

Cross Connection

New Life in Christ Church

A Lenten Devotional Guide W4



◆ We all have a connection to the cross ■ What's yours?

Lifecollectors and Friends,

It can seem like life is always moving at warp speed with little time for pause. We face so many challenges each day, that even our best efforts to remain peaceful can feel ineffective at best. This can leave our souls feeling weary and our spirits yearning for a deeper, more intentional connection with God. This year, we determined that in addition to focusing on inviting our friends and family to join us for Easter service, we would slow our pace and embrace Lent, the 40-day season leading up to Resurrection Sunday.

This Cross Connection Guide, will broaden understanding of our theme "Connected" by reflecting on how we *all* connect to the cross. This kind of deep dive is the remedy our souls long for. Remembering the **radical love** of Christ and the life-changing impact that has on how we can show up in the world.

Our devotional guides traditionally walk us through differing scriptures each day with prompts to write, ponder, and pray. This guide will slow the pace a little - guiding you one scripture per week and giving you simple practices each day that help the Scripture's weekly focus come to life in your time with God.

We anticipate hearing how this intentionality impacts your connection to Jesus during this Lenten season!

In Christ's Love,

Bishop, and the New Life Discipleship Team

CONNECTED
JOHN 15:5



What is Lent?

Lent is a sacred season the Church has observed for centuries as a consecrated time of prayer, fasting, and repentance, mirroring Jesus' forty days in the wilderness and the early Church's preparation for resurrection life. This is not about ritual — it is about realignment — as we corporately turn our hearts back to God and walk the road that leads to the cross. In this season, the cross does more than remind us of what Jesus has done; it reveals who we are becoming as we surrender, are renewed, and are drawn deeper into His will. And as we are transformed together, we are being prepared to live out our calling to change lives in our lifetime for the glory of God.

How to use this guide:

Set aside 10–15 minutes each day.

1. Begin by taking a slow breath and becoming aware that God is with you.
2. Follow the daily instructions.
3. End with the prayer.

You will read the same Scripture every day.

Do not rush. God will meet you in a different way each time.



Week 4

Healing

Isaiah 53:4-5

March 11 - March 18



Because of His Wounds...

Centuries before Jesus was crucified, the Word of the Lord, spoken through the prophet Isaiah, gave remarkable insight into the work of the coming Messiah, often called the “Suffering Servant.” Isaiah describes a servant who would be bruised, pierced, and crushed, bearing the punishment that belonged to others. What makes this description so powerful is that it does not end with suffering. Instead, it reveals that through the servant’s wounds, healing would come.

When many people think about healing in the ministry of Jesus, they often think of His miraculous power to restore physical health. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus heals bodies in extraordinary ways. Yet in many of these moments, Jesus also addresses something deeper. He speaks about sin, forgiveness, and the restoration of the whole person (Mark 2:5-11; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31-32). In fact, Matthew later connects Jesus’ healing ministry directly to Isaiah’s prophecy about the suffering servant (Matthew 8:17).

During Lent, we are reminded that the healing Jesus brings goes beyond physical restoration. Through His suffering on the cross, Jesus brings healing to the deepest places of our lives — our sin, our brokenness, our trauma, and our despair. As we reflect on His sacrifice, we remember that Jesus offers real relief in the present and the promise of complete restoration when He returns, when God will wipe away every tear and remove all suffering forever (Revelation 21:4).

This week’s passage happens during a time when Israel was facing spiritual decline and the growing threat of foreign powers because of their unfaithfulness to God. In the midst of warnings about judgment and exile, God revealed that He would ultimately restore His people through a mysterious “servant” who would suffer on behalf of others and bring redemption. As you meditate on Isaiah 53:4-5 this week, allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you about all the ways God desires to heal you.



Day 1

Week 4 Passage: Isaiah 53:4-5 NET *But he lifted up our illnesses, he carried our pain; even though we thought he was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something he had done.⁵ He was wounded because of our rebellious deeds, crushed because of our sins; he endured punishment that made us well; because of his wounds we have been healed.*

Today's Practice: Lectio Divina (this means "Divine Reading")

Our practice today is called "Lectio Divina". This may be a new term for you, but it is an easy practice to learn. It is a slow, intentional reading of this week's passage, noticing words or phrases that stand out to you, and prayerfully considering what God might be saying to you.

