



# A Good Enough Lent

A 40-Day Companion to  
Read, Reflect, and Pray

## WHAT IS LENT?

Lent marks the forty days leading up to Easter, mirroring the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. It is a practice that began during the 4th century as a way to prepare Christians for the holiest days of the year.

During Lent, we ask God to show us the world as it is. We begin with the reality of our finitude rubbed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday—from dust we were made, to dust we shall return. Then, we walk through that reality in a kind of dress rehearsal. It's the downward slope of God—the Great Descent, where the whole Church walks toward the cross.

Frankly, Lent is my favorite part of the church calendar because it is a time when the whole church is on the losing team. A time when we all get a minute to tell the truth: Life is so beautiful and life is so hard. For everyone.

Of course, the cross isn't the end of the story, but this season of grief is carved out to acknowledge the reality of Christ's sacrifice. And the reality of suffering that so many of our circumstances reflect too—our own pain and grief and despair. Easter is coming, yes. But for now, we sit in the ashes of our broken dreams and broken hearts, knowing that God sits here with us.

Many people practice Lent by giving something up—alcohol, meat, chocolate, social media. Some take up something new—a new prayer practice or swearing profusely like I did one year (you probably remember reading about this in *Everything Happens for a Reason (and Other Lies I've Loved)*).

This year, I'm inviting our Everything Happens Community to give up on the idea that life is always getting better and settle in for a life and a faith that is good enough. Together, we're going to take ourselves off the hook for perfection. Perfect lives. Perfect bodies. Perfect relationships. And realize that this is the beautiful work of being human... again today. Thank God we get to do it together.

So what do you say? Do you want to commit to a "Good Enough" Lent?



# HOW TO USE THIS COMPANION GUIDE

Each of the following forty entries is meant to be read alongside our new book of spiritual reflections, *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*. Of course, you can just use this free guide or just read *Good Enough* on its own, but you might find the most richness and depth when used together.

## EACH DAY INCLUDES:

- An entry to read from *Good Enough*
- A scripture to read and reflect on, based on that day's theme
- Little checkboxes to indicate what you've read ☐
- Reflection questions that are meant to be all-play—accessible whether you are practicing Lent solo or using this book with your church, in a book club, or around the dinner table with your family.
- A prayer to close your time
- Feel free to print this booklet out and write your answers on these pages, in a journal, or simply meditate on your responses.

## A NOTE ON SUNDAYS

Lent lasts for a full 40 days, but Sundays don't count. They are a day off from whatever you are abstaining from during Lent, a day to remind us that we are made for both—grief and joy, sorrow and delight. Strangely, this might feel like a hard thing to do—to make yourself stop working or worrying or checking off your day's reading—and really rest.

But over the next six weeks, you're invited to press against that part of your wiring that tells you that you must always be accomplishing, producing, processing—that everything must be *for* something. And take a day off from the Lent-y feelings to practice the discipline of Sabbath. Rest! Feast! Enjoy!

Before we begin, we wholeheartedly believe in blessing the crap out of each other. So here is a blessing for you, my dear.

## A BLESSING FOR A MEDIUM-SAD JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

Blessed are you  
who have found yourself—yet again—  
among the fellowship of the afflicted.  
Making the long, long walk toward the cross.

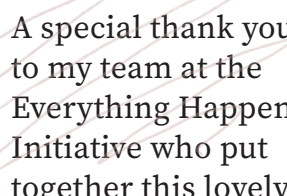
Blessed are you,  
who are tired of pretending  
that raw effort is the secret to perfection.  
That that which breaks your heart  
is overcomeable.  
It's not. And you know that now.

Blessed are you  
who need a gentle reminder that  
even now, even today,  
God is here,  
walking with us,  
meeting us in our places  
of sorrow and despair,  
desperation and grief.  
Slowing lifting our chin toward hope.  
Not promising to erase the pain.  
But to carry it with us.

Blessed are we who realize  
we are never—were never—alone.  
And somehow,  
That is good enough.



To learn more about the work of the Everything Happens Initiative, listen to podcast episodes, or download additional resources, visit [katebowler.com](https://katebowler.com).



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# Regula

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2 | ASH WEDNESDAY

☐ *Good Enough*, 3-8   ☐ Psalm 119:103-106

01

Like many things done with regularity, spiritual practices risk becoming rote or worse—burdensome. But, on the other hand, you might be someone who takes great delight in routine. Where do you fall on the spectrum?



Don't make me do the same thing everyday.

I thrive off regularity/routine.

02

Spiritual practices are not a guarantee of spiritual growth, but somehow and sometimes, God shows up. That mystery is what we open ourselves toward and embrace as we practice the disciplines laid out in scripture and found in centuries of Church tradition. What new spiritual practice (perhaps the practice of Lent!) is rising in you that longs for a beginning? Here are a list of some spiritual disciplines to consider:

**PRAYER**

**FASTING**

**SOLITUDE**

**JOY**

**ATTENDING CHURCH REGULARLY**

**MEDITATION**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**SERVICE**

**GIVING**

**CONFESSION**

03

Nothing harsh or burdensome, that's what St. Benedict sought for his spiritual rules. What shape can your new spiritual practice take, so that it becomes a gentle and loving part of each day?

God, I want to be the kind of person who turns to You regularly, resting in the comfort of your unchanging presence. Meet me in this gentle way. And allow me self-forgiveness when I forget. And the courage to start again.

*Amen.*

# Buoyed by The Absurd

THURSDAY, MARCH 3

☐ *Good Enough*, 9-14 ☐ John 2:1-11, Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 24:36-43

01

Think of a moment you experienced unexpected joy in the midst of sorrow.

02

Joy might come unexpectedly, or it can be a discipline. "Joy is the oxygen for doing hard things," said Gary Haugen. Describe a time the practice of doing something joyful has buoyed you.

03

Try something absurd today, even if you don't feel very joyful. How did it feel?

God, somehow joy and sorrow can coexist. During these long, bleak days of Lent, surprise me with a capacity for delight. Remind me that every moment can contain a wide range of experience. Thank you for the capacity to hold both at the same time.

*Amen.*

# Mourning a Future Self

FRIDAY, MARCH 4

☐ *Good Enough*, 15-20 ☐ Psalm 42

01

Grief can take on many forms. Some losses are easy to name. The people and relationships and pets we love. Some losses are more difficult to name. Like the loss of imagined futures. Name what you are grieving today.

02

Write a prayer of lament to God. You can use Psalm 42 or Psalm 130 as a template. God can take it all, even the angry and most honest parts.

Read your lament out loud as a prayer. Sit in silence. Allow yourself a few minutes to grieve what you've lost.

*Amen.*



# Shiny Things

**SATURDAY, MARCH 5**

☐ *Good Enough*, 21-27   ☐ Exodus 32

01

What do your major life choices—your closest relationships, your family, your career, your hobbies—point toward?

02

What about how you spend your time, your money, your resources? What do those say about who you are?

03

“What is idolatry except beautiful things that do not transform us?” (*Good Enough*, 25). Given that definition of idolatry, what is something you might have to reconsider or redirect?

Dear God, I want to be the kind of person whose life reflects my deepest held values—Your deepest held values. Love. Joy. Peace. Patience. Kindness. Goodness. Faithfulness. Gentleness. Self-control. Justice. Truth. Teach me how to better integrate my life into Your ways.

*Amen.*