

40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent | Meditation Guideline:

1. **Stop/Pause/Be Still:** Create space in your mind, time, and body to desire God's presence and listen to His voice.
2. **Meditate on the theme and scriptures for each day during the Lenten season.** Read the scriptures, reflect on them repeatedly, and meditate on what God is revealing to you through His Word.
3. Each day comes with an action suggestion. Follow it and put it into practice. May you encounter and experience God each day.
4. **Spiritual growth is not a solitary journey.** As we pursue the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, we can share our intimate fellowship with Him with others. In this way, we can encourage one another. You are invited to share your experiences and reflections with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the Lenten season.

3.23.2025. Third Sunday of Lent

Third Sunday of Lent | Reading : Mark 8:27-33

*27 Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, 'Who do people say I am?'
28 They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.'
29 'But what about you?' he asked. 'Who do you say I am?'
Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah.'
30 Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.
31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. 32 He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. 'Get behind me, Satan!' he said. 'You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.'*"



Mark 8:29, "But who do you say that I am?"

Midway through Mark's Gospel, the mood suddenly changes. During the first eight chapters, we can feel the energy, excitement, and actions. Jesus moves from village to village proclaiming the availability of another

(Reference : 40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent, by Trevor Hudson)

40 Days of Fasting & Prayer Guide (4th Week 3/23 ~ 3/29)

kind of life, liberating those enslaved by evil, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and stilling storms and seas. Jesus bears the fruit of a successful ministry. Then comes an abrupt shift in atmosphere. As Eugene Peterson observes, the last eight chapters are dominated by death talk rather than talk about life.

This turning point revolves around a direct question put by Jesus to his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Few questions are more important. Is Jesus a myth created by the imaginings of the Gospel writers—some sort of superhero figure able to swoop down into our lives and sort everything out? Is Jesus a great human teacher able to perform miracles? Our response will shape our lives more than our answers to any other question with which we are faced.

When Jesus initially asks this question, Peter blurts out, "You are the Messiah." This response, at this stage of Mark's Gospel, is not a declaration that Jesus is divine or the second part of the Trinity or God. This fuller understanding of Jesus will come later. Here Peter is declaring that Jesus is indeed the One for whom his people have waited so long, the true Servant-King who will usher in God's reign both for Israel and the world. What Peter does not know is that his declaration will turn his life upside down from that time on.

Reflection

Now it is our moment to wrestle with this question. Who do we say Jesus is? Are we willing, with Peter, to affirm that he is the One for whom our hearts also yearn? Will we also acknowledge him to be the One who alone can heal and empower the human condition? And will we dare to allow him to change our understanding of what it means to follow him today? We can be very sure that if we do call him the Christ and embrace his way of death and resurrection for our lives, it will turn our lives, it will turn our lives upside down too.

Prayer

Father God, help me to set aside my busy schedule and to prioritize my time with you on a daily basis so that I can get to know you more. May my life as a Christ-follower worths your calling.

Day 17 : 3.24.2025.

Theme : TREASURE | Reading : Matthew 6:21

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Each one of us has treasures. As young children, our treasures might have been a special toy, stuffed animal, or blanket. As adults, we continue to have treasures. But now they might be a bank account, a car, or a house.

Jesus teaches that we can store treasures either on earth or in heaven. Earth’s treasures pass away. On earth, “moth and rust consume” and “thieves break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19). Or we would say earth is where stock markets crash, computer files corrupt, and accidents damage.

Heaven’s treasures, on the other hand, are eternal. We invest in heavenly treasures when we invest in God’s work in the lives of others and in the care of all created things.

Daily Practice

As a sign of your intention to invest in treasures of heaven, make today a no-shopping day. Instead, spend the time that you would have spent in shops doing something special for someone else. Be thoughtful and intentional about serving others.

Prayer

Dear Father Lord, I know that sometimes or maybe a lot of times we hold on something materialistic which would decay and vanish in a moment. I pray that I can hold on to something eternal, something that would bring lasting joy and blessings to me and to the people around me.

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Day 18 : 3.25.2025.

Theme : LISTEN | Reading : James 1:19

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.”

The German theologian and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, “Many people are looking for an ear that will listen. They do not find it among Christians, because these Christians are talking when they should be listening.”

Listening lies at the heart of life with God. But in order to listen to God, we need to learn how to listen to the person next to us. After all, how can we listen to God, whom we cannot see, if we cannot listen to the person we can see?

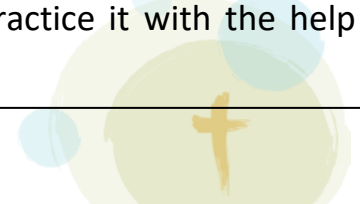
Lent can be a time when we embark on a spiritual adventure in learning to listen. We can begin this exercise with those closest to us—our colleagues at work, family members, or friends. Listening will become a spiritual practice, an everyday habit, a way of life .

Daily Practice

Ask God today for the gift of ears. Throughout the day remember James’ invitation to be quick to listen and slow to speak. Make a conscious effort in every conversation to listen more than you usually do.

