

SERMON NOTES:



22nd Feb, 2026

Lent Part 2
Hunger for Holiness

Pastor Mick Spann

1. The Wilderness Is a Battlefield

- Practicing the season of Lent strips away distraction
- Eventually, this will mean that, like Jesus in the wilderness, we come face-to-face with temptation.
- The battle: truth vs lies

2. Sin Is Not Passive

Genesis 4:7

“Sin is crouching at your door... it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

- Sin is described as active, predatory
- It desires to master us
- God’s command: “you must rule over it”
- Lent invites honest confrontation, not passive acceptance

1 John 1:8

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves...”

- No one stands above another
- We fight together, not alone

3. Learning from the Desert Fathers & Mothers

When Christianity became culturally accepted, persecution stopped but faith became comfortable and passion cooled. Some Christians withdrew into the desert. Not to escape the world but to confront their hearts.

They named the “Eight Thoughts”:

- Gluttony
- Lust
- Greed
- Anger
- Dejection
- Acedia (spiritual apathy)
- Vainglory (need for admiration)
- Pride

The wilderness tends to reveal:

- What distracts us
- What distorts us

4. This battlelines are drawn upon the simple tenets of the Gospel

- All have sinned (Romans 3:23)
- The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
- Jesus lived without sin (Hebrews 4:15)
- He bore our sin (1 Peter 2:24)
- He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)
- Salvation is by grace (Ephesians 2:8–9)
- We are forgiven through repentance and confession (Acts 2:28; Romans 10:9–10)
- We are reconciled (2 Corinthians 5:17–19)
- We have eternal life (John 3:16)

For this reason we do not fight to be righteous *for* salvation.

We fight to be righteous *because* of our salvation.

5. Holiness Is Active

Christ and the Apostles were clear about that active nature of living a holy life:

- 2 Peter 3:11 — live holy and godly lives
- Matthew 18:8–9 — cut off what causes sin
- James 4:7 — resist the devil
- Colossians 3:5 — put to death earthly nature
- 1 Corinthians 6:18 — flee sexual immorality

Throw off. Resist. Flee. Put to death... Holiness requires intention.

6. A reminder from last week... We begin from a place of Belovedness

Before the wilderness, Jesus was declared beloved (Matthew 3:17).

We resist sin because we are loved — not to earn love.

7. Small acts. Real resistance.

Consider these ideas to resist sin in small but deliberate ways:

- Gluttony → fast one meal; pray instead
- Lust → guard media habits
- Greed → practice generosity
- Anger → pray for those who frustrate you
- Dejection → write daily gratitude
- Acedia → take a daily prayer walk
- Vainglory → take a break from self-promotion
- Pride → confess your struggles to someone trusted

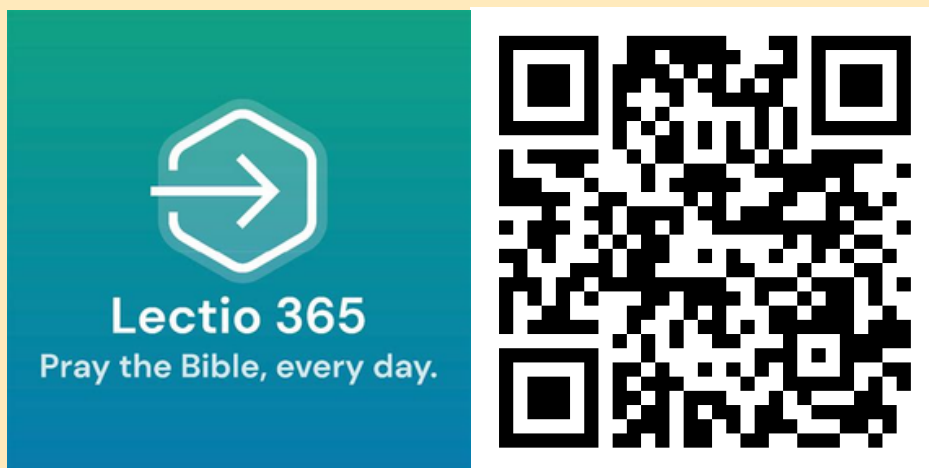
Overcoming sin is a lifelong battle

Sin may be crouching at the door. But Grace is already inside.

