



THE PASTOR'S PEN

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The Purpose of Lent

Why do we observe Lent each year? Instead of getting into a long, boring theological answer please take a moment to read the following story and the comments afterwards.

The light turned yellow just in front of him as he drove down the street. He did the right thing by stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman behind him was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up.

He took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell. After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. As I watched I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally....I assumed that you had stolen the car."

So why do we observe Lent? It is an annual reminder that we need to take a good look at ourselves and how we are living. We claim to be a disciple of Christ, but is that the example we are showing to the world in our everyday words and deeds? If we do not take time to consider the example we are setting for others; if we do not take the time to examine our motives and our actions, then how do we know if we are being effective in our Christian living?

The Season of Lent begins on Wednesday, March 5th this year with the evening service of the Imposition of Ashes. Starting that evening and for each Wednesday over the following six weeks we will meet together for fellowship, devotions, self-examination and to challenge ourselves to be the disciple that we claim to be in our daily lives. It is something that every Christian needs to be a part of in their daily walk with Christ as they live for Him and serve Him.

Can you be a part of our gatherings this year? Are you ready to take the look at yourself that we all must take? Will you make Lent a priority in your worship and your study this year? You can, if Christ is important enough to you.

Preparing to observe Lent with you,

James