Prayer

Father God, please let this verse *“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry”* becomes my daily reminder so that I can practice it with the help from the Holy Spirit.



Day 19 : 3.26.2025.

Theme : POOR | Reading : Luke 4:18

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free.”

The word **poor** appears many times in the Bible. Throughout the Old Testament, the poor have a special place in God’s heart. In the Psalms, God rescues the poor, defends the poor, and hears their cry. Not surprisingly, Jesus places sharing the good news with the poor at the top of his priorities for ministry.

The devastating suffering of poverty causes God to weep. Sharing God’s grief means we act in whatever ways we can to bridge the gap between the rich and poor. In this way, we can embody Jesus’ good news for the poor.

Lent challenges us to examine how we relate to those who are impoverished. We can ask ourselves, ***Who do I know personally who suffers from poverty?, What can I learn from the poor?, and How is God calling me to help in efforts aimed at alleviating poverty?*** Questions like these lead us into a greater faithfulness to God whose heart is always turned toward the poor.

Daily Practice

As a practical expression of your desire to share God’s heart for the poor, make a small donation today to a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that works alongside the economically poor.

Prayer

Heavenly Father! Help me to see my own poverty and the poverty of others. Poverty can be spiritual or material lack. Help me to turn to you for You are the Lord who provides and helps!

(Reference : *40 Words for 40 Days: Pauses for Lent*, by Trevor Hudson)

Day 20: 3.27.2025.

Theme : FORGIVEN | Reading : Luke 5:20

“When Jesus saw their faith, he said, ‘Friend, your sins are forgiven.’ ”

Our most grievous sins occur when we fail to love. We let people down; we hurt others; we offend; we are unresponsive to the needs of others. In all these failures—and in countless others—we behave in unloving ways that break God’s heart. When we have sinned, we can ask God for forgiveness.

The good news is that God is more eager to forgive us than we will ever know. God is always there to embrace us, to receive us home again, and to let us start afresh. We see this clearly in the ways Jesus constantly offers forgiveness to those around him who have failed.

One reason we struggle to forgive others is that we do not really believe that we are forgiven people. If we could fully accept the truth that we are forgiven people and we don’t have to live a shame and guilt, we would know that freedom to forgive. As a forgiven people, we possess the power of forgiveness.

Daily Practice

Take time today to kneel in God’s presence. Share your failures as honestly as you can with God. Hear the words of Jesus: “Friend, your sins are forgiven.” Receive this forgiveness and step into the new life God offers. If you need to make amends with someone, commit yourself to doing so as soon as possible.

Prayer

Father Lord, it is not easy to admit our sin and fault before you. Help me to have the courage to confess before you so that I can seek forgiveness from the others as well.

Day 21 : 3.28.2025.

Theme : PEACE | Reading : John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

We experience two different kinds of peace. One kind is the peace the world gives. This refers to those fleeting feelings of contentment when everything in life is going well. We feel a pleasurable sense of well-being. There is nothing wrong with this type of peace, but we all know that it can pass very quickly.

The other kind of peace is the one God offers to us. It is a lasting peace that cannot be taken away from us. It does not depend on our lives running smoothly. God’s peace provides an inner assurance that, ultimately, all will be well. This peace occurs in the presence—not the absence—not upheaval and turmoil.

We observe the most obvious example of God’s peace in the life of Jesus. For most of Jesus’ life, the odds are stacked against him. Tested, tried, and taunted, Jesus maintains an inner serenity through it all. He knows instinctively that because he trusts God completely, all will be well—even when things aren’t in the moment. This is the peace that God offers to us.

Daily Practice

Find a quiet place today and hear Christ speak these words into your life in spite of your circumstances: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.” Receive these peace so that you can embody it for those around you.

Prayer

Dear Lord, may your peace infuse into my life in every life circumstance. May your promise continue to speak to me.

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Day 22 : 3.29.2025.

Theme : REST | Reading : Matthew 11:28

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Most of us know what it means to feel fatigues. Fatigue ambushes us when we work too hard, when we get up too early and go to bed too late, when we try balance too many demands, or when relationships cause conflict and pain. It comes when we live beyond our physical, emotional, and spiritual means.

In the midst of our daily slog, Jesus wants to gift us with rest. Jesus knows the importance God places on rest. After all, not only did God model rest in the creation story but God also demands we rest too.

Rest has many different ingredients. Besides stopping work and learning to relax, it also includes getting adequate sleep. When we do this, we find that we live more joyful, creative, and fruitful lives. When we don’t, fatigue takes over and brings failure in many areas of our tired lives.

Daily Practice

Memorize today’s verse and repeat it often as you go about your daily work. Go to sleep at a reasonable time tonight and receive your night’s rest as a gift from God.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to examine how I allocate my time every day to see if I am spending it on unnecessary and time-wasting matters. Help me to put rest and time to be close to you as the highest priority, so that I can have enough time to recover physically and spiritually every day!

