

Shrove Tuesday

A short devotional reading for use in any setting
(personal, at home with friends or family, larger groups including church
family or community groups)



Shrove Tuesday is the last day before Lent. The word *Shrove* comes from the medieval word *shriven* which means *forgiven*. It is a day to talk to God and confess things that we've got wrong and may have displeased God in the past year.

People used to avoid eating meat and dairy products during Lent, so on Shrove Tuesday they would eat up all the food that wouldn't last until Easter. In some countries they call it *Fat Tuesday* (in French *Mardi Gras*) or *farewell flesh* (in Greek *Carnival*). In Britain people got into the habit of using up cooking fat, eggs and milk by making pancakes, and it became known as *Pancake Day*. Families would eat pancakes together and there'd be fun activities such as pancake rolling held in the village green.

If it has not previously been part of your tradition, why not make Shrove Tuesday this year an event to remember? You could organise a church family event, or hold an event in your own home for friends and family. Make pancakes to eat alone or as a group of friends or family together. Alternatively, arrange to go to your local fast food pancake restaurant for breakfast or supper, and meet up with others and have some pancakes there. As you eat your pancakes, take a few moments for silent reflection to think about times in the last year where you've gone in the wrong direction and may have displeased God. Read the Bible passage, discuss or silently reflect on the questions and use either the prayer below or make up a confession prayer of your own.

Pancake Recipe

This pancake recipe is a winner every time! 1+1+1+1=Awesome pancakes.

Beat together 1 egg, 1 cup of flour, 1 cup of milk and 1 teaspoon of baking powder.

When your batter is smooth, cook your pancakes, one spoonful at a time on a hotplate.

This recipe will make about 6 pancakes. For bulk pancakes, just double, treble, quadruple the recipe. Keep your pancakes warm in the oven, or serve them as you go.

Pancake Toppings

Invite your friends and family to bring their own toppings to share with the group. Suggest they look to bring things that they have in their household groceries rather than especially going shopping for the event. (This can be seen as a metaphor or symbol for us as people giving to God from within our own personal resources). Toppings could be fresh, frozen or canned fruit, homemade or store bought sauces and syrups, spreads such as Nutella or jams... be creative in seeing what you can individually provide.

Bible Reading

2 Corinthians 5.20 – 6.2

We're Christ's representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God's work of making things right between them. We're speaking for Christ himself now: Become friends with God; he's already a friend with you. How? you say. In Christ. God put the wrong on him who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God. Companions as we are in this work with you, we beg you, please don't squander one bit of this marvellous life God has given us. God reminds us, "I heard your call in the nick of time; The day you needed me, I was there to help." Well, now is the right time to listen, the day to be helped.

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Discuss or Silently Reflect

What happens when we bring our own individual different gifts and abilities to God and to each other as God's family?

How have we failed to cope with our differences?

Do we need to make things right with people we connect with on a daily and weekly basis?

When has God called us to be there to help?

How have we listened?

How have we been there for others when we've been needed?

Prayer

God of grace and mercy, it grieves us to recognise how much we are separated from you because of our own short-comings, and how much poorer our lives are as a result.

Yet we would rather forget our sin, and postpone dealing with it as long as possible.

Forgive us we pray.

Convince us of the urgency of our need for reconciliation, and restore us by your grace.

In the name of Christ we pray.

Amen