

# 40-DAY LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

WELCOME TO YOUR 40-DAY LENTEN DEVOTION! LENT IS A PERIOD OF 40 DAYS EVERY YEAR IN WHICH WE REMEMBER THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE DEATH OF JESUS. THE PERIOD OF LENT IS NAMED AFTER AN OLD ENGLISH WORD MEANING "LENGTHEN" BECAUSE IT OCCURS IN THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN THE DAYS START TO GET LONGER. IT IS A TIME TO REFLECT AND PRAY AND CELEBRATE JESUS' RESURRECTION (EASTER!)

WHY DO PEOPLE HISTORICALLY GIVE THINGS UP?

THIS IS BASED ON THE STORY IN THE BIBLE WHERE JESUS GOES INTO THE WILDERNESS FOR 40 DAYS AND NIGHTS TO PRAY BEFORE APPROACHING HIS DEATH. WHILE IN THE DESERT, HE IS TEMPTED IN HIS HUNGER, BUT HOLDS HIS DEVOTION TO GOD IN HIS FASTING. WE GIVE THINGS UP TO MARK OUR SOLIDARITY AND LOVE IN CHRIST. ALTERNATIVELY (OR ADDITIONALLY!), YOU CAN TAKE SOMETHING ON IN LENT. FOR EXAMPLE, A NEW ACT OF KINDNESS, A GOAL, OR A PRAYER PRACTICE.

THIS 40-DAY DEVOTION IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY EXPERIENCE THE HOLINESS OF LENT AT HOME.

EACH DAY INCLUDES WORDS FROM JESUS, A WONDERING QUESTION, AND A SUGGESTION FOR ACTION.

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LET'S BEGIN!

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DAY

1

***"Come follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people" – Mark 1:17***

Jesus said this when asking people to follow him.

Q: What does it mean to you to follow Jesus?

Act: Tell someone like a teacher or a parent how much you appreciate them and how much they mean to you.

DAY

2

***"We should travel elsewhere to the other towns around here where I can preach there too. That is the reason I came" – Mark 1:38***

This is at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry. He declares that he will travel to spread the message of God.

Q: What do you take with you when you travel or go somewhere important?

Act: Write a message of love to post on your window or door.

DAY

3

***"People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"– Matthew 4:4***

Jesus said this when he was in the wilderness after 40 days and he was very hungry. He was being tempted to break his fast.

Q: What does it feel like to be hungry?

Act: Bake bread together as a family (or help out making dinner!)

DAY

4

***"You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world" – Matthew 5:14***

Jesus said this when he was giving a very famous sermon telling people about God and what God calls us to do.

Q: What do you think God-colours look like?

Act: Draw a colourful image of what you think God colours looks like and give it to someone in your life. .who needs the colours.

SUNDAY

*Sabbath day.  
Today, we rest.*



DAY

5

***“Let your light shine before others” – Matthew 5:16***

Jesus is speaking on the mountain inspiring us on how to live in the world. He tells us that, just like God, we have light to shine.

Q: What colour is your light?

Act: Make a drawing or painting of what your light looks like for the world. Give it to someone who may need a little more colour and light in their day.

DAY

6

***“I’m telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst” – Matthew 5:4***

Jesus is still giving his sermon when talking about loving our enemies.

Q: What does it feel like to forgive someone who has hurt your feelings? Can you feel God in those moments?

Act: Think about someone you need to forgive, or someone you need to ask forgiveness from.

DAY

7

***“Your heart will be where your treasure is” – Matthew 6:21***

Jesus says this when talking about storing up treasures and material possessions, to which he tells us that our biggest treasure is our heart.

Q: What is your favourite possession? Could you live without it for a day? A week?

Act: Go through your toys and see if there’s anything you don’t use anymore that you could donate.

DAY

8

***"God will certainly care for you and clothe you" –  
Matthew 6:30***

Jesus says this while assuring us that God will care for us.

Q: What does it feel like to know God will care for you?

Act: Go through your clothes and see if there's anything you don't use anymore that you could donate.

