

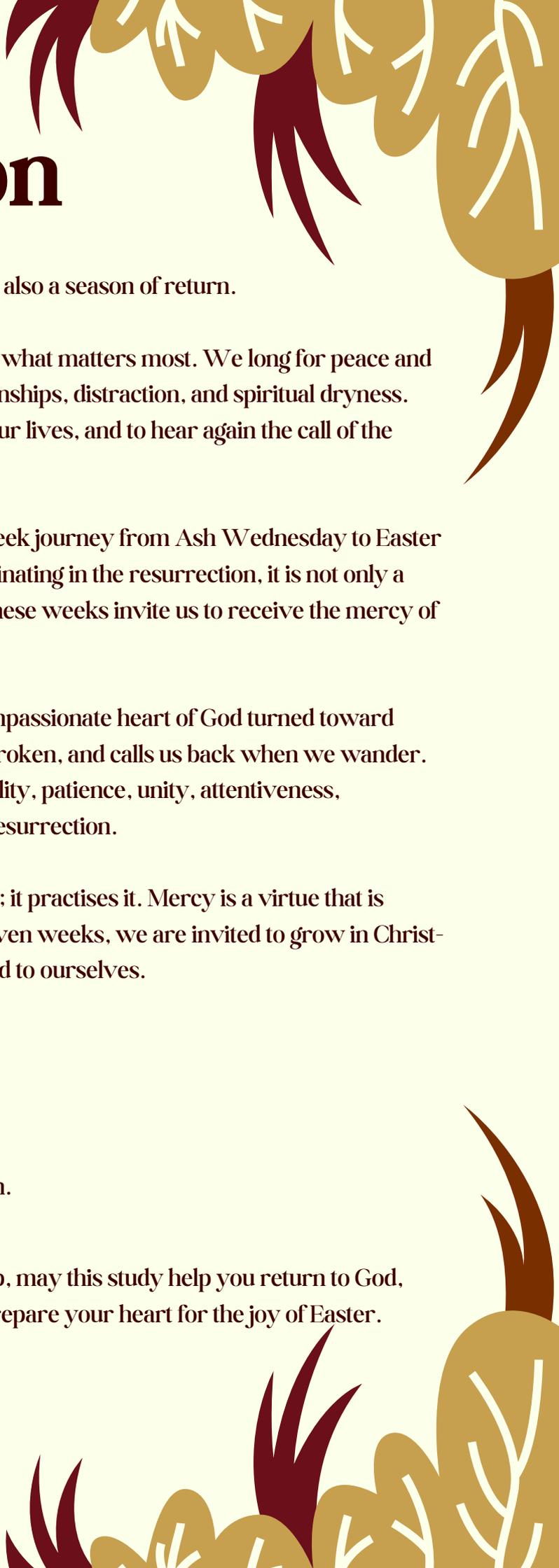
LENT DEVOTIONAL

# FORMED BY MERCY

7 weeks of  
Returning to God and Becoming Like Christ



# Introduction



Lent is not simply a season of self-denial. It is also a season of return.

In the busyness of life, we easily lose sight of what matters most. We long for peace and wholeness, yet we encounter broken relationships, distraction, and spiritual dryness. Lent invites us to pause, to look honestly at our lives, and to hear again the call of the Gospel: Be reconciled to God.

This study, *Formed by Mercy*, is a seven-week journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day. Including the Sundays of Lent and culminating in the resurrection, it is not only a time for reflection but for transformation. These weeks invite us to receive the mercy of God and to be shaped by it.

Mercy is more than forgiveness. It is the compassionate heart of God turned toward humanity. It restores dignity, heals what is broken, and calls us back when we wander. In Jesus, mercy becomes visible: in His humility, patience, unity, attentiveness, endurance, and ultimately in His death and resurrection.

Christian faith does not only proclaim mercy; it practises it. Mercy is a virtue that is learned and embodied. Throughout these seven weeks, we are invited to grow in Christ-like character, extending mercy to others and to ourselves.