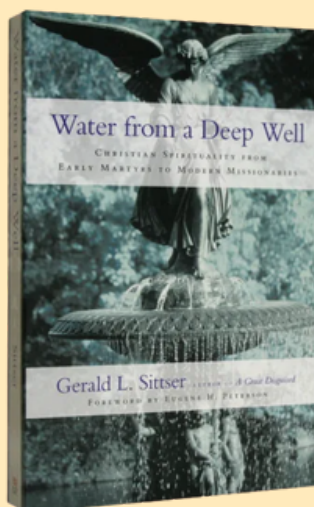
Freedom is worth fighting for.

This series is based upon resources lovingly provided by Lectio 365 and the 24-7 Prayer Movement. The companion study guide on the next page is designed for small groups to consider each weekly theme more personally.

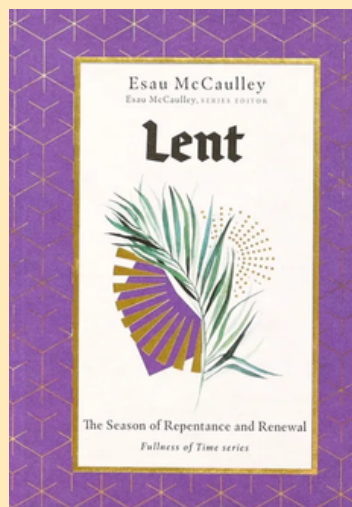
The Lectio 365 App provides daily guided prayers, in the style of meditative lectio divina. Over the next 40 days, the App will focus specifically upon these themes of Lent.



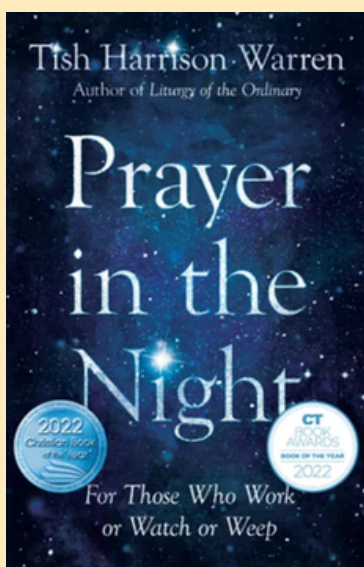
In preparation for this series, Mick has found these books to be very good:



Water from a Deep Well
by Gerald L. Sittser



Lent
by Esau McCauley



Prayer in the Night
by Tish Harrison
Warren





Week 2

(The first week after Ash Wednesday)

Intensifying my Hunger for Holiness

The Desert as a Place of Spiritual Testing

Icebreaker Question

What unexpected test have you faced in life that taught you something or caused you to grow in your faith?

Watch



lectio365.com/desertresources

Week 2: John Cassian

Read



Matthew 18:8–9

Proverbs 4:2–28

Discuss

1. In the video, Pete listed the eight vices which John Cassian said we need to overcome. Have you ever thought about despondency and acedia (or listlessness / apathy) as vices to overcome?
2. Which of the eight vices he listed – gluttony, lust, greed, despondency, anger, acedia (apathy), vainglory (showing off) and pride – do you think God might be encouraging you to reflect on this Lent?
3. Are you able to share an example of a time when you have struggled with one or more of these vices and managed to overcome them?
4. Do you ever struggle with the tension between being saved by grace, yet needing to put effort into your spiritual formation?
5. As a group, think of some creative, simple and practical ways you might “wrestle” with each of these vices this week, such as fasting for gluttony, or acts of generosity for greed. How might you hold each other accountable to these intentions?