DAY

9

***"Continue to ask, and God will give to you. Continue to search, and you will find" – Matthew 7:7***

Jesus says this while continuing to preach to a crowd of people about how to follow God.

Q: How has God helped you in unexpected ways? Sometimes, we receive messages or gifts from God that don't look like what we asked for... can we still be grateful?

Act: Make greeting cards or messages of love and care and put them in mailboxes around your neighbourhood.

DAY

10

***"Do to others as you would have them do to you" – Luke 6:31***

Jesus says this as a part of his sermon on the mountain, helping us to understand what we call the "golden rule."

Q: What does it mean to treat others the way you want to be treated? Or even, the way they want to be treated?

Act: Do something nice for someone today without any expectation of reward or praise.

SUNDAY

*Sabbath day.  
Today, we rest.*



DAY

11

***"Give as freely as you have received" – Matthew 10:8***

Jesus says this while giving instructions to his disciples (the people who follow him), encouraging them to be generous.

Q: What has been the best gift you have ever given?

Act: Write down 5 things you are grateful for today.

DAY

12

***"Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads. I will give you rest" – Matthew 11:28***

Jesus is telling all who will listen that he will carry their heavy loads, which is like saying, he will help them and take care of them.

Q: When has someone carried something heavy for you? How did that feel?

Act: Think about something you can do today to help someone else. (And then do it!)

DAY

13

***"Don't be afraid. Take courage! I am here!" – Matthew 14:27***

Jesus says this as he walks on water and encourages his disciples to join him. They are afraid, but he tells them to have courage and not be afraid.

Q: What are some of the things you are afraid of?

Act: Make a courage badge out of construction paper and a safety pin. Decorate the badge with words or images that remind you to have courage.

DAY

14

***"Let the little children come to me" – Matthew 19:14***

Jesus asked his disciples to bring him children to bless, but the disciples didn't see why that was important.

Q: Do you ever feel like adults don't take you seriously?

How does that make you feel?

Act: Make a poster for yourself that says "God loves me" or "God sees all of my gifts" and decorate it with all the things you love to do, and the gifts that you give the world! YOU are so special to God.

DAY

15

***"With God, all things are possible" – Matthew 19:26***

Jesus says this while talking to followers about how we live faithfully on earth and in heaven, and the trust we can have in God to help us.

Q: What do you think heaven looks like?

Act: Make a list of all the dreams for your life! Where do you want to go? Who do you want to meet? What do you want to be proud of? Write them all down and ask God to support you.

DAY

16

***"Love your God with all your heart, soul and mind" – Matthew 22:37***

*Jesus says this when asked what the greatest commandment of all is. Commandments are like guidelines for us to follow as people of faith.*

Q: How do you love God with all your heart, soul and mind?

Act: Use words, art or silent prayer to express how much you love God!

SUNDAY

*Sabbath day.  
Today, we rest.*



DAY

17

***"Love your neighbour as you love yourself" – Matthew 22:39***

Jesus says this is the second most important commandment (remember... like a guideline!)

Q: How much do you love yourself? How much do you love your friends, neighbours and family?

Act: Bake something for a neighbour. Or draw a card or picture for them.

DAY

18

***"For I did not come to be served, but to serve"***  
**- Mark 10:45**

Jesus says this to his disciples as they travel and talk about what it means to be called to serve others.

Q: What does it mean to you to serve others?

Act: Think of the ways you can serve those around you today: help with dinner, clean up, take a meal to someone in need. And then do it!

DAY

19

***"For God loved the world so much that God gave God's only Son, so that whoever believes in God may have eternal life"*** - John 3:16

Jesus says this as he teaches people about how to be born anew – once they have already been born. Jesus explains that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of the water and the Spirit (which we now mark as Baptism).

Q: Do you remember your Baptism? What do you remember about Baptisms you've seen at church? What makes them special?

Act: Get a little bowl of water and with a bit of water on your finger mark each person in your family with a sign of a cross, saying "Remember your Baptism" to help each other remember the love God has for us all.

DAY

20

***"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the fullest"*** - John 10:10

In teaching about God, Jesus tells a story about a shepherd and sheep. Jesus is the shepherd who guides us and takes care of us, and we are the sheep. So that we may have life to the fullest.

