel about expressing yourself to God through lament? How might this exercise help you enter into a deeper experience of the suffering and sacrifice of Jesus during Lent?

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

- Read Mark 1:9-15 aloud. What stands out to you personally?
- How would you describe what it means to repent? When did it become more than just a religious word to you?
- When did you first believe in God's love for you? How do you experience his love for you today?
- How does Jesus' baptism experience prepare him for the wilderness? What purpose did the desert experience serve in his life and ministry? How does this help you in your desert experiences and the temptations you find there?
- Read the closing paragraph in the outline, Again and Again. What connects with your soul? After the spiritual practice of writing a Lament, what breaks your heart within yourself, within your community, within your family or within our culture.

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

Pray for one another: How can we pray for you?

Benediction: (Psalm 25:1, 4-5, 21)

"To you, O Lord, I lift my soul, in you I trust, O my God... Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long... may integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you." Amen!

DAILY PRACTICE: Continue to spend time with God daily in Solitude, Scripture, and Prayer. See the new Lenten Reading Plan & Playlist online. Spend time in lament during your time alone with God.