

The Gift of Lent

by Carolyn Webb

How are you feeling this Lenten season?

Lent, for me had always been a difficult season. It's such a somber time. For me, it was filled with feelings of guilt that my life should displease God so much that it was necessary for his Son to be punished for what I had done, said, and thought. I felt terrible that all that suffering was caused by me. I took my role in Jesus' death very personally, but when it came to my salvation it was a different matter. From a very young age, I was familiar with John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." As a member of the world who believed in Jesus, I was saved from the punishment I deserved, but at the same time I did not see that he personally came for me.

All that changed one Maundy Thursday evening. I had prepared for communion as I did many times before. The words of institution that the pastor spoke were the same as they had always been, but on that day, these words spoke straight to my heart. "This is My body given for you.... This cup is the new covenant in My blood which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:19-20) When Jesus served that first Lord's Supper, he didn't say this is my body, look what you did to it; this is my blood you caused me to bleed. He said his body is given for me; his blood was poured out for me. His death wasn't something I caused, it was something Jesus knew I needed and he gave it as a gift. As the bread was distributed, the words "for you" were stated as I received my portion. That gift wasn't just a communal gift for the world; it was a gift for me. This sudden realization brought tears to my eyes as I felt the love of the Father's plan of salvation and the Son's willingness to carry out that plan.

I feel different about Lent now. I am no longer overwhelmed by guilt over what I caused. Now I am awed by the precious gift that has been given to me. I pray that as you travel through this season of Lent that you will feel the love of God that has been given to you!



Season: Lent

Videos: 8. Having Peace in Your Life
14. Don't Worry, be Happy...in the Lord!

Devotions: 78. 'Let Go and Let God' is Easier Said Than Done
90. CSI
102. After the Feasting
136. Road Blocks are Mere Pebbles
179. Tug of War
214. K.I.S.S.

Prayers: 7. Dear God of Justice and Mercy, I want to thank you for sending...
27. Dear Merciful Father, You alone know how much I love my pet...

Super Girl: 112. Harped on. Berated. Made to feel less than...

Scripture References: Exodus 24:8; Jeremiah 31:31; Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24;
1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:6, 8, 13

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