

MONDAY
28 MARCH

Isaiah 65:17-21
Psalm 30:1-5. 8.
11-end
John 4:43-end

TUESDAY
29 MARCH

Ezekiel 47:1-9. 12
Psalm 46:1-8
John 5:1-3. 5-16

WEDNESDAY
30 MARCH

Isaiah 49:8-15
Psalm 145:8-18
John 5:17-30

THURSDAY
31 MARCH

Exodus 32:7-14
Psalm 106:19-23
John 5:31-end

FRIDAY
1 APRIL

Wisdom 2:1. 12-22
or Jeremiah 26:8-11
Psalm 34:15-end
John 7:1-2. 10.
25-30

SATURDAY
2 APRIL

Jeremiah 11:18-20
Psalm 7:1-2. 8-10
John 7:40-52

REFLECTION

Our readings from John's Gospel

this week start with a simple healing.

Jesus meets a man who has been ill for thirty-eight years

– just think of that – and heals him.

Notice the question Jesus asks him first:

“Do you want to be made well?”

Jesus is giving the man responsibility

for what will happen: his life is going to change so utterly, and there is going to be such a fuss about this healing, that it would not be fair on the man if he had not been offered the choice.

This healing escalates the mistrust between Jesus and the local religious authorities. In the rest of the week's Gospel readings, we see how Jesus disturbs and divides the people. Some are excited and prepared to believe in him, some are frightened and see him as a destroyer of all they hold most precious. It's easy for us to condemn the latter, but that is because we have become accustomed to the claims made by and about Jesus. We have forgotten how revolutionary and unsettling they actually are.

PRAYER

Merciful Lord,
You know our struggles to serve you.
When sin spoils our lives
and overshadows our hearts,
come to our aid
and turn us back to you again.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.



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CHRISTIAN CLASSICS –
A LENTEN STUDY COURSEMERE CHRISTIANITY
BY C. S. LEWIS – PART IV

Jane Williams continues her study of C. S. Lewis' Mere Christianity.

Lewis outlines three spheres of “moral” behaviour. The first is about how we behave towards each other in order to create harmony. The second is about how we manage our own emotions and reactions, and the third is about what human life is made for and how we discern the shape and meaning of life.

Lewis looks at the virtues and vices, and argues that morality is not so much about trying to do good in order to please God, as about shaping who we are. Each decision and action we make is making tiny adjustments to the kind of person we are becoming, “slowly turning [us] into a heavenly creature or a hellish creature”. That is why our behaviour is so very important: its consequences are enormous.

So Lewis argues that the greatest sin is pride, or self-conceit, because it is, by definition, competitive rather than co-operative, essentially about being willing to do whatever it takes to make oneself superior. It can never be satisfied because there will always be someone, somewhere, with more – more money, more power, better looks – than we have. So pride is always causing enmity: it is the perfect tool of God's enemy.

Lewis offers a simple pride test: how much do we hate it when other people snub us or overlook us, patronise us or hog the limelight or put us in the wrong? And how do we then feel about the person who seems to be making us look small?

Genuine humility is not putting ourselves down, longing for people to see how humble we are. Instead it is a joyful and liberating freedom from having to think about ourselves the whole time, and worry about what others are thinking. Humility is freedom.

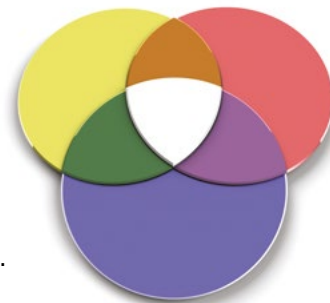
Questions for thought or discussion:

- What do you think people usually mean by “Christian morality”?
- Do you agree with Lewis that pride is the root of most sin?
- Can you look back and see how past actions have shaped you?

LIVE
the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
Caroline Hodgson
and
Heather Smith



Fourth week of Lent

Monday 28 March to
Saturday 2 April
2022

WEEK