

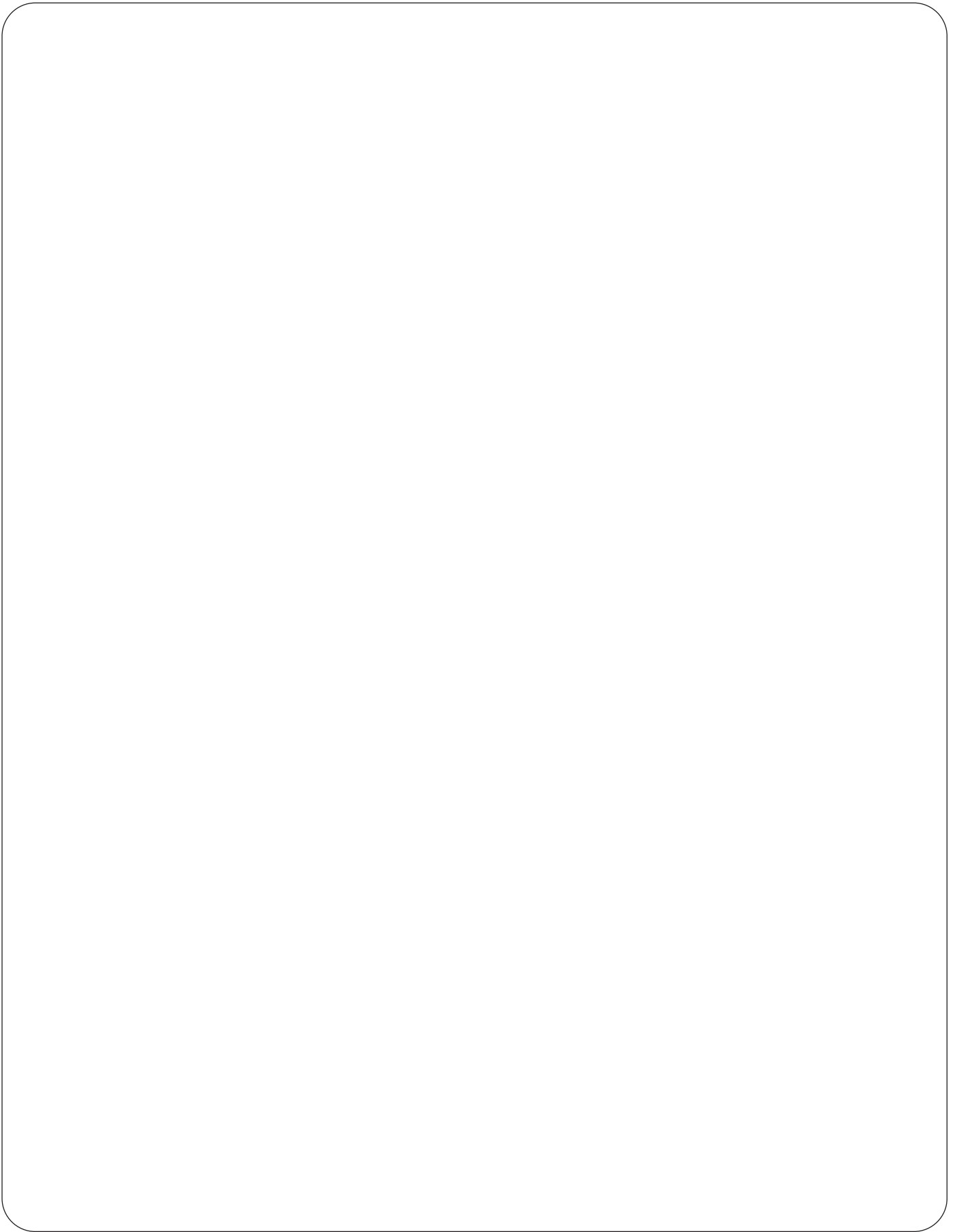


LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES

*People Of Christ With The Message Of Hope*

*a new perspective*

Reflections 2009



*Brought to you in partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries*

# INTRODUCTION

I love the cycle and variety of the calendar. Having grown up in Wisconsin, I am quite accustomed to four distinct seasons. (Actually, there seems to be more than that, but we'll just say, "four.") What's your favorite time of the year?