Each day follows a simple pattern:

- **Scripture** grounds us in God's Word.
- **Reflection** connects the text to daily life.
- **Prompt** encourages personal application.
- **Prayer** helps us respond to God.

Whether used personally or in a small group, may this study help you return to God, deepen your communion with Christ, and prepare your heart for the joy of Easter.

Now is the time of salvation.  
Let us be formed by mercy.

## Day 1 (Ash Wednesday)

*Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

*"In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you."*

2 Corinthians 5:20 and 6:2 (NKJV)

### Reflection

What an honour to be called as an 'Ambassador for Christ'

Our lives are shaped by the one who sent us into this world to be his messengers. But what if we are lost in our own world of worries and despair? Can we still reconcile with God? We have moments in our lives when we realize that God is protecting us, watching over us, and guiding us in ways we do not even realize or even think about.

Let this season be a moment of reconciliation, a time to be connected to God, because He loved us first and died on the Cross, so that we can become righteous in God's sight.

Let this Lent be a Lent of Salvation, a Lent of Reconciliation, and a Lent of Connection with God.

### Prompt

Think of a situation in your life, or a person who needs to be reconciled.

Pray about this situation and ask God to reconcile and follow this

### Prayer

Father God, we are thankful to you for your love, and reconciliation through your son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins on the cross. We ask for your help to revive your mission in our lives. We ask for your mercy in Jesus' name. Amen.



## Day 2

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 3:28 (NKJV)

### Reflection

As human beings, we all have our own favourites in our lives. Favourite sports, player, food, country, etc. God does not have favouritism. He equally sees every human being with the same love and compassion.

We all are 'masterpieces' and unique in God's eye. Period.

God loves us regardless of our background, social status, rich or poor. His love is the only constant and measure for every human being.

Every person has dignity, and God sees our humanity. More than anything else. We matter to God.

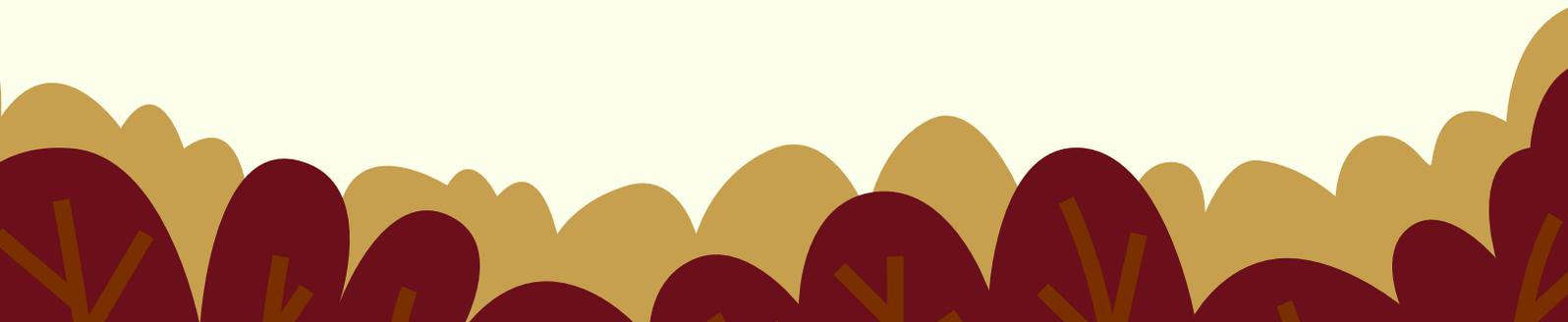
Why do we treat people differently based on their background?

### Prompt

Journal your own prejudices in your life and think how to develop a more Christ-like attitude towards others.

### Prayer

Father God, we are thankful for your love, which you demonstrated to us through your son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins on the cross. May our prejudices and biases be transformed through your abiding love, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.



