

# Cross Connection

New Life in Christ Church

## A Lenten Devotional Guide W5



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

## Lifetchangers 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

## Hope

### 1 Peter 1:3-5

March 18 - March 24



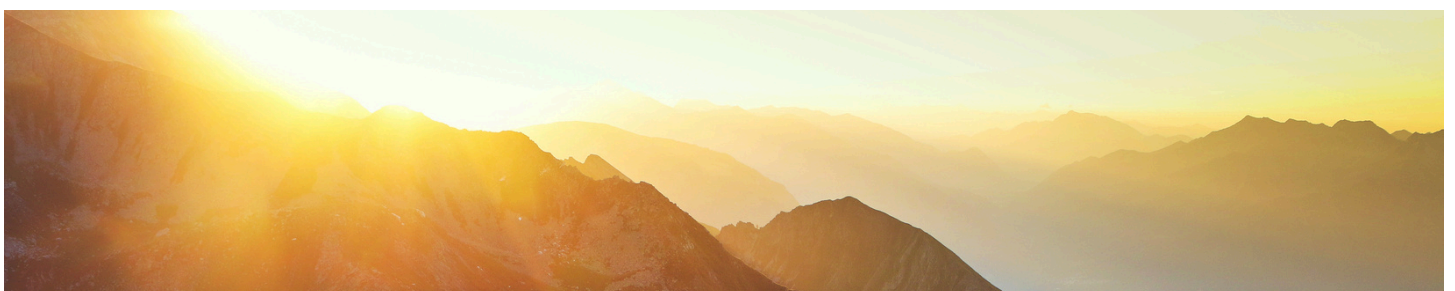
## *A Living Hope*

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 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5** *3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

**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 hope You have given me in Christ."

**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 "new birth", "living hope", "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ", "an inheritance that can never perish", "shielded by God's power".

*Write down your word or phrase:*

**Step 4 – Cross Connection Reflection:** How does the resurrection of Jesus give you confidence in what God has promised, even if you have not yet seen it fully?

**Prayer:** "Jesus, anchor my heart in the hope You have given me."

**Live it out today -** Repeat your word or phrase during the day and reflect on it.

# Day 2

## Week 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5

### 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. Where have I been placing my hope in things that are uncertain or temporary? (Examples: my plans or timeline, financial security, relationships, personal success, control over outcomes). How does the cross and resurrection expose the difference between temporary security and the hope God provides?

**Prayer:** “Lord, forgive me for placing my hope in things that cannot last.”

**Live it out today:** When anxiety arises, remind yourself, “My hope is in Christ.”



# Day 3

**Week 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5** *3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

## 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, "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade."

**Step 2 – Ask yourself:** What concerns or uncertainties about my future am I holding onto tightly?

**Step 4 – Practice surrender:** "Lord, I give my future into Your hands."

**Step 5 – Cross Connection Reflection:** How does the resurrection assure you that God is able to secure your future?

**Prayer:** I trust what You have prepared for me."

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

# Day 4

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**Week 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5**

## **Today's Practice: Reframing Your Perspective**

Today's practice is designed to help you align your vision with God's vision. It will help you see your current circumstances through the lens of living hope.

**Step 1 – Begin with this prayer:** “Lord, help me see my life through Your promises.”

**Step 2 – Read this week's passage again.**

**Step 3 – Reflect. What situation in my life currently feels uncertain or discouraging?**

**Step 4 – Reframe it. Now ask -** How does having a living hope help me remain steady even when this situation has not yet changed?

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

**Prayer:** “Jesus, help me see with hope instead of fear.”

**Live it out today:** When you face that situation, pause and remember God's promise.

# Day 5

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**Week 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5**

## **Today's Practice: Intercession**

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

**Step 1 – Read this week's passage.**

**Step 2 – Reflect: Who in my life feels discouraged or hopeless right now?**

**Write the names below:**

**Step 3 – Pray for them:** “Lord, let others experience Your living hope.” Ask God to strengthen their faith and reveal His hope to them. Ask Him to use you to point others to the hope that is only found in Him.

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



# Day 6

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**Week 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5**

## **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.**

**Cross Connection Reflection:** How does focusing on what is eternal reshape what you depend on in this season?

**Prayer:** "Jesus, help me live for what lasts."

**Live it out today:** Let moments of hunger remind you of eternal hope.

# Day 7

**Week 5 Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-5** *3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

## Today's Practice: Reflection

**Step 1 – Read the passage one final time and reflect.** How has God been building your hope this week? What truth from this passage has stayed with you the most?

**Step 2 – Testify:** Write down the next date and time you will have a chance to share the Hope God is building in you.

**Declaration:** The Hope I have in Jesus is alive because He is the Living Hope. I will not put my hope in temporary things, but will look to Jesus, the hope of my salvation. Because of his sacrifice, I will NEVER be without hope!

