

Life



Lent 1 Seasons

Matthew 4.1-11

Our Lent journey starts with the Jesus time in the desert. Following His baptism Jesus is “led by the Spirit” into the desert. There Jesus is tempted by the devil, through: physical needs and desires and easy access to worldly power. More subtly, the devil gets Jesus to question His calling by putting the Father to the test.

Does the way in which Jesus moves into His public ministry resonate with us? Would we pause or dive straight in? If we look at the whole of Jesus’ earthly life, what do we see? If Jesus’ life were represented in music would it be all quiet, all loud, all in the same style? No: Handel’s Messiah demonstrates the light and shade of our Lord’s incarnation.

The traditional seasons of the church’s year seek to provide this light and shade, this variety, in our worship and our prayer lives. Without this, we run the risk of being 365-day Easter Day people, or 365-day Good Friday People, or a church anchored in the manger with the infant Jesus.

The liturgical colours, the focus of the lectionary, the nature of the collects and other seasonal liturgical provision seek to echo the changes of mood throughout the year.

From the anticipation for the coming Kingdom in Advent. The joy of Christmas into Epiphany. Then the pause for breath prior to anticipating all our Lord has done for us through Lent, into the roller-coaster ride from Palm Sunday, through Holy Week, to Good Friday, and the crescendo of Easter Day. Then the wait for Pentecost followed by the pause of the long Trinity season.

Rather than live a monochrome, steady Christian life, can we use these seasons to encourage us to engage with God in different ways, fresh ways, as each year unfurls?

To Reflect upon this week

1. As we enter into this new phase of the church year, are we willing to go where the Spirit leads, as Jesus was willing to go into the desert? Reflect on today’s passage.
2. Use the Video 40 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Xb8-mkSNSg>) as an aid to thinking about the ups and downs our life, how do these resonate with the seasons of the church year?
3. Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Day, Pentecost, The Ascension. Which speaks most to you in your walk with God today? Seek out the Bible passages related to the festival/day you pick. Where is the Spirit leading you?
4. How might you engage with the rhythm of church year in a new way? Are the parts of the year that simply pass you by?
5. If you’ve never thought about the ways in which the church year is indicated by the liturgical colours, try and research that.
6. Try drawing out the church year showing how a season is joyful or reflective or penitential.

May you know God with you in the seasons of your life.