## Day 3

*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NIV)

### Reflection

Do you consider yourself a patient person? We can all relate to a time when we lose our patience with other people or situations because we cannot take it anymore. We believe this is the end.

We do not want to see ‘that person’ ever again.

The Bible reminds us that in such circumstances, we need to be ‘humble, gentle and patient, bearing with one another in love’.

It is easier for us to write or read these things than to act upon it. Let God move in this situation.

May the God of peace and gentle spirit guide you in your situation.

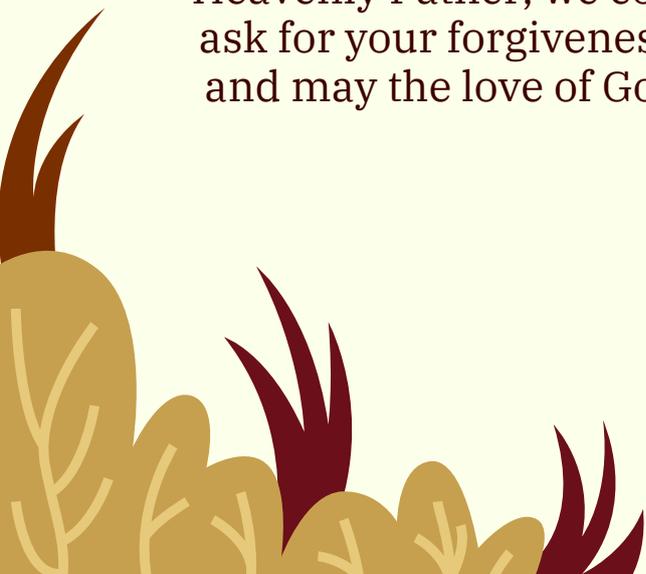
### Prompt

Seek to make peace today with someone you dismissed too easily.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come to you humbly and graciously and ask for your forgiveness and guidance in difficult situations, and may the love of God radiate in our dealings with others.

Amen.





## Day 4

***If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.***

1 Corinthians 12:26 (NIV)

### **Reflection**

The concepts of belonging and participation are important to our human, social, economic, political, and spiritual lives because we are social beings and connected to each other. No man is an Island.

Sometimes, we are part of the crowd, a Church, or a community, but at times, we feel, we do not belong there. We feel we are physically part of the community, but we are not made welcome, to participate and to be encouraged in the body of Christ. This can be a lonely position to be in.

Look around in your life, how many people are lonely around us, made different by others in our society, left and deserted by those around them.

As Christians, we are reminded of our place in Christ – one in all, and all in one.

Christian life is about ‘looking out for others’, to be proactive, to care, to make others part of our community.

### **Prompt**

Journal on moments when you felt lonely in the midst of a community. Reflect on why you felt that way and what would have made a difference to feel welcomed and included.

Look out for someone around you who seems lost or lonely and try to make them welcome.

### **Prayer**

Father God, I am thankful to you for your mercies and blessings in my life. I acknowledge that all good things come from you. You have brought people into my life who have blessed me, held me in their arms in my challenging times, and kept me going in many ways. Let my life be a blessing to others today and forevermore for your name’s sake Amen.



# 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent

*'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'*

Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

## Reflection

It is daunting to know that Satan even attempted to tempt Jesus when he was fasting for 40 days. Jesus responded to temptations with the enduring word of God. There are parallels between Deuteronomy 8: 2-3 when Moses was the Israelites in the wilderness, compared to how Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness

God led the Israelites to the wilderness -  
Jesus was led by spirit in the wilderness  
Israelites stayed in the wilderness for 40 years –  
Jesus was led in the wilderness for 40 days  
Israelites were tested by hunger –  
Jesus was tested by Satan while he was fasting  
Israelites grumbled –  
Jesus prayed  
Israelites were provided with Manna –  
Jesus spoke the 'Word'. He is the word, a true 'Manna.'

In the Gospel of John 6:35, Jesus said, 'I am the bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty again'. This concept of word and bread has been celebrated for more than 2000 years.

