

# Pastor's Corner

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March 2017 – Rev. Jay Bissett

Each winter, just as it seems Spring will never arrive, the Season of Lent (which comes from the Old English word for Spring) arrives to usher in Easter. Even though this year Winter seems to have forgotten to arrive, Lent is upon us.

Lent is a time of Preparation and Introspection before Easter, recognizing our sinfulness, our mortality, and our need of God. Hopefully, by the time Easter arrives we have new perspective and new joy in God's grace and the promise of resurrection.

We begin our observation of Lent with an Ash Wednesday Service on March 1st at 7:00 p.m. We begin with admitting our mortality. Lent continues through Saturday, April 15th excluding Sundays, which are technically no part of Lent because each Sunday is a "little Easter".

Traditionally, Lent has been observed with a fast of some kind: historically meat and yeast bread would not be eaten during Lent; more recently chocolate and sodas have been popular to give up for Lent. The idea was that to deny yourself would allow you to more closely identify with Christ's suffering.

Several years ago, I came across an article that suggested that instead of giving up meat or chocolate or soda, that we give up habits that separate us from God. I hope that you will read this list and use it for Lent.

## 19 things you might consider giving up this Lent and beyond:

**Fear:** God is on my side. In Him I am more than a conqueror. (Romans 8:37)

The need to please everyone: I can't please everyone anyway. There is only one I need to strive to please.

**Envy:** I am blessed. My value is not found in my possessions, but in my relationship with my Heavenly Father.

**Impatience:** God's timing is the perfect timing.

**Sense of entitlement:** The world does not owe me anything. God does not owe me anything. I live in humility and grace.

**Bitterness and Resentment:** The only person I am hurting by holding onto these is myself.

**Blame:** I am not going to pass the buck. I will take responsibility for my actions.

**Gossip and Negativity:** I will put the best construction on everything when it comes to other people. I will also minimize my contact with people who are negative and toxic and bring other people down.

**Comparison:** I have my own unique contribution to make and there is no one else like me.

**Fear of failure:** You don't succeed without experiencing failure. Just make sure you fall forward.

**A spirit of poverty:** Believe with God that there is always more than enough and never a lack.

**Feelings of unworthiness:** You are fearfully and wonderfully made by your creator. (see Psalm

**Doubt:** Believe God has a plan for you that is beyond anything you could imagine. The future is brighter than you could ever realize.

**Self-pity:** God comforts us in our sorrow so that we can comfort others with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

**Retirement:** As long as you are still breathing, you are here for a reason. You have a purpose to influence others for Christ. That does not come to an end until the day we die.

**Excuses:** A wise man once said, if you need an excuse, any excuse will do.

**Lack of counsel:** Wise decisions are rarely made in a vacuum.

**Pride:** Blessed are the humble.

**Worry:** God is in control and worrying will not help.

Source: <http://www.dailyworld.com/story/opinion/2017/02/16/19-things-give-up-lent-arent-chocolate/9800561>