

# Footsteps to the Cross



My  
Lenten  
Journey  
with Jesus

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## My Lenten Journey with Jesus

Each day of Lent is something like a step along a path, a path that leads to Easter. This small book will help you get to know Jesus a little better as you make your way to understand his suffering on Good Friday and celebrate his rising on Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday may seem like a long way off, but just take one day at a time. Each day, a special passage from Scripture tells about an event in Jesus' life or a key Lenten theme. Remember, even the longest journey begins with a single step. In this case, it is a step closer to your Savior.

On Ash Wednesday, set up the cross centerpiece. Every day you will read a devotion and Bible verse, place a sticker and think about your footsteps to the cross of Jesus.

### 1. Setting Out

Ash Wednesday

Read Psalm 51:10

Ash Wednesday is the very first step on the Lenten road to Easter. The cross of ashes is a sign of two things: that we have sinned and that God has forgiven us. At Easter, we will celebrate the new life that awaits us in heaven. Lent is a time to do a little “spring cleaning” before the celebration begins. The cross of ashes is the first step and a sign that our sorrow for sin has been changed into the joy of new life.

*Jesus, help me to be sorry for my sins this Lent.*

## 2. Commandments

Thursday

Read Deuteronomy Psalm 25:4-5

When we go on a trip, it is good to take along a map that tells us how to get where we want to go. God has given us a map: the Holy Scripture. If we follow God's map, then sooner or later, we'll get where we want to go! If you lose your way by not telling the truth or taking something that doesn't belong to you, use the map to find your way again. Jesus is always ready to guide us back to the right path, but first we have to know that we are lost!

*Jesus, help me to know when I have gone off the path.*

## 3. The Meaning of Lent

Friday

Read Psalm 104:30

What does the world "Lent" mean? Why have we given this name to the time of preparation before Easter? Lent comes from an old word meaning "springtime." During the spring of the year, daylight increases, trees begin to bud and flowers start to appear. The new life that comes to the world each spring is like the renewal of life that comes when we pray and try hard to follow Jesus.

*Jesus, thank you for the new life you give our world and our spirits.*

## 4. The Forty Days of Lent

Saturday

Read Matthew 4:1-2

Do you know why Lent is so long? Many years ago, Lent was a time of preparation for baptism on Easter. Lent was made forty days long because Jesus spent forty days and nights in fasting and prayer getting ready for his public life. During Lent, we remember what it means to follow Jesus in all we do.

*Jesus, help me to follow you each day, especially this Lent.*

## 5. Jesus Was Tempted Too

Monday, Week 1

Read Matthew 4:10-11

We all at times want to do things we know are wrong. Temptations draw us down a different path, one that does not follow Jesus. Jesus himself was tempted in the desert by Satan, and he showed us just what to do: remember that God alone is all-powerful and turn to the Lord in prayer.

*Jesus, you know what it is like to be tempted to do the wrong thing. Help me do what you want me to do.*

## 6. Prayer Changes Things

Tuesday

Read Matthew 6:9

Jesus often walked off to be alone so that he could pray to his Father in heaven. Sometimes he went to the desert, sometimes up a high mountain, and sometimes into a garden. We also need to pray, but we don't have to go to the desert to do it. This Lent, we should all make a special effort to pray more, beginning with our prayers each morning and every night.

*Jesus, help me this Lent find time to be with you in quiet prayer.*

## 7. Remembering Jesus' Gifts

Wednesday

Read Matthew 6:25

Why do some Christians "give up" certain foods during Lent? Why is Lent a good time to remember to "give" to those in need? These are simple ways to remember two things: first, that everything we have is a gift from God and, second, that to show his love for us, Jesus gave up everything, even his life. When we give a little something for God, we find ourselves blessed with a new awareness of how much God loves us.

*Jesus, help me to be thankful for all your gifts to me.*

## 8. A Gift of Repentance

Thursday

Psalm 51:2

After you have a fight with a good friend, don't you say, "I'm sorry," so that you can patch things up? That's what it means to repent—we admit to God that we have done something wrong and we say, "I'm sorry." Here's the best news of all: God has already forgiven us. That's why the Gospel of Jesus Christ is called the "Good News."

