

# LENT DEVOTION

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A believer is imputed with God's righteousness when God imparts His Righteousness to the believer. It is only the beginning and then comes the process of growing in Righteousness with the help of God's leading and guidance. A believer also needs 'training' in the process of growth in God's Righteousness. "All Scripture is given by God and is useful for teaching, for showing the people what is wrong in their lives (rebuking), for correcting (faults), and for training in Righteousness (that is, for training how to live right)" (2 Timothy 3:16). God Himself has taken the initiative to reveal Himself and His plan and purposes for His creation in the written Word called the "Scripture." It refers to the 66 books in the Bible and nothing more and nothing less. God took almost 1500 years to complete this book and in the process used almost 40 authors who lived in different regions, times, and cultures. But still we can see a 'continuity' and 'coherence' as you read this book from page 1 to the last one. That is the uniqueness of this book and it has the power to change the lives of the people for the better. "How can a young man live a pure life? By obeying your "Word" (Psalm 119:9). When taken seriously and sincerely studied and obeyed the Scriptures has the power to change any person. "I have taken your words to heart so I would not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

The prophet Isaiah pictures the work of the Word of God as follows: "Rain and snow fall from the sky and don't return without watering the ground. They cause the plants to sprout and grow, making seeds for the farmer and bread for the people. The same thing is true of my Words; they will not return to me empty. They make the things happen that I want to happen, and they succeed in doing what I send them to do" (Isaiah 55:10--11). Friends, we learn from the negative examples as well from the positive ones. We are given the principles and the precepts for holy and righteous living in the Bible. We, in fact, need to spend more time in reading, studying and meditating on the Word of God. It gives you and I the timely advice and tools needed for us to make the right decisions in every step of our way. In fact Jesus Himself, while tempted used the Scripture (Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:16; and 6:13).

"Do what God's Word says: when you only listen and do nothing, you are fooling yourselves. Those who hear God's Word and do nothing are like people who look at themselves in a mirror. They see their faces and then go away and quickly forget what they looked like. But the truly happy people are those who carefully study God's perfect law that makes people free, and they continue to study it. They do not forget what they heard, but they obey what God's Word says. Those who do this will be made happy" (James 1:22--25). The Spirit of God through the Word of God works in the hearts of the people of God - not only enabling them to be "pure and blameless till the Lord's coming" (2 Thessalonians 5:23b) but also to stand firm and resist the Devil and his schemes by "taking the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).

Let us continue to take time to read, study, and meditate on the Word of God. That is the tool through which the Spirit of God chooses to work in our lives and provides the training in Righteousness.