A lot of people like summer; others like winter. Some enjoy fall the most; for others, spring is their favorite. Each one is unique, depending on where you live and what you enjoy. Your perspective helps to determine your favorite season of the year.

For quite awhile, thousands of years in fact, Christians have used Lent to reflect on their own life and get ready for Easter Sunday—the "Super Bowl" event that Christians celebrate each year.

It's a great season of the year because the event connected to Easter Sunday, Jesus' resurrection from the dead, offers hope and answers to the daily challenges and struggles of our lives.

What does the word "Lent" mean? It comes from the Latin word for spring, the season of the year when Lent occurs in the northern hemisphere. Lent is a time to pause, re-focus, and reflect on Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness and His journey to the cross. That's exactly what we're going to do: pause, re-focus, and reflect.

It's easy to get caught up in the routines of life—the normal, the mundane. Want to try something a little different for the next few weeks? How about stretching yourself to consider a new perspective?

As we consider this perspective together, let's focus on seven questions:

What's my perspective?

What about Jesus?

What about my life?

What about my junk?

Who *is* Jesus, really?

What does Jesus think of me?

Now what?

I hope these questions help you to sort through some of your own assumptions, questions, and struggles.

Enjoy the journey...

Pastor Ryan

## DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Not too long ago, I was talking with a good friend. We had been questioning, challenging, and discussing something important. (At least, it seemed important to us.) We went back and forth.

I said something.

She said something.

I said something back.

She shot back at me.

I said the most profound thing in the world.

She disagreed.

Finally, she said, "I think we just have different perspectives."

She was right: we did have different perspectives. Isn't that a part of life? You're not the same as your neighbor, brother, or mother. You see life differently. Your angle on the world, its events, and what it all means is unique.

I'm glad you picked up these reflections. Life is hard. Life can be lonely. Life is exciting as well. Usually, it's everything in between. Life isn't always what you expect it to be.

If you've ever been surprised, disappointed, or challenged by life, then keep reading, and engage in these reflections. Consider your life and a new perspective. Through it, you will be introduced to a God who is active in your journey, wanting to give you a new perspective on life.

A new perspective never hurts, does it?

*O Lord, You have searched me and You know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar.* Psalm 139:1-2

**YOUR PERSPECTIVE:**

Think about your life. What phrase best describes your life?

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Ryan Peterson, a teaching pastor and Director of Next Generation Ministries at St. John Lutheran Church in Ellisville, Missouri, developed these *A New Perspective* reflections. Ryan has been on staff at St. John for over five years, serving in different capacities along the way. He has a passion for communicating the love of Jesus and moving people towards a deeper relationship with Jesus that shapes their entire life. You can find Ryan on Facebook, his blog, or out riding his bike, running, or hanging out with his awesome wife, Kristy, and really cool son, Andrew.

For more information on St. John, go to [www.stjstl.net](http://www.stjstl.net).

As the season of Lent arrives each year, Christians everywhere are drawn to the foot of the cross where Jesus laid down His life for us. It is a period of deep reflection, self-inspection, and ultimate awe at the magnitude of love God has shown a sinful, self-absorbed world. As Christians, we know that without Christ's saving work on our behalf there would be no true joy, no lasting happiness.

And how many are there among us who have no true joy because they do not know Jesus?

For those who do not yet know Jesus as their Savior or who are in a relationship with God that is still unsure, Pastor Ryan Peterson of St. John Lutheran Church in Ellisville, Missouri, has prepared *A New Perspective*. Read these engaging pages; share them with others. Let these straightforward messages focus your attention on the cross and a divine love that proved itself unstoppable when it came to reaching man.

You may well find this Lenten season is different for you. You may encounter a new perspective that changes everything. It is our prayer that you will.



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660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, St. Louis, MO 63141-8557  
1-800-876-9880 • [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org) • [www.lentendevotions.net](http://www.lentendevotions.net)