



# 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?



Kate

# 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.

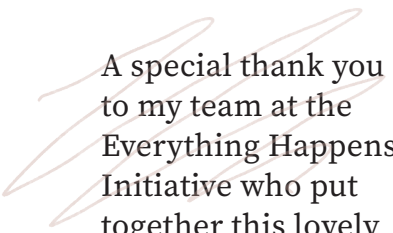
Blessed are you,  
who are tired of pretending  
that raw effort is the secret to perfection.  
That that which breaks your heart  
is overcomeable.  
It's not. And you know that now.

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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# Hopping Off The Treadmill

MONDAY, MARCH 21

☐ *Good Enough*, 98-102   ☐ Isaiah 55:1-3

01

Where do you fall on this busyness spectrum?



My days have lots of margin.

My days are always too full.

02

Think back to something you did recently that shimmered with meaning. What does that say about what's important to you?

03

As the great theologian and reformer Martin Luther said to Philip Melanchthon, "Philip, let's go fishing. Today we can leave the governance of the universe to God." How would it feel to get off of the treadmill (or at least slow down) today, and recognize that you are more than the sum of your tasks, hyper-activity, or accomplishments?

God, Sometimes I am tempted to believe that my worth is linked to all I can do. The person who never says no. Whose plate is filled to the brim. But too often my productivity can leave me feeling empty, exhausted, and unseen. Ground me in Your love. Remind me that I am not merely the sum of my tasks, and infuse my work, my relationships, my life with a deeper meaning—one grounded in Your purposes.

*Amen.*

# Hello, Goodbye

TUESDAY, MARCH 22

☐ *Good Enough*, 103-109   ☐ Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

01

Think about a change you have made recently. Perhaps you moved careers or had a child or lost someone you loved or had to give up playing your favorite sport. What are the goodbyes and hellos embedded in that change (no matter how small)?

02

“Not every change is going to be a transformation. But every change can be an opportunity for grace” (*Good Enough*, 105). The change you thought of in the previous question: has it made you better? Worse? Holier? Crustier? Softer? Quicker on the draw? What other words would you use to describe yourself in the wake of that change?

03

The Good Enough Step for today says, “I did what I knew to do, with what I knew then.” How does that phrase sit with you as you think back on past decisions or mistakes?

God, Show me what I need for right now, and grant me the courage and wisdom and grace to receive it.

*Amen.*

# No Reason Whatsoever

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

☐ *Good Enough*, 110-116   ☐ Luke 12:22-28

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01

Why do people even try to offer comfort by telling us, “DON’T WORRY!”? The trick to not worrying is... well if I knew that I’d be rich. What’s your usual approach to life when it gets overwhelming?

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02

One of Kate’s tricks for combating feeling overwhelmed is to do something for no reason whatsoever. Just for fun, give yourself a short time limit, and race to see how many ridiculously absurdly fun things you can think of to do for no reason! Pick one and try it today. How does it make you feel?

God, come into those places that are too heavy, that feel truly overwhelming. Lift them away for a while, so that I might turn my gaze to the loveliness of the lily, the feathered texture and color of bird wings. And give me the courage to play once in a while, like the little kid I once was, and who is still in there somewhere.

*Amen.*



# Becoming Real

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

☐ *Good Enough*, 117-121   ☐ Isaiah 53:1-5

01

Did you have a comfort item as a child? What do you turn toward for comfort now?

02

Some may actually, physically turn away from the sight of suffering. But there is One who never does, our God. Can you recall a time in your life when God felt especially close?

03

The Isaiah reading for today is about Jesus, who “had nothing in His appearance to attract us... a man of suffering and familiar with pain.” Lent is when we walk with Jesus toward the mysteries of His death and resurrection when He appeared more alive, more real than ever before. God knows human suffering from the inside out, and whatever you bring, God can hear it. You are never too much. Bring God all the reality you know too well—all the hurt and confusion and even the stuff that looks the shabbiest. Talk it out. Honest prayer is where reality grows and comfort begins.

God, I need you to show up in the midst of my most fragile humanity. Make yourself present to me in my pain and loss and fear. Remind me I never walk alone.

*Amen.*

## #Blessed

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

☐ *Good Enough*, 122-128 ☐ Matthew 5:1-12

01

How do you think culture defines “blessing” or being “blessed”? How do you define it? Based on this passage in Matthew 5:1-12, how does Jesus define it?

02

“The world looks a bit strange from here, upside down. But maybe it’s how it’s supposed to be; our feet rooted in heaven” (*Good Enough*, 124). In the Matthew reading, how is Jesus calling us to embrace the upside-down kingdom?

03

Write a blessing using your own name and the specifics that you are dealing with.  
*Blessed am I, [Your Name], when....*

God, I can’t do this alone. Come into these hard places and be with me, bless me, that I might find a way through, that there might be comfort and even some love and peace in the midst of it. Enough maybe, to be a blessing to others.

*Amen.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

☐ *Good Enough*, 129-133 ☐ Philippians 4:4-9

01

Are you someone who loves to live in the past, the present, or the future? Why?

02

Which is the hardest for you to live into and why?

03

In Philippians 4:4-9, Paul connects gentleness with two practices: handing over our worries to God, and loving what is good in the here and now. But it's hard to notice the good things when we are trying to problem-solve. Grab some sticky notes or scraps of paper, and give each of your worries a name. Place them in a basket—into God's hands.

God, I am bringing all these worries to You, for they are too big for me to solve right now. And I am turning my eyes to all that is good, gazing on each one knowing they all come from You: the true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, praiseworthy, and excellent things. Thank You, God.

*Amen.*



**Blessed are you, recognizing  
that the rightsizing of reach  
and possibility is the heart's  
ease of God's good counsel.  
Opening your eyes to all that is  
here. Let its beauty seep into  
your pores and whisper words  
of peace.**

*Good Enough, p. 132*

