

LENT 2023

LESS IS MORE



**BRIDGEPOINTE**  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

# LENT 2023

## LESS IS MORE

Hurry. Stress. Fatigue. Frustration. Our lives have many things that we wish weren't in them. Meanwhile, the world around us suggests that "more" will make it better—more stuff, more commitments, more work, more people, more things to do. But these things never bring the deep peace, contentment, and joy that our hearts long for. When we follow Jesus, we discover time-tested Christian practices that reveal less is more.

During the season of Lent, we want to experience addition by subtraction in our lives. In our teaching series, *Less is More*, we will look at spiritual practices we can implement to discover the peace and strength that Jesus offers.

**FASTING** – *Less food is more focus*

**MORNINGS** – *Less sleep is more strength*

**SABBATH** – *Less work is more delight*

**SLOWING DOWN** – *Less hurry is more peace*

**SILENCE** – *Less noise is more listening*

We encourage you to use this guide along with the teaching series to experience the abundant life in Jesus you were created for.

## THE SEASON OF LENT

Lent is the forty days leading up to Easter, a season in which we look to disrupt our normal rhythms and deny ourselves normal comforts to turn our attention toward Jesus with greater frequency and focus. We reduce the clutter in our lives to make more space for Jesus.

# PRAYER & FASTING

*We invite you to join us for a church-wide day of fasting and prayer on Fridays during Lent.*

Fasting is a Christian practice in which we choose to abstain from food or something else for a specific period of time in order to concentrate on God. We live in a culture of desires, excess and luxury. Fasting denies those desires and redirects them to God, who fills us up.

## FAST FROM FOOD ON FRIDAYS

Join us in fasting on Fridays. You can skip one meal for your fast, or try a 24 hour fast (for example, from Thursday dinner until Friday dinner). Go some or all of the day without eating and let your hunger turn your attention to Jesus.

Breaking a fast together with others is a powerful way to experience community. We recommend breaking your fast together with your family, small group or others, either regularly, or at least once during the season.

## FOCUS ON GOD IN PRAYER

During this time of prayer and fasting, be careful not to fill up your time with activities that keep you from praying. As we subtract things from our lives we are seeking:

- **MINDFULNESS** – God is with us all the time
- **DEPENDENCE** – We need God all the time.
- **EARNESTNESS** – Steadfastly bringing our needs before God

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR FASTING:

- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- Remember, keeping a strict fast is not the goal. If you need to, drink juices or other liquids when you fast.
- Don't give up too quickly. Press through and let your body feel the hunger.
- Decide in advance when you will begin and break your fast, then commit to wait.

## **TIME IN SCRIPTURE**

*There are six weeks in Lent, and 24 chapters in Luke. We recommend using S.O.A.P. and reading four chapters a week.*

S.O.A.P. is an acronym for silence, observation, application and prayer. It's a powerful tool that moves you from the text into the reality of your life. Use a journal or notebook and for each day, make an entry and apply this method as you study.

### **SILENCE**

When you read Scripture, it is necessary to slow down and invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you. Take a moment to be silent, pray and listen to the Spirit before you start.

### **OBSERVATION**

Read the text and ask the following questions:

*What does this reveal about Jesus?*

*How does this challenge the reader to believe in Jesus or become like Him?*

### **APPLICATION**

Write down how the passage applies to your life today.

*How should this change the way that I think?*

*What does this challenge me to do?*

### **PRAYER**

Talk to God about what you have heard from this text. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you respond to the application of this Scripture in your life.

## **FOR FAMILIES**

If you have young children, we recommend reading through the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones. This fully-illustrated storybook Bible tells the story of Scripture with Jesus at the center.

For older students, The Bridge will be talking about Lent on Wednesday and encouraging students to use this guide.

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

Our staff compiled this list of recommended readings to compliment the series. Read through the summaries below, check them out online and choose one to read this Lenten season.

### **The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction** by Justin Whitmel Earley

The Common Rule offers four daily and four weekly habits, designed to help us create new routines and transform frazzled days into lives of love for God and neighbor. Justin Earley provides concrete, doable practices, such as a daily hour of phoneless presence or a weekly conversation with a friend.

### **Habits of the Household** by Justin Whitmel Earley

Is there a disconnect between how you long to parent and what your day actually looks like? Earley shares a proven paradigm for bringing spiritual formation into family life, creating more meaningful---and peaceful---moments! With easy-to-implement daily rhythms, you'll develop a bedtime liturgy for little ones, discover discipline as discipleship, plan regular household mealtimes, and more.

### **The Tech-Wise Family** by Andy Crouch

Reclaim real life in a world of technology. Making good choices about technology in our families is more than just using internet filters and determining screen-time limits for our children. It's about building character, wisdom, and courage.

### **The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry** by John Mark Comer

Pastor Comer appeared to be successful. Inwardly, things were a mess. Turning to a trusted mentor for guidance, he was told, "Hurry is the great enemy of the spiritual life." It wasn't the response he expected, but it's the one he lives by today. Discover the compelling case in favor of a slower, simpler lifestyle.

# WEEKLY TEACHING & PRACTICE

Use the next section of this guide to track along with *Less is More* with us on Sundays. Take notes on Sunday's message, and then reflect, pray and commit to putting into practice the discipline we are focused on that week.

# ***FASTING*** *Less food is more focus*

Key Scripture and points from Sunday's message:

How can fasting draw you closer to Jesus?

What will your rhythm of fasting be during Lent?

# ***MORNINGS*** *Less sleep is more strength*

Key Scripture and points from Sunday's message:

Why are mornings so important in your relationship with Jesus?

What changes will you make to your mornings?



# **SABBATH** *Less work is more delight*

Key Scripture and points from Sunday's message:

How can the practice of Sabbath draw you closer to Jesus?

How will you implement the practice of Sabbath?

# ***SLOWING DOWN*** *Less hurry is more peace*

Key Scripture and points from Sunday's message:

How can slowing down draw you closer to Jesus?

What practical steps will you take to slow down?

# **SILENCE** *Less noise is more listening*

Key Scripture and points from Sunday's message:

How can silence draw you closer to Jesus?

How will you make room for silence in your life?



BridgePointe Christian Church was founded in East Providence, RI in 2013 with the mission to make disciples of Jesus in relationships. Find out more at [BPRI.CHURCH](http://BPRI.CHURCH)