



# GRACE OF CHRIST

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LOVE WELL WITH DROPS OF GRACE

**“And he said to all, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.’” Luke 9.23 (ESV)**

February 26, 2021

Dear Grace of Christ Family,

This Sunday is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent. It's no different than the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent. It simply means that we are drawing closer to Holy Week, and eventually Easter Sunday. As each week passes, it's a reminder that we are on a journey that leads us all to the cross. It's a journey of our continual transformation and sanctification. As a Reformed people, we are always “being Reformed”. Lent is a perfect time for all of us to consider the journey we are on as we follow Christ. It's an ideal time for us to pay attention to the ways the Holy Spirit is transforming us along the way.

The New International Version of the Bible translates Luke 9.23 in the following way:

*“Whoever wants to be my **disciple** must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”*

To be a DISCIPLE of Jesus is more than simply following Jesus, or even giving allegiance to Jesus. There were many followers of Jesus when He was on earth. Unfortunately, not all of the followers continued on the journey once Jesus was crucified. To be a disciple of Jesus requires learning how to become like Jesus. It is a lifelong process that happens while we abide in Christ. It's an ongoing process where we are transformed from death to life, from barrenness to fruitfulness. Lent is a great time for us to consider how we might not only follow in the footsteps of Jesus, but to allow ourselves to imitate Him who came to be a servant of all. Lent is a time for us to be more intentional in our pursuit of God as we invite the Holy Spirit to speak into those places in our lives that are keeping us from becoming like Christ. It's a time when we can be more conscious about what the Holy Spirit needs to keep cutting away from us that is preventing us from loving God and loving others.

The journey to the cross for Jesus culminated in His laying down His life for us. Without His death, there would be no Resurrection. Our own journey to the cross involves dying to ourselves, laying down our lives, leaving our old self behind, while stepping into who we are as New Creations in Christ.

As you prepare for worship, as well as for the celebration of Easter, what can you do in order to continue the process of sanctification? Are you spending time with the Lord, reading Scripture, offering your prayers, listening to the voice of God? Are you able to invite the Holy Spirit to search your heart, soul, mind, and body in order to be purged of thoughts, attitudes, behaviors and even habits that are luring you back into the

shadows? Can you spend time embracing the life that is yours in Christ by praising God and giving Him thanks? Don't wait until Sunday. Don't wait until Easter. Continue to daily pick up your cross as you rise up out of the ashes.

Because of Christ, and in His Grace  
Pastor Bill