

Lent – Week 2

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Welcome to the second week of Lent. Whether this is your first time observing Lent or your fiftieth, each season brings different experiences and revelations. Before we reflect on the past week, let's first look at what Lent is and why we are observing it.

Lent commemorates the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan.

Matthew 4:1-2

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

What should our posture be during this season? While we should have a repentant, humble, and gracious posture at all times toward our Lord, the reality is that we oftentimes let the world in and consume us to the point that our posture with the Lord is more like a drive-through restaurant. When we have a few spare minutes, we swing by and throw a few prayers to the Lord and then move on with our day. The Lenten season is a time for us to be more intentional with our posture toward the Lord. I often think, "I can do anything for 40 days." The first time I observed Lent, I went in with that attitude. What I found at the end of the 40 days is that the Lord took that time to change the behavior I fasted from. It was almost as if He said, "You give me 40 days, and I will take care of the rest." I did not know what to expect when I started the journey that year, but I knew that I needed to change my posture.

How did your first week go this year? Do you feel any different? It is completely OK to say, "no". I heard a sermon from Fr. Mike Schmitz this morning about us having expectations as we begin something new. "We need to be weary with great expectations as they can be a killer of joy and a thief of peace." I encourage you to enter Lent with your only expectation being to spend more time with the Lord. We need to be careful not to put God in a box, in that setting our own expectations might close the door of our mind to things He has planned to reveal to us during this time.

What did you experience this week? While there might not have been any major revelations during your time this week, you likely spent more time with the Lord than in a typical week. You showed up and He will honor that. Is there anything you were expecting or hoping to experience in the past week? Change does not happen overnight. While we did not give up something for Lent in order to bring a change in our life, it is likely that some sort of change will occur through our intentionality this season.

The first year my family observed Lent, we gave up watching TV during dinner. What came from that intentionality was nothing we would have imagined or expected. It was years ago that we gave up something that had been an integral part of our habits and, by the grace of God, we still don't watch TV during dinner. What we planned for a season; the Lord turned into a life-long change in our family.

Challenge

As we enter the second week of Lent, I encourage you to "keep on keeping on". The first week or two seem to be the hardest as we can feel yearnings for what we are abstaining from. I pray that our yearning for the Lord is greater than that of non-eternal importance.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for the past week of turning my attention more towards You. Thank you for revealing things to me that I was not aware of. Please bless this week as one where my yearning is more for you and less for those things that do not have eternal significance. In Jesus' name, Amen.