



### **WHAT LENT IS**

Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) leading up to Easter, patterned after Jesus' forty days in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). Historically observed by the global church, it is a time of repentance, prayer, fasting, and renewed focus on the cross. Lent is not about spiritual gloom; it is about spiritual clarity. It invites us to slow down long enough to see the depth of our sin and the greater depth of Christ's mercy. In a culture that constantly distracts and indulges, Lent calls us to examine our loves... what we trust, what we cling to, and what we fear losing. For Pentecostal Christians, Lent becomes a Spirit-led journey of consecration. We believe the same Holy Spirit who accompanied Jesus into the wilderness now leads us into seasons of surrender, not to diminish us, but to deepen us.

### **WHAT LENT ISN'T**

Sometimes, however, well-meaning people approach Lent directed by a common misunderstanding. In some traditions Lent can be perceived as a season in which one earns spiritual merit through self-denial or compensates for sin through personal sacrifice. The Protestant Reformation rightly insisted that we are justified by grace alone through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). From an Assemblies of God perspective, Lent is not a way to add to Christ's finished work but a way to apply it more fully to our hearts. We do not fast to atone for sin; Christ has already done that. We fast because we have been forgiven and we want to strip away the distractions that keep us from following the lead of the One who forgives. Our repentance does not purchase grace, it simply positions us to receive and respond to grace more deeply. The cross is sufficient! Lent simply clears the clutter so we can see it more clearly.

### **HOW WE RESPOND**

So how do we engage Lent faithfully? We begin with the gospel. We ask the Holy Spirit to search us and reveal areas where lesser loves have displaced Christ. We may fast from food, media, or other comforts in order to re-train our desires. We commit to prayer and Scripture, especially the passion narratives, allowing the Spirit to awaken gratitude and holy longing. We practice generosity and reconciliation, embodying the kingdom Christ secured. And we remember that every Sunday in Lent is a small resurrection, a reminder that sorrow does not have the final word. As Pentecostal believers, we lean into Lent expecting the Spirit not only to convict, but to empower. The goal is renewed joy in Jesus. And instead of concluding Lent exhausted from self-effort on Easter morning, our prayer is that we find our spirits awakened by grace.