Step 1 – Become still: Sit quietly and pray - "Lord, help me see the healing You offer through the cross."

Step 2 – Read this week's passage slowly: Read the passage out loud twice. Do not analyze – simply listen.

Step 3 – Notice the word or phrase that stands out and write the word down below. It may be "carried our pain", "pierced for our transgressions", "crushed for our iniquities", "by His wounds we are healed".

Write down your word or phrase:

Step 4 – Cross Connection Reflection: What does the word or phrase you noticed teach you about what Jesus carried for you at the cross?

Prayer: "Jesus, thank You for carrying what I could not carry."

Live it out today - Repeat your word or phrase during the day as a reminder of Christ's work.

Day 2

Week 4 Passage -Isaiah 53:4-5 NET

Today's Practice: Confession

Our practice today is confession. Confession simply means agreeing with God about our sin.

Step 1 – Begin with this prayer: “Jesus, because of the cross, I can be honest with You.”

Step 2 – Read this week’s passage. Focus on the phrases, “wounded because of our rebellious deeds” and “crushed because of our sins.”

Step 3 – Practice agreement with God. What attitudes, choices, or patterns in my life need God’s forgiveness and healing? (Examples: ignoring God’s voice when He is leading you, speaking or acting in ways that harm others, holding on to anger or forgiveness, indifference to God’s Word). Ask Jesus not only to forgive your sin but also to *heal* the places it has wounded your heart or relationships.



Prayer: “Jesus, thank you for forgiving me and healing me.”

Live it out today: When guilt or shame tries to return, remind yourself: “Jesus carried this so I could be forgiven and healed.”



Day 3

Week 4 Passage: Isaiah 53:4-5 NET *But he lifted up our illnesses, he carried our pain; even though we thought he was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something he had done.⁵ He was wounded because of our rebellious deeds, crushed because of our sins; he endured punishment that made us well; because of his wounds we have been healed.*

Today's Practice: Surrender

Our practice today is surrenderance. To surrender means releasing control of our plans so we can follow where Jesus leads.

Step 1 – Read this week's passage: Become still and focus on the words, "he carried our pain."

Step 2 – Ask yourself: What emotional pain or hardship have I been holding onto instead of bringing to Jesus?

Step 4 – Practice surrender: "Lord, I place these and all burdens into Your hands."

Step 5 – Cross Connection Reflection: What does the cross show you about Jesus' willingness to carry your suffering?

Prayer: "Teach me to trust Your healing."

Live it out today: When worry returns, place it back in Christ's hands.

Day 4

Week 4 Passage: Isaiah 53:4-5 NET

Today's Practice: Receive

Today's practice focuses on receiving the healing Jesus secured through the cross. Sometimes we believe that God can heal others, yet struggle to believe His healing is meant for us. Isaiah reminds us that the suffering servant endured punishment so that we could be made well.

Step 1 – Begin with this prayer: “Jesus, help me receive the healing You purchased for me.”

Step 2 – Read this week's passage again. Focus on these words: “the punishment that made us well” and “because of his wounds we have been healed.”

Step 3 – Identify the area where you need healing, Ask the Lord: “Where do I need Your healing today?”

It may be:

- a place of emotional pain
- a lingering wound from the past
- spiritual discouragement
- a pattern of sin
- a relationship that has been damaged
- physical/chronic illness mental illness

Write it on a separate piece of paper.

Step 4 – Receive what Christ has provided. Place your hand over your heart with the piece of paper you wrote on and pray: “Jesus, through Your wounds You have made healing possible. I receive the restoration You desire to bring to this part of my life.”

Spend a few moments with your eyes closed and quietly allowing God's presence to minister to you.

Prayer: “Jesus, thank You for the healing that flows from Your sacrifice.”

Live it out today: When you feel discouraged or wounded today, remind yourself: “Jesus' wounds opened the way for my healing.”

Day 5

Week 4 Passage: Isaiah 53:4-5 NET

Today's Practice: Intercession

Today's practice is intercession. This simply means praying for others.