## Prompt

Journal about a verse, poem, or saying that has sustained you, and ask how God's Word can become that same daily nourishment in your life.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am thankful to you for sending your only begotten son, Jesus, in this world, who paid for my sins, who was tested and tempted, and finally died on the Cross of Calvary – a real Manna of Heaven.

I acknowledge that I have sinned in my life, and I ask for your Mercy and Grace to help me face the trials and temptations of my life, through the Living Mana of my life.

I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

## Day 5

*Ears that hear and eyes that see—  
the Lord has made them both.*

Proverbs 20:12 (NIV)

### Reflection

We all have two ears and one tongue. Meaning, we need to listen more and speak less. More often than not, in our real life, the opposite happens. We want to speak more and listen less.

It is important to have listening ears.

We live in the world where everyone has a desire to be heard. But imagine a room where everyone is speaking and shouting. In noise, it is challenging to make a sense. Noise is just another word for a disorder.

God is the God of Silence and Listening, and He has a watchful eye.

Let this Lent be a season when we are able to listen to what God has to say and witness His Grace, Mercy, and Glory with our own eyes.

Are you listening to God this season?

### Prompt

Go and sit somewhere open, observe what you see,  
then close your eyes and listen.

Notice how differently the world speaks when you truly pay attention.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I want to rely not on my intellect and understanding,  
but on your guidance and direction in all aspects of my life.

Let your ears be my ears, and your eyes be my eyes,  
and your mouth be my mouth. All in Glory for your name.  
I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.





## Day 6

*After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them as asking them questions. All who heard him were amazed at this understanding and his answers.*

Luke 2:46 (NIV)

### Reflection

At the age of 12, Jesus was more mature than most of the adults around him. As part of his family tradition of visiting the Temple in Jerusalem, Jesus found himself sitting with the religious establishment, where he was having an engaging conversation.

What it means to live a God-filled, and a purpose driven life? There are two things that make us achieve this. We need to be active and engaged in the body of Christ.

One of the defining challenges of the Church today is that people are inactive and dis-engaged from their Churches. They find purpose in other things in life.

As Jesus sat with the religious establishment of His days, he listened to them first and engaged with the community by asking them the questions.

Our spiritual growth happens when we recognize who we are and what our purpose in life is.  
Just like Jesus did when he was 12 years old.

### Prompt

Those who listened to Jesus were left amazed. What impression do others have of you when you speak in your community or in your Church? In what way does your attentive nature and eagerness leave others impressed?

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, like Jesus, I want to be a blessing for those around me. Mould me, shape me, and help me be like Jesus and may your purpose be fulfilled in my life. I ask in your name. Amen.



## Day 7

*Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

### Reflection

Acceptance is the door through which we enter God's reconciliation.

We all make mistakes, and we hurt others and get hurt by others, consciously or unconsciously. Accept others, with their failings and weaknesses.

Be gentle in your dealings with others.

No matter how many times we sin in our lives. We are accepted through the sacrifice of Jesus, one without sin. We are shaped by the mercies of God; we experience them every day.

Empathy and openness create space for real understanding of who we are, and what it means to be in an authentic relationship with those around us and with God. Mercy abounds

### Prompt

Think of one person you find difficult to accept. Write down what makes this challenging and then reflect on how Christ has accepted you in your own brokenness. Ask God to show you one concrete way to practice gentleness and reconciliation this week.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am sorry that I have sinned against you and those around me. I bring my brokenness and ask for your wholeness. May your love, Grace and Mercy surround me during this Lent and through all the days of my life. In Jesus' name I ask. Amen.



## Day 8

*Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak,  
and slow to become angry.*

James 1:19 (NIV)

### Reflection

Last week, we learnt the importance of listening. Today, we return to the theme of listening again. Do you consider yourself a listener or a speaker? All good speakers are also good listeners.

Imagine, during a spring sunny day, you are walking in the woods, and as you take the steps on the dry ground full of fallen dry leaves, you listen to the rustling of the leaves while birds are chirping in the far beyond the blue skies in the background. You feel the sense of yourself. You become aware of your environment. Of your own being. You are listening.

