

5 LENTEN QUESTIONS

A SERIES WITH BISHOP WRIGHT

INTRODUCTION: ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION GUIDE FOR SMALL GROUPS/INDIVIDUALS

These reflection guides are designed to supplement the Bishop's videos for use in a small group Bible study. They are created for the leader's ease of use, and with links to free web-based resources.

REFLECTION

The Bishop mentioned that, in Lent, God desires our healing. We know we have said no to God, we know we have missed the mark and frustrated God's grace, but God's desire is for our good, for our healing, for our returning, and to offer us forgiveness and new chances. Some people think of Lent as a macabre or depressing season of deprivation. Thinking of Lent as a season for healing may be a helpful shift. Through dust and mourning, in realizing our inadequacy, healing begins.

SCRIPTURE

Read Ezekiel 33:10-20. You might also compare the NRSV and The Message.

Read Psalm 51. Sometimes, we realize how failing to chose God's way has not been life-giving, and, like David, we need absolution from guilt. Other times, we don't realize where we are in need of healing; reflection is key to discovering this.

Read Genesis 2:7. New life starts with dust. In the Old Testament, dust was almost always associated with death and morality, the idea that we are soon to die. And because of God's genius, death is not the end; instead, that is precisely where new life begins.

DISCUSSION

- When you think of Lent, how do you feel? What resonates/draws you and what doesn't?
- How might thinking of Lent as healing and life-giving be a shift for you?
- As you go through the Ash Wednesday service, what resonates with you? What in Psalm 51 sticks out? What does the Litany of Penitence reveal to you about what is needed in your life right now?
- Which Scripture passage stuck out to you and what might God be speaking through it to your life circumstances today?

ARTICLES

To aid in self-examination, see this article on how to let Lent help you grow, based on your MBTI personality type:

<https://grottonetwork.com/keep-the-faith/belief/what-to-give-up-for-lent-mbti/>

PRAYER

As a group or individually, pray the Litany of Penitence in the prayer book starting on page 267. If you have 10 tealights or candles, gather them, and light one for each of the prompts, inviting God's healing into each area. Journal about specific ways you need God's light and healing in those areas.

TAKE-AWAY

Plant a seed. New life begins in the dust and dirt and dark. As you tend to it each day, pray about the areas of healing you've identified in your own life, and think about the actions that will lead to life and healing in those areas. Let your seed remind you to take those actions daily, to tend to your spiritual life.