

## An Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent

### Some Questions to Ask Yourself

1. *When I wake up on Resurrection Sunday morning, how will I be different?*
2. From what do I need to repent?
3. Is there one particular sin in my life that repeatedly gets in the way of loving God with my whole heart or loving my neighbor as myself? How do I address that sin over the next 40 days?
4. Is there anyone in my life from whom I need to ask forgiveness or pursue reconciliation?
5. What distractions most commonly interfere with my time in prayer/Scripture?
6. What spiritual discipline do I need to improve upon or want to try?
7. What are some things in my life that I tell myself I need but I don't? What would I like to add to my life, for which Lenten prayer and self-denial are making space?
8. Why am I giving this particular thing up? How does giving it up draw me closer to God and prepare me for Easter?
9. What am I going to tell myself when self-denial gets hard?
10. **Is it necessary/helpful for me to share the nature my fast with others or should I keep it private?**

### Some Ideas to try to Give Up AND Give Back

- Choose to make water your only beverage during Lent. Remember those who do not have access to clean water
- Live on \$2 a day. Or, eat only oatmeal for 40 days. Donate the money you save to a favorite charity. Host a party halfway and invite friends and enemies to talk about poverty. Read, *A Place at the Table: 40 Days of Solidarity with the Poor* by Chris Seay

- Give up eating out for 40 days. Donate the money you save.
- Do a 40-day purge of all your excess stuff and donate the best of it to Goodwill or a local thrift store that benefits the needy in your community.
- Give up Facebook for Lent. Or, commit the next 40 days to getting to know your neighbors better and meeting any needs you perceive.
- Give up your favorite little luxury purchases (chocolate, iTunes, magazines, books, shoes, specialty coffee, electronic gadgets, etc.) and send the money you save to a favorite charity.
- Give up your Saturday mornings for Lent. Volunteer your time.
- Stop using plastic.
- Spend 10 minutes everyday for 40 days in silent meditation.
- Read Scripture everyday.
- Say only kind things. If you can't do that, don't say anything.
- Intentionally bless people you encounter.

John Wesley emphasizes that one may acquire virtues by practicing them. "Thus, visiting the poor sick is not only a sign of virtue but also a means of acquiring virtue."

One becomes hospitable by practicing the hospitality of Christ. How does one become a just steward of one's resources? By practicing self-denial and sharing with the poor. How does one become a humble person? By visiting and conversing with the poor, the sick, and the needy. We exercise our faith and through exercise our faith becomes part of who we are—and often we have no idea how it happened. from *Radical Grace: Justice for the Poor and Marginalized—Charles Wesley's Views for the Twenty-first Century*, by ST Kimbrough Jr.