

Shift + Share & Sacrifice

Allen Temple Baptist Church

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Week 5 Readings / March 31st-April 6th

March 31st	John 4:43-54
April 1st	John 5:1-18
April 2nd	John 5:19-29
April 3rd	John 5:30-47
April 4th	John 7:1-2,10,25-30
April 5th	John 7:37-52
Bonus Reading April 6th	John 12:1-8

Journeying in the Gospel of John

Over the next two weeks, our daily devotional readings will take us through the Gospel of John.

Unlike the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—John offers a distinct and deeply personal account of Jesus’ life and ministry. In fact, over 90% of its content is unique to this Gospel.

As you explore Jesus’ story through John’s eyes, may these readings encourage you, surprise you, and challenge you in meaningful ways along your Lenten journey.

And don’t forget to take time to reflect—and write down any insights the Holy Spirit reveals along the way.



What is Lent?

The Lenten season, from Ash Wednesday to Resurrection Sunday, is a time for reflection on God's great love for us and God's great call on us to faithful and liberating discipleship. It is often characterized by three main components:

- Confession & Repentance - Lent offers an opportunity for self-examination, allowing us to identify areas of our lives that need transformation.
- Fasting & Prayer - Fasting is a biblical practice that helps us grow in discipline, resist temptation, and become more attuned to God's voice (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9,18; 1 Kings 19:8; Matthew 4:2).
- Charity & Almsgiving - Lent is not only about personal sacrifice but also about serving others. During this time, participants often make an intentional practice of generosity through acts of kindness, charity, and service.



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Prayerfully consider these ways to embrace the spirit of the Lenten Season.

SHIFT

Carve out additional time in your schedule to shift your focus more intentionally on Jesus through reading in the Gospels and prayer + reflection time. If you already have a regular prayer time, consider adding another time of prayer to the day OR lengthening the time you spend praying and seeking God's face.

SHARE

ATBC offers several opportunities to practice charity and almsgiving, including volunteer opportunities during Food Distribution, For Sisters Only, the Homeless Ministry, Face Mask Crew, and donating to the Benevolence Ministry or the Food Box. Visit allen-temple.org for more information on Ministries you can support during this season.

SACRIFICE

Fasting during Lent can take many forms. While some choose to give up food or drink, others may abstain from distractions or habits that hinder their spiritual growth.

Here are some ideas:

- Sweets and desserts
- Social media
- Television and entertainment
- Caffeine or coffee
- Meat
- Negative speech, gossip, and complaining
- Alcohol
- Shopping or impulse buying
- Excessive use of technology

During this critical time in our nation, many organizations are advocating for an economic fast / blackout of specific retailers. Consider participating in one of those initiatives as part of your Lenten Season fast.



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Why 40 Days?

The 40-day period of Lent is commemorative of Jesus' 40 days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11).

The number 40 also carries additional biblical significance, notably in:

- Moses' 40 days on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28).
- Elijah's 40-day journey to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8).
- The 40 days of rain during the Great Flood (Genesis 7:12).
- The Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the desert (Numbers 14:33).



Stay Plugged In

Take advantage of corporate times of worship, study, and prayer to support your Lenten Journey including:

- Noon Day Bible Study with Pastor Jackie
- Theological Thursdays
- Sunday Morning Worship
- Sunday School or Sunday School Live
- Wednesday Evening Prayer Call

Check your Allen Temple Email for dates, times, and ways to connect.



Partner Up

Everything is better with friends!
Enhance your Lenten journey by doing it with a buddy.

Use daily phone calls, a group chat, or Zoom to stay in touch and share how God is meeting you during your journey.