

Me.” As we all know Eve took the bait and fell for every one of the twists satan spun relative to what God had spoken to Adam and Eve. Thankfully Jesus didn’t. Instead, He spent time alone being filled-up with the Holy Spirit. I don’t know what that exactly entailed, but I imagine Him having a great time of prayer and focusing on all the Promises that were made about Him for us that were about to be fulfilled. Jesus defeated every single one the satan’s tests with the Word, the very Word that was spoken by Him, and about Him. The very same Word we still have at our disposal today. What a gift we’ve been given to be able to come and sit at our Lord’s feet every day to hear from Him, learn from Him, and grow in Him. Thank Him in your prayer time for the gift of His Word to you.

Friday – Intentional Time In God’s Word

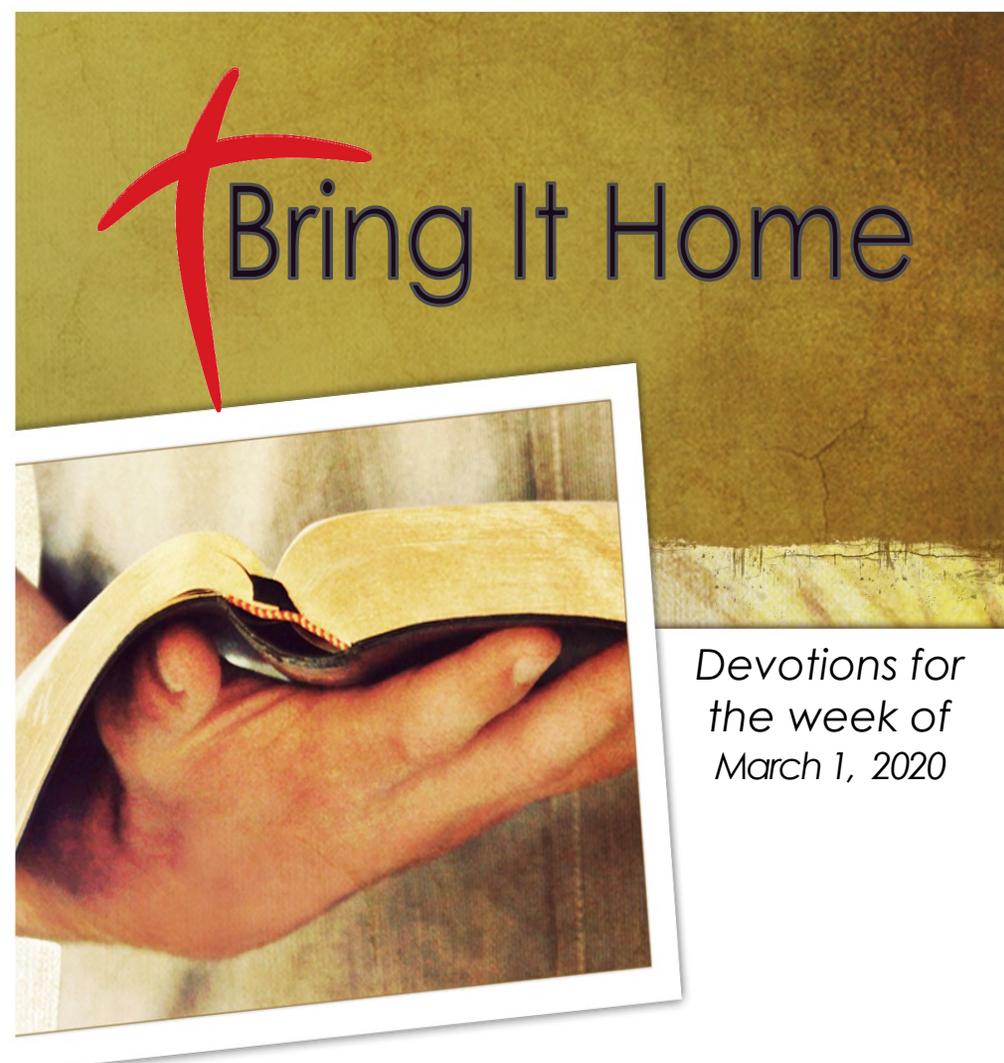
For today please read 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 16-17. In these verses, St. Paul tells Timothy that though there will be terrible times when “people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, and unforgiving...” that he (Timothy) knows all about the Holy Scriptures and He can fully get equipped for every good work. In our Gospel reading for this week (Matthew 4:1-11) Jesus used the Word, His Word, His words to handle all of satan’s testings. We can, too, when we intentionally spend time reading the Word. God’s Word is “alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to diving soul and spirit, joints and marrow, it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12) These are promises for you and me, too. When we dig into God’s Word, when we spend time with Him, we can’t help but be transformed. I encourage you to write down these Scripture verses that we read today and carry them with you. I also encourage you to write down any other favorite Scripture verses you have and carry them around with you so that you can “chew” on God’s Word anytime of the day.

