



LOST

WHERE THE CHURCH WENT WRONG

LENT 2021 SERIES COMPANION



SERIES OVERVIEW

SERMON SCHEDULE*

LENT- The season leading to Easter Sunday

Feb 21 John 13:1-17 Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet

Feb 28 John 14:1-14 The Way, Truth, Life/Disciples Will Do Greater Things

Mar 7 John 15:1-17 Vine and Branches, Command to Love One Another

Mar 14 John 15:18-25 The World Will "Hate" Jesus' Disciples

Mar 21 John 16:1-15 The Holy Spirit

Mar 28 John 17 The High Priestly Prayer

Apr 4 EASTER- John 20

**Sermon topic is subject to adjustment as needed based on local and global events.*

LOST: WHERE THE CHURCH WENT WRONG

By some measures, the American church is more successful than ever. Money. Political influence. Bursting sanctuaries. But in another sense, the church is poorer than it has ever been. What we have gained in political and financial power, we have surrendered in spiritual power. We are lost, and far from Jesus' vision for His Church. This Lent, we'll examine the long-ignored instructions Jesus gave the Church - instructions that could have set us on a much different path if only we had followed them more faithfully. Jesus intended for us to be on a path that leads to humility, dependence upon God, blessing to others, and ultimately to new life. Our hope is that by confessing where we went wrong, Jesus would lead us back to where we always should have been.



SERMON NOTES & CONVERSATION PARTNERS

Use the notes as they are helpful for keeping track of what stands out to you as you engage with the sermons. As the weeks go on, you might begin to see connections and themes emerge as you look back on your notes. Below are some tips for using this section.

Use the **self-reflection** page to consider the lenses you bring as you read and interpret Scripture.

Community is key to examining and transforming our lives, hearts, and minds. If you are not doing this study with a small group, note 1-3 people who you could reach out to periodically to share about what you are noticing from this study.

Trusted Conversation Partners

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Setting Group Expectations

The directions below have been taken from Ruth Haley Barton's Book, Sacred Rhythms. They provide a great framework for setting the posture of how the group makes space for each other and what the expectations are. On the sheet attached, write down any additional expectations/ values/ norms your group would like to highlight, add, or prioritize.

- "Guide the group in making the following basic commitments as they journey together (if needed, encourage them to add any other values or commitments that will increase their sense of willingness to commit themselves to the group):
- We will be faithful engage with the material.
- We will support and pray for one another as we each explore what wholeheartedness looks like in our lives and respond faithfully to God's invitations along the way.
- We will respect each other's personal relationship with God understanding that each person's relationship with God takes place at God's initiative and within his leading and control.
- We will create and maintain a safe environment for questions and wondering. This means we will listen rather than fix and ask questions rather than give answers.
- We will seek to increase our self-awareness and be appropriately self-disclosing respecting our own boundaries and those of others.
- We will pay particular attention to the times and ways in which God is moving in each person's life and seek to affirm evidence of each person's growth and transformation.
- We will honor confidentiality*. What is shared in the group stays in the group!

Remember that the focus is on transformation, not information. Closing your time with prayer that celebrates what God is doing in each person's life and affirms each person's spiritual desire and intent for the week to come is an important way of "gathering up" all that has been shared and entrusting it to God."

**Leaders concerned with harm to self or others (or by others) will need to report this to a Pastor.*

IN OUR GROUP WE WILL....

Together, discuss and then write down those values/ norms/ expectations you are agreeing to as a group for this 8 week series. They can be from the list on the left as well as things your group decides on and AGREES on together. (Ex. being on time... praying for each other... allowing for silence... etc.)



WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE

Pray

Open your time with a word and a moment of silence to become present to God, yourself, and each other. Pray for your time in discussion.

Check In

Use a few minutes at the beginning of your time to follow up on any action items shared from last week.

- For your first meeting, take time for each member to share a little about themselves.
- Following weeks: Was there a next step or application challenge that they took on this past week? What did they learn about themselves and following Jesus?

Set a time for one minute per person. Then go around and share on **one** of the bullet points:

- Your highs and lows for the week.
- Who was a hero to you this week? (who made your week a bit better or was a blessing to you?)
- Where did you notice God in your week?

Sermon Conversation

- Read the related passage for the week. What do you notice about the passage? What is the context it is in?
- What stood out as the main theme?
- What questions did this sermon bring up for you?
- What new insights or perspectives did you gain?
- What might God's invitation to you be out of this sermon? How can you take that prompting from conversation to applied into your life?

Confession

- As you have considered the topic this week is there something you would like to name as a confession or for repentance?
 - Give time for those who would like to share. Or to quietly consider these things before God. Read this responsive confession together. Close in prayer for the group and what is ahead in your week and for knowing Christ's presence.