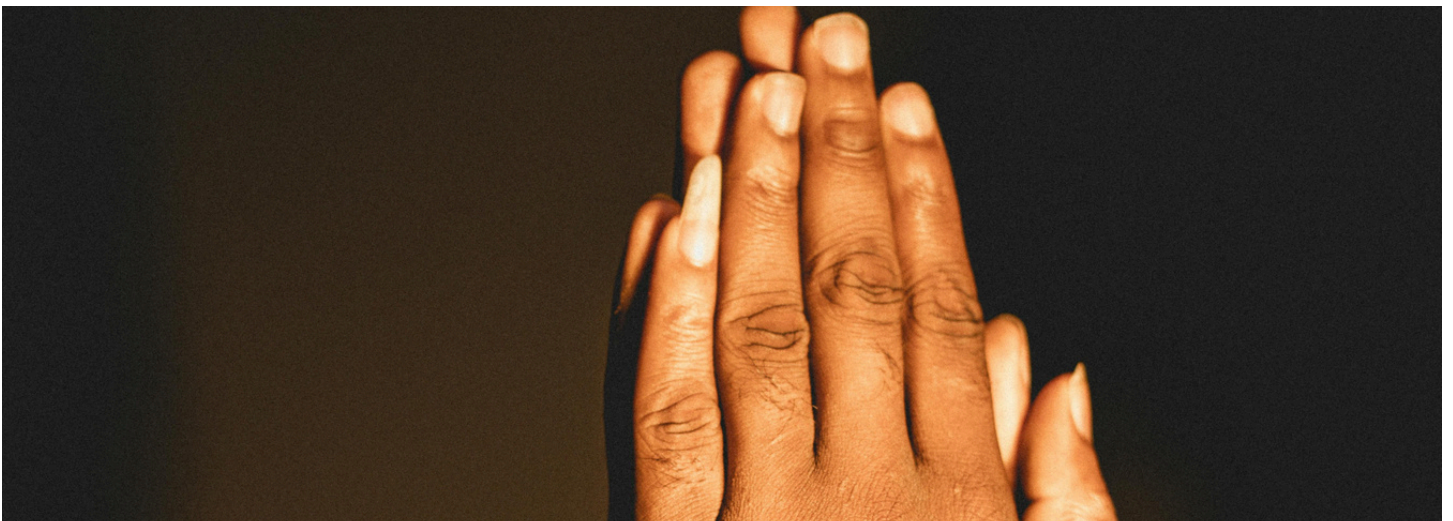
Step 1 – Read this week's passage. Focus on all the times you see plural pronouns (our, us, we).

Step 2 – Reflect: Who or what in your life or environment needs the healing power of Jesus right now? Either physical healing or otherwise?

Write the names below:

Step 3 – Pray for them: Ask God to bring peace, restoration, and hope into their lives/situations.

Live it out today: Pray for those names again during your day.



Day 6

Week 4 Passage: Isaiah 53:4-5 NET

Today's Practice: Fasting

Today's practice of fasting means to make room for God by giving something up (typically food).

Step 1 – Choose something to lay down today. It can be food (a meal or all day), or something else that takes your attention away from God.

Step 2 – Read this week's passage throughout the day. Focus on the words: *"the punishment that made us well."* In other translations, it says *"the punishment that brought us peace"*.

Cross Connection Reflection: How does the fact that Jesus endured punishment so we could experience peace change the reality of how you show up in or navigate chaotic situations?

Prayer: "Jesus, help me live in the reality of the peace you paid for with your life. Show me where I can, with your help, personally bring peace into situations happening around me."

Live it out today: In moments of hunger, pray the Lord's prayer or re-read this week's passage.

Day 7

Week 4 Passage: Isaiah 53:4-5 NET *But he lifted up our illnesses, he carried our pain; even though we thought he was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something he had done.⁵ He was wounded because of our rebellious deeds, crushed because of our sins; he endured punishment that made us well; because of his wounds we have been healed.*

Today's Practice: Reflection

Step 1 – Read the passage one final time and reflect. What did God reveal this week about the sin and/or my need for healing?

Step 2 – Testify: What has God already healed you from? Who can you share your testimony with during this Lent season?

Declaration: Jesus carried my pain, bore my punishment, and through His wounds I am being made whole.

