



**LIFE**  
**IN HIS**  
**NAME**

## ***Life in His Name***

*During the next seven weeks as a church family we are going to be rooting ourselves in the book of John. John is one of the four gospels, or biographies, about Jesus, and it was written by John who was with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry. A central theme of John is what is called the Seven Signs of John – seven miraculous events in the ministry of Jesus. John tells us that they are intentionally placed there when he writes "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31).*

*Life in His name, this is what we want; to experience the full life that he promised to give. Over this season called Lent, we are inviting you to join us on a journey where we are immersing ourselves in the book of John by reading it a chapter a day and preaching through the seven signs on Sundays.*

*We believe that the same Holy Spirit who inspired John to write what he did inspires our reading of John today, and that as we prayerfully encounter the book of John that we will find life in His name.*

## ***A Invitation to Lent***

*One of the central seasons of the Church calendar is the season of Lent. Lent is the time from Ash Wednesday (this year celebrated on February 26) until the Saturday before Easter Sunday (this year on April 11). Lent is one of the most ancient of Christian practices – dating back to at least the early 300’s AD. It is a forty day fast – the Sundays are a break from fasting – that mirror Jesus’ fast in the wilderness after his baptism. Joan Chittister writes that “Lent comes to train us, like spiritual athletes, to keep our eyes, with Jesus, on the road to Jerusalem.” Fasting is a way of diverting ourselves from our desires – both good and bad – and redirecting those desires towards prayer and practicing the presence of Jesus. In Lent “we must be prepared to give up some things if we intend to get things that are even more important,” and what is of utmost importance, Jesus himself.*

*Each week of Lent we are going to invite you into a different fast revolving around a different series of desires. James K.A. Smith writes that “you are what you desire.” The things that we place our desires towards shape who we become, and so with that in mind we want to shift our desires towards Jesus in our ongoing apprenticeship goal to be with him, learning from him how to be like him.*

*How you engage with these fasts is up to you. Some weeks the invitation will be to just fast for a period of time and others it will be for the whole week. On Saturday as the fast ends we invite you to reflect on how going without has allowed you be with Jesus instead — to wonder how life has been different having given up what is less important for what is more.*

## **Reading Scripture**

*There are many ways in which you can approach reading the Scriptures.*

*One way is to read it and then find a verse or phrase in to memorize – this can be so helpful in setting the truth down deep in your heart.*

*Another way would be read through asking the following questions:*

- 1. What does this say about God?*
- 2. What does this say about humanity?*
- 3. What themes or ideas are repeated in this passage?*
- 4. How does what I've read change how I need to live?*

*Another way could be asking the three questions of apprenticeship:*

- 1. How can I be with Jesus based on what I've read?*
- 2. What can I learn from Jesus based on what I've read?*
- 3. What would being like Jesus look like based on what I've read?*

*Another way is to try the ancient practice of Lectio Divina (divine reading) which is a way of prayerfully entering into the passage. You may want to do this through the whole chapter or just select a few verses – try to find a rhythm that works for you. See the following page for a way to do Lectio Divina.*

*We believe that the same Holy Spirit who inspired John to write what he did inspires our reading of John today, and that as we prayerfully encounter the book of John that we will find life in His name.*

## **Lectio Divina**

*Step 1: Silence yourself before God then pray asking for him to be present with you, giving you ears to hear what He has for you today.*

*Step 2: Read the passage - SLOWLY*

*Step 3: Read the Passage again. Try to engage with the passage through your imagination, visualizing the scene in front of you. See what is going on and watch the people in the scene. What does Jesus look like? How do the others react to him? What are the people saying to one another? What emotions fill their words? Is Jesus touching someone?*

*Step 4: Read the passage a third time asking Jesus what he wants to stick out to you*

*Step 5: Have a period of silence focusing on what stuck out to you from the text. What thoughts, images, and feelings come to mind. What do you think Jesus is trying to say to you in this?*

*Step 6: Pray or journal about what sticks out to you, meet with God in what he's saying to you.*

## ***Week One: Fast from Food***

*The invitation of this first week is to give up food. Now we are not recommending that you fast from Wednesday through Saturday, this would not be healthy for your body. Instead what we are inviting you to fast for a part of this week. How that looks is up to you; maybe it's a whole day of meals, maybe it's the same meal for each of the days, maybe it's one meal that week, maybe it's choosing to only eat a rice and bean diet for the week. One fast is not more impressive than another, but instead is an opportunity to allow your hunger pangs to draw you to prayer and remind you of your dependence on the one who provides our daily bread.*

***February 26 - John 1***

***February 27 - John 2***

***February 28 - John 3***

***February 29 - John 4***

***Reflections on the Fast***

## ***Week Two: Fast From Television, Movies, and Video Games***

*The invitation of this second week is to give up television, movies, youtube, and video games. Think of your week and the amount of time that you spend doing this activities. Our entertainment industry can take a lot of our time — and it can provide a lot of good and fun — but what could redeploying this time to being with Jesus, friends, and family do for the week? We invite you to try going a week without these things.*

