



# Through the Scriptures

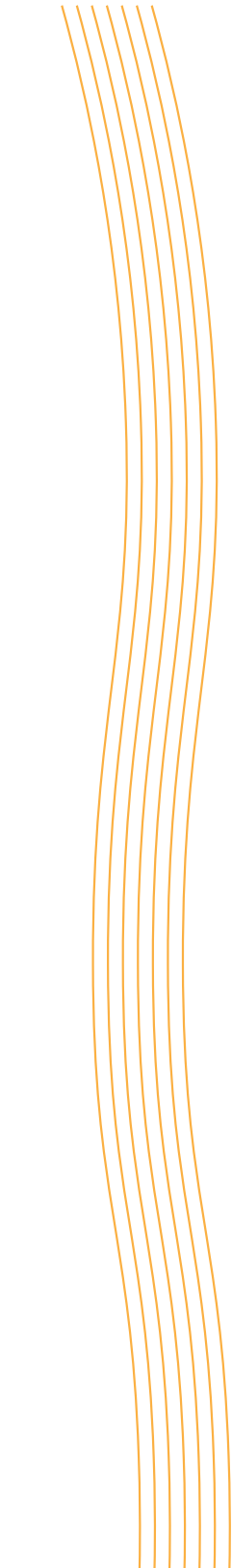
*Daily holy readings for spiritual renewal*



Resource #2 on Lectio Divina



Diocese of Toronto  
Anglican Church of Canada



Eternal God, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning, grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**Lectio Divina (Latin for Divine Reading) has been a practice of the Christian Church since the time of the Desert Fathers and Mothers. These were early Christian hermits and ascetics who understood this form of careful reading as a path to promote a deeper walk with God and to increase one's knowledge of the scriptures.**

The goal of these 31 daily readings<sup>1</sup> is to come to know and love Christ<sup>2</sup> the *Living* Word more deeply, as you engage with and are formed by the *written* Word.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, the scripture passages are cited in the New Revised Standard Version (Updated Edition).

<sup>2</sup> Origen, an early Christian teacher of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, understood Christ, the Living Word, to be the interpretive key to unlocking the message of the Scriptures, the written Word. Reading scripture was meant to be more than simply reading through sacred texts; it was meant to be a tool by which people encountered and enjoyed the Living God. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century the term Lectio Divina was already well established in the writings of such Church Fathers as St. Ambrose and St. Augustine. However, the four-fold pattern of Lectio Divina used during the medieval period has been attributed to St. Benedict and Pope Gregory.

First, find a quiet place with few distractions. Then, after a few moments of silence, offer a short prayer thanking God for his presence, and inviting the Holy Spirit to be your guide.

Then, read through one of the following scriptures three times; once for each of the first three “movements” of Lectio Divina: reading, meditating and praying. The final movement (contemplation) is not about thinking but about resting in the presence of God.

- (1) **Read** the scripture slowly and, when possible, aloud, paying loving attention to the text itself, no matter how familiar it is.
- (2) **Meditate** on the passage, pondering words and phrases that stand out and inviting the Holy Spirit to help you see Christ working in and through the text.
- (3) **Pray** the passage, offering it as part of a loving conversation with God that will ultimately be a lamp for your feet and a light for your path.
- (4) **Contemplate** God’s love for you in Christ, simply resting in and enjoying God’s love in silence.



# God's Call to Relationship With Us

## (1) God calls the whole human race into life

**Genesis 1:26-31**

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

## (2) God calls each of us into life

**Psalms 139:13-16**

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.

### **(3) God calls us into a relationship of loving intimacy**

**Isaiah 55.1-3**

[Yahweh says,] “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters. Come, you who have no money, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk – without money and without cost. Why spend money and get that which is not bread? Why spend your labor on that which does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me; and you will have good food to eat, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give heed and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

### **(4) God calls us into relationship with God and each other**

**1 John 4:7-12**

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.



## **(5) God calls us into baptism**

### **Romans 6:3-11**

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

## **(6) God calls us to specific roles as Christians**

### **Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13**

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. . . .The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

## **(7) God calls us to faithful love in the Body of Christ**

### **John 15.4-12**

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.



## **(8) God calls us to imitate Christ in the Incarnation**

### **Philippians 2.1-11**

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but the interests of others.

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## **(9) God calls us to repentance and celebration**

### **Luke 15.17-24**

But when [the prodigal son] came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."'



So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

## **(10) God calls us to reconciliation and mission**

### **John 21.15-17**

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."



