



**Better Together
IN CHRIST**

LENT 2022

EPHESIANS 4:4-6

MARCH 2-APRIL 16

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

TIAM BOTH LOCATIONS

Stonecrest Campus 5460 Hillendale Dr. Stonecrest, GA 30058	Atlanta Campus 2283 Baker Rd. N.W. Atlanta, GA 30318
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SALEM BIBLE CHURCH
Shalom

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2022 LENT DEVOTIONAL

MARCH 2- APRIL 16

WEEK 1

Salem Bible Church

2283 Baker Road | 5460 Hillendale Drive

Atlanta, GA. 30318 | Lithonia, GA. 30058

Dr. Joseph L. Williams, Senior Pastor

Rev. Jasper W. Williams, Jr., Pastor Emeritus

Dear Salem Family and Friends:

The 2022 Lent season is upon us, and we pray that you will be blessed by our program this year. In keeping with our 2022 church theme *Better Together in Christ*, we will focus on the tenet *Unification* in the acronym C.U.R.E.

Other features of our Lenten observance will include:

- Daily prayer, Bible readings and personal worship
- Weekly Devotional Readings and Jubilee Growth Groups
- 42 Weeks of Prayer and Consecration with Jubilee Prayer Partner
- Fasting & Prayer Times (personal and corporate)
- Virtual Sunday School classes
- Maundy Thursday Observance
- Easter Sunday Services
- Special Resurrection Offering (over and above regular tithe and offerings)

Finally, please know that although we are in prayer with you during this Lenten Season as God continues to bless during the season of Jubilee. We pray that you continue to stay safe, in good health and that God will prosper you. Until we see you again, Shalom and God bless you.

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Joseph L. Williams, Senior Pastor

Rev. Jasper W. Williams, Pastor Emeritus

WEEK 1 (March 2-5, 2022)

Better Together

Scripture Reading:

*And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set [him] in his presence.
(Luke 5:18)*

Devotional Reading

Luke 5: 17-26, Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12

Mary learned to write grants out of necessity. Over thirty-five years ago she was a public health nurse and did not know that if you worked for a nonprofit organization that existed on soft funds that all employees were paid on grant or contract funds. When the grant or contract ends, your job is over. Thinking it was time to move on to try something new, Mary took her first non-nursing job as a project direct on a program funded by a federal grant. It was a small organization and the staff of three worked together as a family. A month after accepting the job, Mary was told she needed to write the continuation grant application. As a single parent, she panicked and prayed for guidance. Mary wrote the continuation application, and it was her first attempt at grant writing and thus the journey began. From a small nonprofit organization to a small independent medical school, writing grants became a way of life for her.

However, the grant applications process became more complicated and time intensive. What she could do by herself now required a team. Mary learned that people on her small staff had different skills. Some could not write the major parts of the grant, but they could do the sections that did not require her skill set. She learned that a member of her team liked and was good at the budget and budget narrative; another member of her team loved to do the part of the grant that required getting people to write support letters and organizing supplemental documents. In this high-tech way of doing things, grants are not mailed, but submitted electronically. Mary was not highly proficient in technology and found

that she had a skilled member on her team who could handle all of the technical requirements of the grant application. By working together as a team, Mary found that she could write better grants in shorter time periods. It is really true that we can get a lot more accomplished if we work together. As in today's scripture, the paralyzed man could not get through the crowd to get to Jesus on his own, but his friends working together found a way and he was healed.

Scripture Commentary

These scripture passages from Luke come at a time when Jesus is in the midst of his ministry while on his journey to Jerusalem. Throughout the narratives, Luke weaves together mutually interpreting words and actions of Jesus. The result is escalating conflict between Jesus and other teachers (i.e., Pharisees and teachers of the law) over both his authority and the interpretation of scripture. In this case, the healing of the paralytic in Luke 5:17-26 disrupts Jesus' teaching in the company of "Pharisees and teachers of the law" from every part of Palestine.¹ When the man is lowered into the room, Jesus, struck by this display of faith, says to him, "Friend your sins are forgiven you". Notice in verse 20 it says, "When he saw **their** faith" it was only then that the man's sins were forgiven by Jesus. It was not just the faith of the paralytic man but those of his friends as well. One could say his friends played an important role in his healing. It is no wonder that the second greatest commandment is to love thy neighbor for God knows we are better together when we operate out of love for each other.

Reflection Questions

Question 1: What are ways we can help a friend find forgiveness?

Question 2: What are some obstacles that can get in the way of helping a friend. Discuss ways of eliminating these obstacles?

¹ Bartlett, David L. *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*. Edited by Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David L. Petersen. 1st Edition, 1st Printing. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010.