

Lent - A Season to Reconnect With Jesus

The 5th March is Ash Wednesday, and the start of Lent. The season of Lent invites us to reflect on our relationship with Jesus, and take up spiritual practices to help us draw closer to him. I find it is all too easy to neglect the important spiritual disciplines of prayer, reading of Scripture and fasting, amongst other things, and therefore I appreciate the opportunity Lent provides to do a spiritual reset. To consider what it means to know and love Jesus, and to live a more godly life based on his teachings. We should see Lent, not as something burdensome, but a wonderful opportunity to focus on what matters most, our relationship with Jesus.

As we enter Lent, I would like to encourage you to join me, in thinking about two simple things you can do to make the most of this special season - one thing to give up, and one thing to do.

Many Christians use Lent as a time of fasting. Fasting can take many forms, including, but not limited to, food, alcohol or caffeine. For example, you may wish to fast from social media, limit the amount of time you watch TV, or even going on a carbon fast (choosing to walk, cycle or use the bus rather than the car) etc. There are so many things we can choose to fast from, my advice is to decide on one thing that you may like to fast from, rather than trying to do too much. It is important to remember that the primary purpose in fasting, is to recognise that what matters most in our life is Jesus, and our need for him above all else.

Secondly, I would like to encourage you to think about one thing you might take up during Lent. For example, you may wish to make a habit of going for a daily prayer walk, or getting up each morning earlier than normal to spend time in prayer - you might even like to join our zoom prayer meeting every Monday to Friday at 8.30am! You may wish to spend more time reading the Bible, or choose to read a Christian classic., or keeping a prayer journal. You might like to commit to buying Fairtrade goods, spending time each day listening to Christian music or a podcast, volunteering, donating to the food bank, or simply to try and live more simply, again the list of ideas is endless! Whatever you decide to do, the key focus should be on doing something that will help draw you closer to Jesus.

My hope and prayer is that at the end of Lent, we will all have drawn closer to Jesus, and have a deeper understanding and appreciation of his love for us.

Revd Simon Bickersteth