Saturday – Preparing Your Heart for Sunday Worship

For today I encourage you to spend your devotion time listening to, “Just As I Am” – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxA0TFe3-Uo> – or singing a few verses of this great song. 1) Just as I am without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me, And that Thou bidst me come to Thee, O Lamb, of God I come, I come. 2) Just as I am, and waiting not, to rid my soul of one dark blot, to Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I Come! 3) Just as I am, though tossed about, With many a conflict, many a doubt, With fears within, and foes without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come. 4) Just as I am Thou wilt receive, Wilt welcome pardon, cleanse relieve, Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God I come, I come.

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This week’s *Bring it Home* devotions were written by Rhonda Frerichs



What Now?

Prayerfully consider how you might put to use the spiritual disciplines of fasting, prayer, and/or being in God’s Word throughout this season of Lent to strengthen you and your faith in Jesus.

Monday – Dying to Live Requires Preparation

As Pastor Glen mentioned on Sunday, for our Lenten series, “Dying to Live,” we will be focusing on Spiritual Disciplines. Spiritual discipline is a passion of mine. I don’t claim to be any more disciplined than the next person, but the more I hear about how crazy our world is becoming the more I see a deep need to cling to Jesus. I desire to represent Him well and I’m sure you do, too. This season of Lent is the perfect opportunity to really focus on our relationship with Jesus. We began the season with Ash Wednesday, a day where we are reminded that we are the created, and not the Creator. So today let’s look at our Creator and learn from Him. Please read Matthew 4:1-11. As you read what stood out to you? For me it was a realization that Jesus took 40 days to prepare Himself for what was awaiting Him. A lot of the time the stories in the Bible seem so familiar that I kind of read them with a yada-yada attitude of, “Let’s get to the good stuff.” But this **IS** the good stuff. Each and every word we are to digest. Did you hear or catch that the Holy Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness to be tempted? Read just verse 1 and 2 again and ponder what Jesus did during this preparatory time – what do you think was happening during those days in the wilderness? As you think, jot down what comes to mind and chew on this throughout your day. Throughout this week we will focus on different disciplines to help us “Kill the Old Man” (kill the old Adam in us). As we close our devotion time today, pray Psalm 8 as David prayed. And thank God that He is mindful of us human beings that He cares for us.

Tuesday – Being Intentional – Where and When

Read Matthew 4:1-2 again. As you read, use your imagination and ponder 40 days of solitude out in the middle of nowhere. What came to your mind as you pondered? We know from Luke’s Gospel that this time was not pure Trinitarian time. Jesus was being tested during this time. But Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit as we read from Matthew 3 that He was baptized by his cousin John and just had our heavenly Father confirm Him as His only begotten Son. I can’t help but think that some of that time was filled with sweet communion with the Father and some sacred space. Have you been in the “wilderness”? The “wilderness” isn’t always a pleasant place to be, but God can use our wilderness times for our good. Do you have a sacred space where you can just sit in the Presence of your Maker? On most days this sounds so sweet and inviting, being bathed in that eternal love that exists among the Triune God. But can we actually make this a priority? Most certainly! If you are a married couple, or if you have children, then help one another create sacred space for each other. I’m not taking about time to go get a massage or your nails done. I’m

talking about a physical space in your home, maybe a closet or attic or the old shed in the backyard (not a He-shed or She-shed, but a Thee-shed). Turn that into someplace where you can each take time away from family and spouse for time just with Jesus. The payoff will be amazing. For married couples I would even encourage you to take couple time together to focus on the direction God wants your family to grow in. Jesus took alone time with the Father quite often. So what can we learn from our Creator? Preparing for all of the tempters shenanigans requires intentionally setting aside time and a space to practice being in God’s loving Presence where nothing else can distract you.

Wednesday – The Purpose of Fasting

Yesterday we pondered the “Where and When” of Jesus’ preparation time. Today we will focus on fasting. The season of Lent has often been a time when the church encourages parishioners to take a fast. Early church fathers like St. Ignatius of Loyola or St. John of the Cross may have actually practiced going without food for forty days. I don’t know about you but I can distract myself from hunger for a meal or two simply by staying busy, but what about one whole day, or two or ten or forty?! This is what Jesus did, so what’s going on here? Let’s look at Philippians 2:1-11. For forty days Jesus emptied Himself because He was The One Obedient Man we needed to “kill the Old Man” in each of us. One definition I found for fasting from Adele Calhoun’s, “Spiritual Disciplines Handbook,” defines fasting as, “the self-denial of normal necessities in order to intentionally attend to God in prayer. Bringing attachments and cravings to the surface opens a place for prayer. This physical awareness of emptiness is the reminder to turn to Jesus who alone can satisfy.” I want to encourage you this Lenten season to try a one day fast. Plan for it, create space in your life so that you won’t just fill the emptiness with business, but with Jesus. If you need any ideas for fasting please contact me, Rhonda at rfrerichs@ImmanuelLoveland.org and I would be happy to share some ideas and encouragement.

Thursday – Three Temptations

Today I would like you to read Matthew 4:1-11 and Genesis 3:1-7. Read them through again. What stood out to you? Did you notice some similarities? What’s the first thing satan uses to tempt Eve and Jesus? It’s a question about what our heart desires – the temptation to distrust in the providence of God. What’s the second thing satan brings into question? Will God really let you die? Is God really trustworthy? And lastly, satan brings into question whether God is good and worthy of worship or if He is holding us back. The first commandment is “You shall have no other gods before