## **(11) God calls us to abundant life in the Word**

### **Isaiah 55.6-11**

Seek the Lord while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;  
let the wicked forsake their way,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,  
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

## **(12) God calls us to proclaim and share the Word**

### **Luke 24.30-35**

When Jesus was at the table with {the two disciples in Emmaus}, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the

scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

## God's Call to Pray

### (13) Solomon's prayer for God's presence

#### 1 Kings 8.27-30

Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O Lord my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive."

### (14) The Psalmist's prayer when God seems absent

#### Psalm 43.1-8, 11

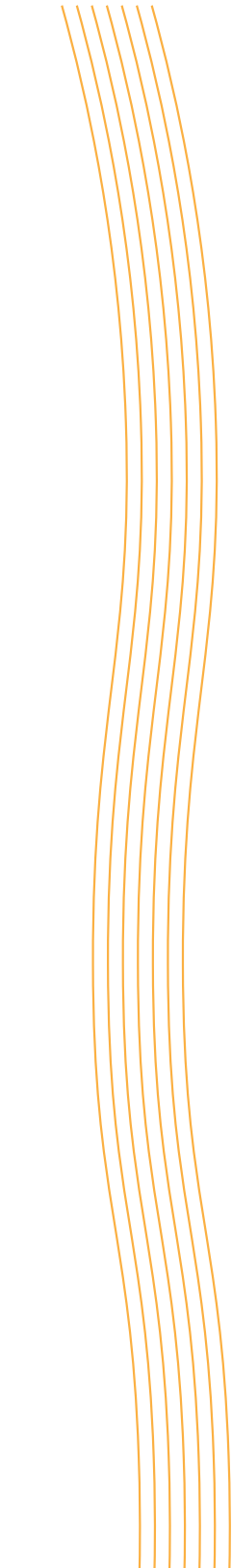
As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When shall I come and behold the face of God?

My tears have been my food day and night,

while people say to me continually, 'Where is your God?'



These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:  
how I went with the throng, and led them in procession to  
the house of God,  
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude  
keeping festival.

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you  
disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my  
God.

My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you  
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.  
Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your cataracts;  
all your waves and your billows have gone over me.  
By day the Lord commands his steadfast love  
and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my  
life.

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you  
disquieted within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my  
God.

### **(15) Jesus' instruction to pray in solitude and simplicity**

#### **Matthew 6.5-14**

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for  
they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the  
street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell  
you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray,  
go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father  
who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will  
reward you.

When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.

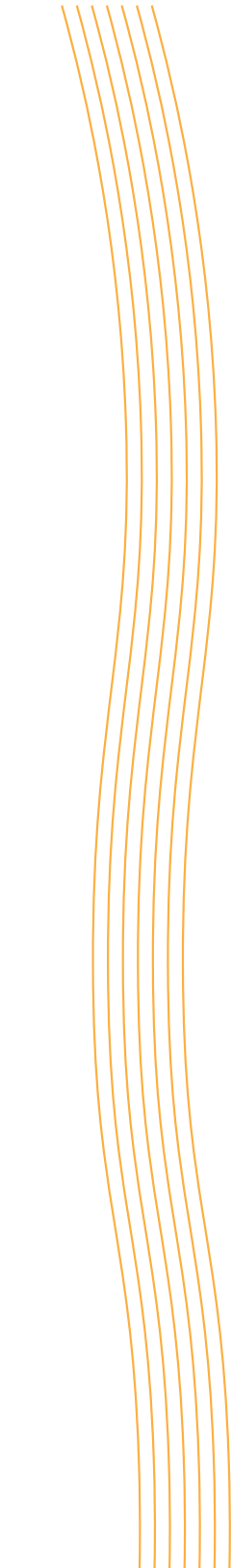
For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

## **(16) Jesus' encouragement of trust when we pray**

### **Matthew 5.25-34**

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing?"

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass



of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

### **(17) Jesus affirms humility in prayer**

**Luke 18.10-14**

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

### **(18) Jesus' request for prayer**

**Mark 14.32-38**

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake."

And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are

possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

## **(19) Peter's prayer for healing a blind man**

### **Acts 3.1-10**

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.

But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. All the people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.



## **(20) Paul's prayer for his reader**

### **Ephesians 3.14-20**

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

## **(21) Paul's prayer to know Christ**

### **Philippians 3.7-11**

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.