Take a moment and listen to what God is telling you this Lent. Listening is healing. God wants to heal us. From our disappointments, our regrets, and our heartaches.

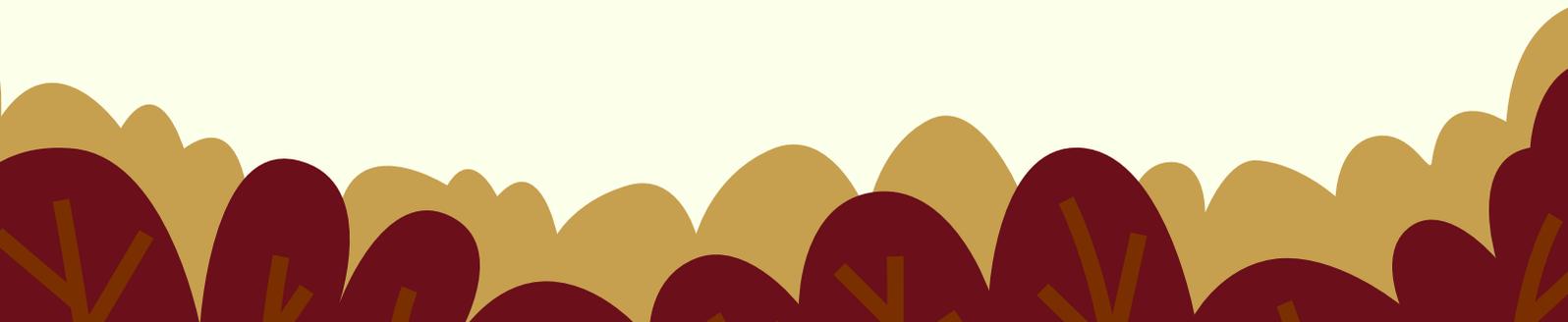
Patient listening creates space for healing

### Prompt

Notice how you communicate today. Before responding in conversation, pause and intentionally listen without interrupting or preparing your reply. Later, journal what you discovered about yourself and about the other person through that practice.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, grant me the gift of listening this Lent. I want to listen to what you have to say. I am willing to cut the noise of the world and worries around me and listen to you. I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.



## Day 9

*One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.*

Acts 16:14 (NIV)

### Reflection

True listening requires openness, genuine interest, and undivided attention. It opens our hearts, minds, and souls to listen to what God has to say and to those around us. Our healing, wholeness, and transformation depend on our listening, and listening is more than simply hearing words.

It is an act of responsiveness. To God and those around us.

Think of Lydia for a moment and imagine how God spoke to her through Paul. God opens hearts that are willing to receive his message and love wrapped in mercy.

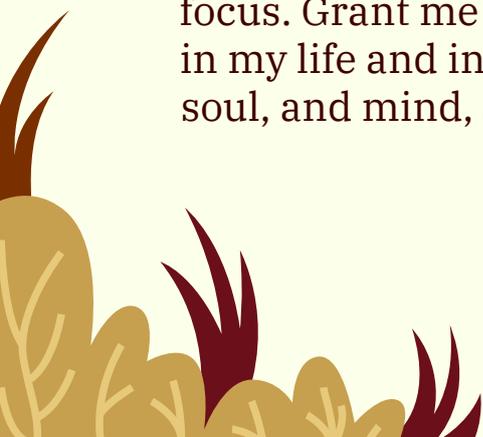
Today is your opportunity to open your heart to others and to God.

### Prompt

Spend five quiet minutes asking God to “open your heart” as He did for Lydia. Write down any area of your life where you may be guarded or distracted. Consider one small step you can take today to respond more openly to God or to someone close to you.