A Responsive Prayer of Confession by Randall Wilkens, based on 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

Lord, Your word says love is patient and kind. *But we confess the times when we have been impatient and unkind.*

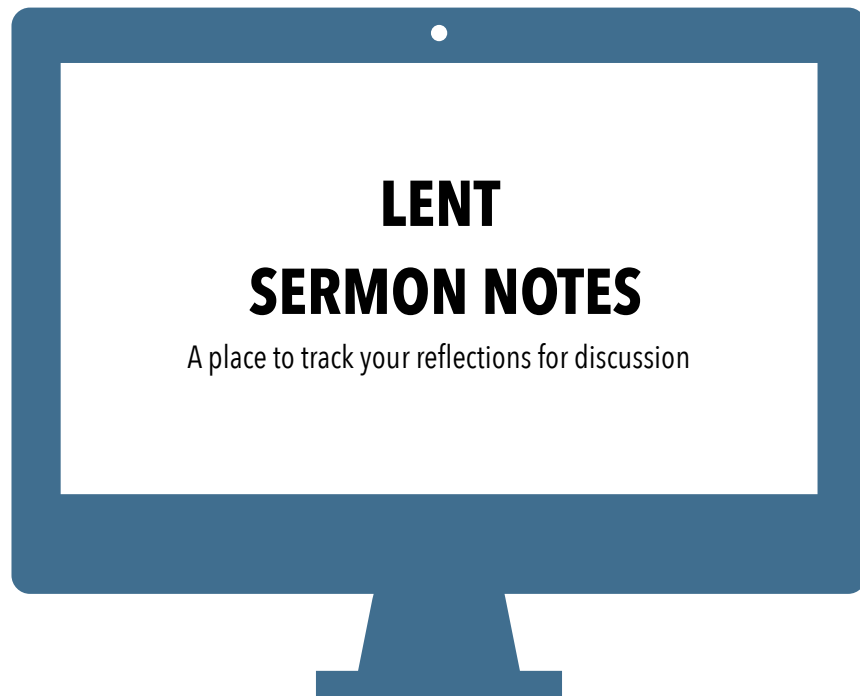
Your word tells us that love does not envy, that it does not boast, and that it is not proud. *But we confess that sometimes we have been envious, and boastful, and proud.*

Your word says that love is not rude, and that it is not self-seeking, *But we confess that in many ways we have been inconsiderate of those around us, thinking only of ourselves.*

Your word tells us that love is not easily angered, and that it keeps no record of wrongs.

But we confess how quickly we fly off the handle, and how carefully we keep score when we have been wronged.

Your word says that love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth, that it always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. *Help us, Lord, not to take pleasure in what is evil, but to always rejoice in the truth of Your love. Protect us with Your love, Lord, and help us to choose the way of trusting You, putting our hope in You, and persevering in Your ways, knowing that love never fails, and that You never fail. Amen.*





What is Lent?

Don't skip this!

"In the season of Lent, we enter into the forty-day fast that Jesus undertook in the wilderness. Through this dedicated period of self-examination, we allow God to further shape us into the image of Jesus. We also align our hearts with the suffering of Jesus as we move ever closer toward Holy Week and the event of the crucifixion. The season begins with Ash Wednesday, in which we receive the imposition of ashes and are reminded we are but dust and to dust we shall return. During this season, we observe chosen forms of fasting, prayer, and service or charity for forty days but break the fast on Sundays, which are considered feast days of celebration throughout the church year."

–Jenn Giles Kemper

Reflections Questions by Jean Giles Kemper

How open am I to this season of penitence, fasting, and prayer?

What role has self-examination played in my spiritual life?

How might I serve others through this time of sacrifice?

The website **SACRED ORDINARY DAYS** has incredible resources, practices, podcasts, and reflections for the season of Lent.



Naming your Context

Don't skip this!

We all bring our stories, experiences, history, culture into how we read scripture. These questions aim to be a brain dump space to name the lenses you bring to the reading and contextualizing of Scripture.

This can also help us be more open to learning from and seeing perspectives from others as they share how Scripture speaks to them.

Scripture continually points to working out who God is and what God's will is within community. By embracing our own stories and the experiences of others, we can work towards greater depth of understanding how God is at work internally, communally, and globally. It is through community we can be challenged to grow and feel the safety to take those vulnerable steps to try, fail, learn, and try again.

What has shaped you

What was your socioeconomic circumstance growing up. What is it now. How were you directly or indirectly taught to regard those who were not in that same circumstance?

What were messages you received about your identity (ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, etc...)

What were/ are some norms about right and wrong in your faith background?

Was asking questions encouraged in your faith tradition? Why or why not?

What questions do you have regarding how the Church represents following Jesus?



SERMON NOTES

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 13:1-7

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 14:1-14

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

March 7

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 15:1-17

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES ABOUT GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

March 14

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 15:28-25

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES ABOUT GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

March 21

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 16:1-15

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES ABOUT GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

March 28

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 17

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES ABOUT GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

April 4: EASTER

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 20

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES ABOUT GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



SERMON NOTES

April 4 EASTER

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE John 20

PREACHER _____

NEW IDEAS/ INFORMATION/ THEMES

QUESTIONS/ CURIOSITIES

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW JESUS MODELS/ COMMUNICATES ABOUT GRACE AND TRUTH?

INVITATIONS TO LIVE/THINK/BELIEVE IN A NEW WAY

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO REPENT OR CONFESS AFTER HEARING THIS SERMON?



Naming your Context- REFLECTION

After concluding the sermon series note how your context has informed how you understand God, Scripture, and the world around you.

Use this portion to prayerfully consider what God's invitation to you may be out of this series.

What has shaped you

What are perspectives or voices you are not engaging with regularly in your spheres. What is one step to include more of those in your regular learning?

What is a group or perspective you may have dismissed? Why might that be?

How might you engage in supporting/volunteering in a way which you are learning from people of color?

How might your own story be keeping your idea of God small or limited because it feels more certain or safe? How could a more expansive view of God bring life for you and those around you?

When you think about the Church and following Jesus now, what has shifted or evolved for you? What questions and curiosities do you have that you would like to explore further?