*Jesus, help me repent when I make a mistake. Help me really believe that you have completely forgiven me.*

## 9. Pray for Enemies

Friday

Read Matthew 5:44-45

Jesus told us to pray for those who injure us and do good to those who persecute us. He wasn't just talking about enemies in war. He also meant people who annoy us or make trouble for us. Does he really expect us to pray for them? Yes. Jesus wants us to love everyone because God loves everyone—even bullies. We can begin showing that love in prayer.

*Jesus, send your blessings on the people who are not nice to me.*

## 10. Mountaintops

Saturday

Read Matthew 17:1

As Peter, James and John were struggling up the side of the mountain, they probably asked themselves, "Why are we doing this? This is too hard!" But at the top of their climb, Jesus' face and clothing suddenly began to shine like the sun, and they saw him in all his heavenly glory. As we follow Jesus, sometimes the path gets steep and the way is hard, but remember: you, too, will someday get a glimpse of his glory.

*Jesus, help me to stick close to you, even when the going gets tough.*

## 11. Light Along the Way

Monday, Week 2

Read John 8:12

Can you imagine trying to walk along a path with no light at all: no moon, no stars, no streetlight, not even a flashlight? You would have a hard time not losing your way, and it would probably be very scary. Jesus, through his life and teaching, is our light to help us find our way to goodness and joy. And Jesus told us that if we try hard to follow him, we would become “light for the world,” helping other people find their way to Jesus.

*Thank you for being a light for me, Jesus.*

## 12. Do Unto Others ...

Tuesday

Read Matthew 7:12

Jesus put it very simply: treat other people the way you would like to be treated yourself. This is very simple to say, but much harder to do. We all get a little selfish sometimes and forget that other people have needs and feelings too. When we forget to treat others fairly, Jesus just wants us to try again. And that’s all we can ask of anyone.

*Jesus, help me to remember to treat others fairly.*

## 13. The Good Shepherd

Wednesday

Read John 10:14-15

Jesus said he was the Good Shepherd so we would understand how he would take care of us all along the different paths of life. A shepherd lets the sheep pretty much go where they will, as long as they don’t get themselves into trouble. When we did wander off the right path, Jesus laid down his life for us. Each year during Lent, we take time to remember and thank God for this tremendous love.

*Jesus, help me to trust and follow you each day.*

## 14. Be Not Afraid

Thursday

Read Isaiah 12:2

So often the Bible tells us not to be afraid. Jesus said it many times. After he rose from the dead and appeared to his friends, Jesus told them not to be afraid. Why? Because fear keeps us from hearing the special message that God is always trying to tell us. That message is simply, “I love you.” And that means we don’t have anything to fear anymore. The next time you feel afraid, listen for the message of God’s love for you.

*Jesus, give me courage to do what is right even when I’m afraid.*

## 15. The Prodigal Son

Friday

Read Luke 15:20

Sometimes we may get off the track and find ourselves far away from the path of Jesus. That happened to the Prodigal Son. But the father in the story had been watching and waiting for his son to come home. He ran out to meet the young man “while he was still a long way off.” God does that for us—comes out to meet and embrace us, even when we are still far from the right path.

*Jesus, help me to return home quickly if I ever lose my way.*

## 16. Living Water

Saturday

Read John 4:14

Jesus knows we need refreshment from time to time. Lent is a good time to try to get new energy by drawing closer to Jesus. How can you do that? By spending more time in prayer, by making little sacrifices like doing without candy or television and by helping those in need—all to give thanks and show your love for God.

*Jesus, I, too, want the living water of your love and grace.*

# 41. Follow Jesus Forever

Easter Sunday

Read Luke 9:23

Dear Jesus, I am so thankful for you! I can imagine how the women and disciples felt when they saw you alive. Oh, the relief! The joy!

I want to be your disciple, to walk with you my whole life. Please strengthen my faith and give me the courage to follow your example through faith.

*Help me to serve others, tell them about your love, and sit at your feet and hear your Word.*