### Prayer

Father God, I come to your presence, and I acknowledge that my life is full of worries of this world. I often lose sight of where to focus. Grant me the humility of Lydia, that I may listen to you first in my life and in the lives of those around me. I give you my heart, soul, and mind, and I receive your healing power to transform my life through Jesus. Amen





## Day 10

***Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.***

Hebrews 3:15 (NIV)

*“Listen! Listen to the teaching of the Master and incline the ear of your heart; accept it willingly as guidance for your life.”*

The Rule of St Benedict

### Reflection

God wants us to be attentive, open, honest, and transformative in our lives. Listening is an active and intentional discipline.

Practice listening throughout this Lent, and you will witness how God is talking to you through his voice in your inner being and those around you.

God speaks through His Word, His Holy Spirit, and believers around us.

### Prompt

Reflect on what you have been listening to and learning these days about yourself and about God. Are you noticing any change? Write down two things that you notice and think about them.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am thankful to you for your mercies in my life. I acknowledge that all the good things in my life belong to you. Grant me the peace, listening ears, and open heart to experience the love the Christ through this Lent season. In Jesus' name.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent

*I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*

Psalm 116:9 (NIV)

### Reflection

Sunday is the day of collective and communal worship, when we share the love of God in the community and the Church.

Think about how Jesus had a fellowship with people.

He lived among people all the time.

Worship in a community strengthens our faith in God.

Walking in the land of living means living faithfully and confidently before the Lord.

### Prompt

Set aside intentional time today to focus on God, whether in communal worship or in personal reflection.

Ask yourself what it means to “walk before the Lord in the land of the living” in your current circumstances.

Write down one way you will live more consciously before God in the coming week

### Prayer

Father God, I am thankful to you for your son Jesus Christ who died for me on the Cross.

I am thankful for the testimony of those who live and walk in faith with you.

Grant us the courage to live in a community filled with your love, grace, goodness and mercy for all days of our lives.

In Jesus' name I pray.

## Day 11

*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

### Reflection

Words are like arrows; once you shoot them,  
you will never get them back.

We need to be careful, thoughtful, and prayerful in what we say to others. Our words have impacts, and that impact depends on how and what meaning your words carry.

We build relationships with God and those around us through communications which carries words.

We are encouraged to build, to help, and to support one another in our communities at the local, regional, and global levels.

### Prompt

Pay attention to your words throughout the day. Choose one conversation where you intentionally speak encouragement instead of criticism. In the evening, reflect on how that choice affected both you and the other person.

### Prayer

Father God, I am thankful to you that you have given me the thought, mind and words that I could use them for your Glory. Please help me to learn, grow and use this gift for your glory, to develop, encourage, help and build one other. In Jesus name I pray.  
Amen





## Day 12

*A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.*

Proverbs 25:11 (NIV)

### Reflection

This week, we have been learning about how to use our words wisely. How God intended them to be.

Well-chosen words are precious, inspiring, and beautiful. Such words have healing power to restore and transform us.

Reflect on how God uses words. He uses words to build us and encourage us to be the change in our communities and networks.

Reflect also on how words have healed you and restored you in your own life

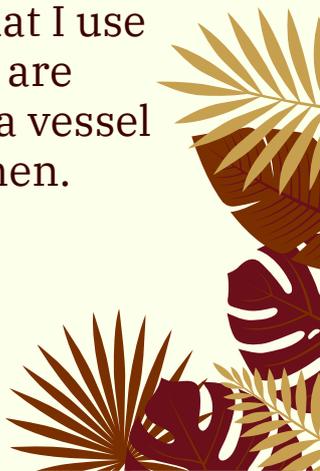
Speaking thoughtfully and prayerfully is an act of faith, wisdom, and knowledge.

### Prompt

Think of someone who needs a thoughtful word. Take time to pray before speaking or writing to them. Journal how it feels to speak carefully and whether it changes the atmosphere of your interaction.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am open to learn, teach me, Lord, that I use my words wisely with those around me. Words that are inspiring, encouraging, and helpful. May my mouth be a vessel for your Grace and Mercy in Jesus name, I pray. Amen.



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