



THE LIVING  
WORD  
OF  
LENT

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

March 12 - March 18

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



In the Gospel of John, chapter 8 tells us that Jesus had just slipped through an angry crowd. Stones were in their hands. He had said, “Before Abraham was, I AM,” and they could not bear it. The One who could not be seen passed through them unseen.

And then, in chapter 9, “As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth” (v. 1). There is something revealing here: A Jesus who cannot be seen, seeing someone no one else sees. This is what God is like.

The blind man didn’t cry out or confess faith. He was begging for coins, not a miracle. Before he speaks, Jesus is already moving toward him.

*Long before you see God, God sees you.*

We often imagine God’s sight as exposure—a spotlight catching what we hoped would stay hidden. But God’s vision is not surveillance. It is recognition. It is the steady gaze that sees your humanity when others only see your condition.

The disciples ask, “Who sinned?” (v. 2). They see a problem. Jesus sees a person.

How often do we do the same? When others suffer, we search for causes. When we suffer, we search for blame. But Jesus says, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned” (v. 3). In other words: You’re asking the wrong question.

Blindness happens. Loss happens. Wounds happen. God does not break something so he can fix it. He enters what has happened and reveals his glory there.

The man is healed—yet confusion follows. His parents withdraw. The leaders argue. And the man says simply, “I don’t know. All I know is I was blind, and now I see” (v. 25). ***That is honest faith.***

Faith is not spin. It is the humble confession: I do not understand—but I trust that God is at work.

Later, when the man is cast out, Jesus seeks him again. This matters. We are sinners, yes—but we are also wounded people. God seeks us not only to forgive what we have done, but to heal what has been done to us. ***When Jesus reveals himself, the man worships.***

Then comes the paradox: “I came so that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind” (v. 39).

***God opens our eyes to his kingdom and closes them to lies.***

He does not see you as your worst moment. He does not rehearse the accusations in your mind. He sees his image in you. He speaks his word over you.

*Perhaps our deepest fear is that we are beyond repair.* But God knows you more truthfully—and more gently—than you know yourself.

You are not finally who you say you are. You are not finally who they say you are. *You are who he says you are.* To live knowing that—to live known—is peace. Not because nothing hard happens. But because, in what happens, you are seen.

## FOR reflection



***Where do you most need to trust that God sees you—not as a problem to solve, but as a person to love?***

***What false story about yourself might God be refusing to tell—and are you willing to let him name you differently?***



# SCRIPTURE

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK

<b>Thursday</b>	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:10-21; Ephesians 4:25-32
<b>Friday</b>	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:22-31; Ephesians 5:1-9
<b>Saturday</b>	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:32-34; John 1:1-9
<b>Sunday</b>	Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
<b>Monday</b>	Psalm 146; Isaiah 59:9-19; Acts 9:1-20
<b>Tuesday</b>	Psalm 146; Isaiah 42:14-21; Colossians 1:9-14
<b>Wednesday</b>	Psalm 146; Isaiah 60:17-22; Matthew 9:27-34

### *Why do the daily readings begin on Thursday?*

The daily readings for each week begin on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. The Thursday through Saturday readings prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead. The Monday through Wednesday readings reflect on what was presented on Sunday.

# The Morning Liturgy

## **Opening Scripture**

Jesus said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

*Mark 8:34*

## **Opening Prayer** (based on Psalm 51)

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. *Amen.*

## **Scripture Reading** (read Psalm and Gospel text here)

## **Period of Silence**

## **Confessing Our Faith** (Apostles' Creed)

## **The Lord's Prayer**

## **The Collect** (Fourth Sunday in Lent)

*Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

*Amen.*

## *A Midday Prayer*

Blessed Savior, at this hour you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms. Grant that all the peoples of the earth may look to you and be saved; for your mercies' sake. *Amen.*

## *An Early Evening Prayer*

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

## *A Bedtime Confession and Prayer*

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. *Amen.*



*Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*