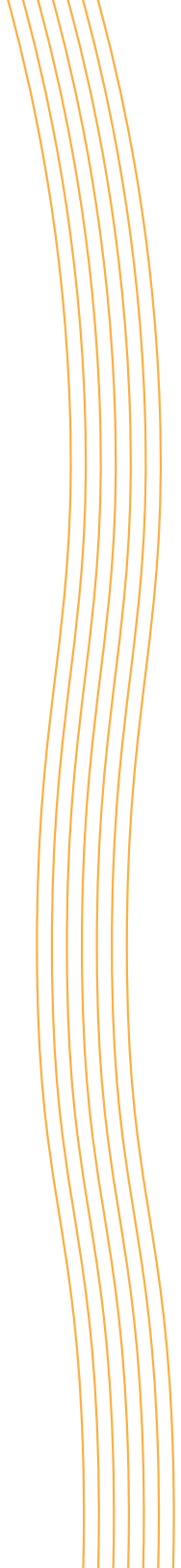
## (22) Paul's exhortation to confidence and joy

### Philippians 4.1, 4-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. . .

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.





## Continually Growing into our Baptismal Promises

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

### (23) Peter preaches to the crowds at Pentecost

#### *Acts 2.41-47*

So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?**

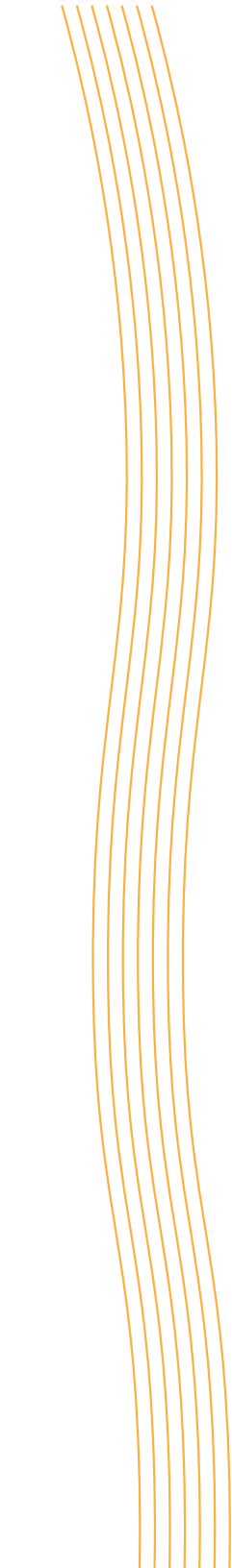
**(24) Jesus tells two parables about finding the lost**

**Matthew 15.1-10**

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable: 'Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.

'Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'



**Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of  
God in Christ?**

**(25) Telling the Good News**

**Romans 10.14-16**

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

**(26) The Great Commission**

**Matthew 28.18-20**

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

**Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?**

**(27) Who is my neighbour?**

**Luke 10.25-37**

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

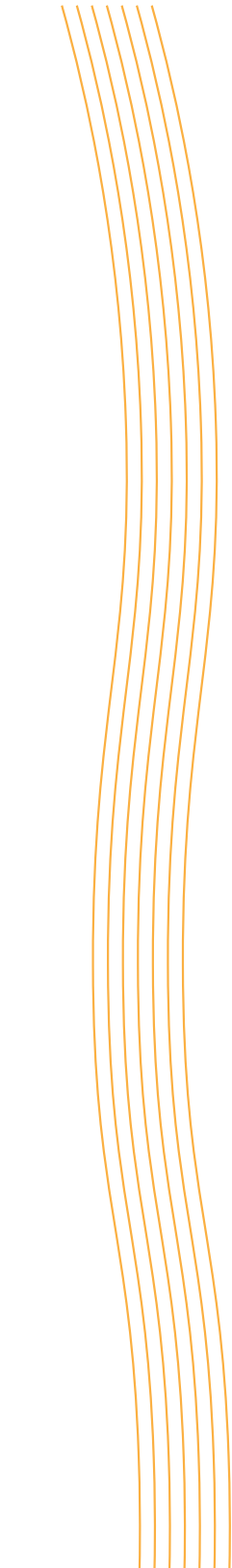
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers . . . Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

**Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?**

**(28) What does God require?**

**Micah 6.7-8**

With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt



offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

## **(29) Jesus' parable of the Last Judgement**

### **Matthew 25.31-46**

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?"

And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

**Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation,  
and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?**

**(30) From the creation stories**

**Genesis 1.26; 2.8, 15**

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

**(31) A vision of Earth to inspire our care of Creation**

**Psalms 65**

Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion;  
and to you shall vows be performed, O you who answer  
prayer!  
To you all flesh shall come.

When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us, you forgive our  
transgressions.  
Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in  
your courts.  
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your  
holy temple.

By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God  
of our salvation;

you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

By your strength you established the mountains; you are girded with might.

You silence the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples.  
Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;  
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.

You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it;  
the river of God is full of water;

you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it.

You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.

You crown the year with your bounty;  
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.

The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,  
the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.