***March 1 - Sign One: Water into Wine***

***March 2 - John 5***

***March 3 - John 6***

***March 4 - John 7***

***March 5 - John 8***

***March 6 - John 9***

***March 7 - John 10***

***Reflections on the Fast***

## ***Week Three: Fast From Social Networking and Internet***

*The invitation of this third week is to fast from social media and internet surfing. We recognize that some of you need to do these things for work, but what if that was it? What would a week without social media and the internet do to your ability to be present with Christ? What would it do to your levels of contentment? What if you just signed off for the week?*

***March 8 - Sign Two: Healing the Royal Officials Son***

***March 9 - John 11***

***March 10 - John 12***

***March 11 - John 13***

***March 12 - John 14***

***March 13 - John 15 & 16***

***March 14 - John 17***

***Reflections on the Fast***

## ***Week Four: Caffeine, Alcohol, and Sweets***

*The invitation of this fourth week is to fast from caffeine, alcohol, and sweets. These three categories can be some of our strongest desires, some of the habits that we do without thinking about, and something we can build dependency upon. What if a fast from them is an invitation to instead grow dependency on Christ, to give him lordship over these desires.*

***March 15 - Sign Three: Healing the Paralytic***

***March 16 - John 18***

***March 17 - John 19***

***March 18 - John 20***

***March 19 - John 21***

***March 20 - John 1***

***March 21 - John 2***

***Reflections on the Fast***

## ***Week Five: Fast From Radio, Podcasts, and Music***

*The invitation of this fifth week is to fast from radio, podcasts, and music. We have constant noise going on our world, and yet God comes in the still small whisper. What if you were to take a week without constant noise to just let yourself sit in the silence, to be still before God, and to be present to him in the moment? How could your commute look different if you began your day in silence?*

***March 22 - Sign Four: Feeding of the Five Thousand***

***March 23 - John 3***

***March 24 - John 4***

***March 25 - John 5***

***March 26 - John 6***

***March 27 - John 7***

***March 28 - John 8***

***Reflections on the Fast***

## ***Week Six: Fast From Shopping for Non-Essentials***

*The invitation of this sixth week is to fast from shopping for non-essentials. We can take a lot of time shopping, whether in person or online, and this can breed into us a discontentment and longing for more. What would a week without the mall or Amazon or wherever you spend the bulk of your time look like? How could this shift your desires and cause you to lean into contentedness in Christ?*

***March 29 - Sign Five: Walking On Water***

***March 30 - John 9***

***March 31 - John 10***

***April 1 - John 11***

***April 2 - John 12***

***April 3 - John 13***

***April 4 - John 14***

***Reflections on the Fast***

## ***Week Seven: Fast from Sleep***

*The invitation of this seventh week is to fast from sleep. Now we are not recommending that you fast from sleep altogether by any means. Instead the invitation is that this week we find solidarity with Jesus as he's praying in the garden and he asks his disciples to stay awake with him. What would it mean for you to spend an hour in the late evening praying, or perhaps waking early to pray. We are not recommending an all nighter, but instead finding a window to sacrifice sleep for the sake of prayer.*

***April 5 - Sign Six: Healing the Man Born Blind***

***April 6 - John 15 & 16***

***April 7 - John 17***

***April 8 - John 18***

***April 9 - John 19***

***April 10 - John 20***

***April 11 - John 21***

***Easter: Sign Seven: The Raising of Lazarus***

***Reflections on the Fast***



*Reading Guide*

*February 26 - John 1*

*February 27 - John 2*

*February 28 - John 3*

*February 29 - John 4*

*March 1 - Sign One: Water into Wine*

*March 2 - John 5*

*March 3 - John 6*

*March 4 - John 7*

*March 5 - John 8*

*March 6 - John 9*

*March 7 - John 10*

*March 8 - Sign Two: Healing the Royal Officials Son*

*March 9 - John 11*

*March 10 - John 12*

*March 11 - John 13*

*March 12 - John 14*

*March 13 - John 15 & 16*

*March 14 - John 17*

*March 15 - Sign Three: Healing the Paralytic*

*March 16 - John 18*

*March 17 - John 19*

*March 18 - John 20*

*March 19 - John 21*

*March 20 - John 1*

*March 21 - John 2*

*March 22 - Sign Four: Feeding of the Five Thousand*

*March 23 - John 3*

*March 24 - John 4*

*March 25 - John 5*

*March 26 - John 6*

*March 27 - John 7*

*March 28 - John 8*

*March 29 - Sign Five: Walking On Water*

*March 30 - John 9*

*March 31 - John 10*

*April 1 - John 11*

*April 2 - John 12*

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*April 4 - John 14*

*April 5 - Sign Six: Healing the Man Born Blind*

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*Easter: Sign Seven: The Raising of Lazarus*

*Feel free to tear this out and use it as a book mark*



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church.  following Jesus  
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