

# Lent Devotionals

## March 12 - 18



### Day 9 – Read Luke 6:1-26

The Pharisees were rule followers. They were extremely devoted to the law of Moses (commandments found in the first five books of the Old Testament). They were so extreme, in fact, that instead of simply obeying the laws themselves, they created thousands of tiny rules to interpret the law. Some describe this as two concentric circles. The inner circle is the Mosaic Law. The outer circle are rules that the Pharisees created to interpret the Law, essentially fencing it in or guarding it. The idea was that if one kept all the laws, one could not help but keep the actual Mosaic Law. Unfortunately, the resulting religion emphasizes performance, rather than God's love, justice, and mercy.

In today's passage, we see examples of the Pharisees attempting to trap Jesus in a violation of this law. Rather than debate their rules interpreting the Law of Moses, he asserts his authority (vs. 5) As One who created of the law, reminding all who will listen that following God is truly about loving God and loving others.

Dear God, as I walk through this day, help me to follow you by loving you with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind. Help me to share your love with the people you bring into my life. Amen. -Amanda Rue

### Day 10 - Read Luke 6:27-49

Christ triggers a change of thought when He speaks this passage (Luke 6:27-28). In the Old Testament, it was 'eye for eye' action against your enemy. But Christ flips that on its head when He challenges:

- Love your enemies.
- Do good to those who hate you.
- Bless those who curse you.
- Pray for those who mistreat you.

Whoa God! That is going a little too far!

Bless your enemy - did I just hear you right? Are you telling me I cannot obtain my own justice?

This section offers powerful guidance on how to handle our enemies. Especially that of "pray for those who mistreat you".

Christ did not call upon us to pray a "*Lord Wipe them Out!*" type prayer (I have had to repent a number of those...), but He meant for us to have heartfelt prayers of "*Lord, bless their family. Lord, give them the wisdom they need. Lord, help them in their job. Lord, increase their finances. Lord, comfort them in their loss...*"

This is hard, especially towards those who wounded you deeply. Through my faith walk, when I pray for my enemy, my feelings toward them change. I start thinking, "*How can I bless and encourage them?*"

I have found those who are most mean actually are surprisingly vulnerable. When we start praying for them, God lends us His Eyes to peek deeper in their heart. Maybe they acted mean because their loved one is fighting cancer... Or they are wounded from childhood or marital abuse... Or they just lost their job... We don't know what has occurred, but God does.

So, next time instead of praying, "*God Wipe them Out!*" pray He gives you the ability to start blessing them.

Your encouragement may bring them closer to the eternal knowledge of Christ.

-Jen Einrem

## Day 11 - Read Luke 7:1-35

**“He stepped forward and touched the stretcher on which the dead man was being carried. Those carrying him stood still. Jesus said, “Young man, I say to you, get up.” The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.” Luke 7:14-15**

Jesus had compassion on a widow whose son had died, and when Jesus saw the man being carried, he reached out to him. Those who were carrying the young man’s body stopped and Jesus told the widow’s son to rise up and he did.

- 1) Have you experienced any similar miracles in your lifetime?
- 2) Why do you think so many miracles occurred in Jesus’ and his disciple’s lifetime?
- 3) Are there fewer miracles now than in New Testament times? Why or why not?

*-Jim Karn*

## Day 12 – Read Luke 7: 36-50

Throughout the New Testament, the Gospels have many examples of Jesus confronting the religious leaders and letting them know that their thinking is wrong. Most of those examples are written in a way that it seems Jesus was in constant conflict with the religious leaders. At least that’s the way I’ve always read them.

In today’s passage in Luke however, Jesus is invited to a meal at one of the religious leader’s homes. I have never been invited to someone’s home that I am in conflict with, but if I was I’m sure I would come up with an excuse to not go. Jesus not only goes, he takes the opportunity to teach this Pharisee a valuable lesson in a loving way.

Jesus asks which of the debtors will love the leader more. The Pharisee answers correctly and then Jesus goes on to compare this story the Pharisee seems to understand with the actions of both the woman and the Pharisee. Jesus shows us that, yes, he comes to forgive those of us with many sins, but he also comes to change the thinking of those that either don’t have many sins or think they don’t have many sins. No matter which group you associate with, Jesus came for you.

*-Jeremy Skoglund*

## Day 13 – Read Luke 8:1-25

Just by participating in reading the book of Luke this Lenten season, you are sowing seed, God’s word, into your life. Where is this seed falling? In the Parable of the Sower, the first of nearly thirty parables found in Luke, Jesus provides four possible responses to the word of God:

**Path** - Have heard the word, but allowed the devil to steal it from your heart (vs. 12)?

**Rock** - Are you accepting of this message, but only if it’s convenient (vs. 13)?

**Thorns** - Did you hear God’s word, but allow life’s worries, riches or pleasures to impede growth? (vs. 14)

**Good Soil** - Did you resolve to persevere? Did you hear God’s word and commit to it with a good and upright heart (vs. 15)?

Be encouraged, friends! Today is a new day. No matter where the seed fell yesterday, remember that “God is rich in mercy. He brought us to life with Christ while we were dead as a result of those things that we did wrong. He did this because of the great love that he has for us. You are saved by God’s grace!” (Ephesians 2:4-5) This Jesus, who calms the storms of life, has the power to heal, commands the wind and the waves and can cast out demons, loves you more than you’ll ever know. Resolve to take a step in your faith journey today. “Hear God’s word and put it into practice” (vs. 21).

Lord, thank you for your word. I receive it today and trust its power in my life. It is living, active and sharper than any two-edged sword. It illuminates my path and keeps me from sin. Give me the courage to live a pure life by living according to your word. Amen.

(Prayer based on Psalm 119:9-11, 105 NIV, Hebrews 4:12 CEB)

*-Amanda Rue*