Q: Who are the shepherds in your life?

Act: Spend some quality time taking care and playing with a pet you may have. If you don't have a pet, think about how you can support animals in need through a local shelter or humane society.

DAY

21

***"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep" – John 10:11***

This is a continuation of Jesus describing himself as a shepherd and us, the sheep.

Q: Are there people in ur society today who are responsible for the livelihood of others? (Think of nurses, doctors, parents, etc.)

Act: Make a sign for your window or lawn that says thank you to everyone who is helping to keep us safe and healthy during this challenging time.

DAY

22

***"I am the way and the truth and the life" – John 14:6***

Jesus says this to comfort the disciples.

Q: How do you know that something is true?

Act: Go the whole day saying only things that are 100% true! At the end of the day, reflect on whether that is what you do every day. If it's not, how can you incorporate truth-telling more in your daily life?

SUNDAY

*Sabbath day.  
Today, we rest.*



DAY

23

***"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me"- John 14:1***

Jesus continues to comfort the disciples.

Q: How do you trust in God?

Act: Do some trust exercises with your family! Try "trust falls" or a "blindfold walk." Experience what it's like to trust someone and have them trust you.



DAY

24

***"If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it" – John 14:14***

Jesus says this as he is explaining to his disciples how God is in him and he is in God. Jesus is explaining the mutual relationship we can have with God.

Q: How does it feel to have a mutual relationship with God? Do you see God as your friend?

Act: Write a nice card for a friend telling them how much you love them.

DAY

25

***"Because I live, you will live too" – John 14:19***

Jesus says this as he starts to think about what we as followers will do when he is no longer with us on earth. He speaks about the Holy Spirit always living with us.

Q: How do you feel the Holy Spirit move through you? (Some people feel goosebumps and chills or a sense of peace when they light a candle or listen to music.)

Act: Take a few minutes to do some stretches and yoga poses. Breathe in deeply and exhale deeply. While you breathe in, invite the Spirit to come and enter you. After a few times, can you feel its presence in your body?

DAY

26

***"I leave you peace. My peace I give you" – John 14:17***

Jesus says this as he continues to explain the Holy Spirit.

Q: What does peace look and feel like for you?

Act: Say a prayer for peace for anyone living in fear and violence around the world. Can you think of any one or any place in particular to pray for?

DAY

27

***"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" - John 8:32***

Jesus said this as he was trying to inspire people to follow him and believe the truth that he was preaching about God.

Q: What does it feel like to be free? Are you holding on to anything (such as a negative body image) that blocks you from being free?

Act: Write or draw all those things holding you back, and then let them go. Rip them up!

DAY

28

***"Love each other. You must love each other as I have loved you" - John 13:34***

Jesus says this as he prepares to say goodbye to his followers. He gives this command to them as instructions on how to live and love.

Q: Who are all of the people you love (or at least as many as you can name without taking a breath)?

Act: Tell some of those people how much you love them! Call them or write to them.

SUNDAY

*Sabbath day.  
Today, we rest.*



DAY

29

***"I am the light of the world" - John 8:22***

Jesus says this to the disciples as he is explaining the light and power of God's love in our lives.

Q: What does the difference of light and dark mean to you?

Act: Light a candle to mark and remember the light of Christ in our lives.

DAY

30

***"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them" – 1 John 4:16***

Jesus is explaining to his followers how the love of God works.

Q: What does "living in love" look like to you? What does it feel like?

Act: Can you spend the day living in love as you have just described it?

DAY

31

***"Those who are sad now are happy. God will comfort them" – Matthew 5:4***

Jesus says this as a part of his famous sermon on the mountain describing to people how God works in our lives.

Q: When do you feel sad?

Act: Do you know anyone in your life who is sad right now? Reach out to them and tell them you're thinking and praying for them.

DAY

32

***"Do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" – Matthew 6:34***

Jesus tells us to not worry about material things in our lives.

Q: What are some things that worry you?

Act: Write down on paper some of those things that you're worried about and as a family do something symbolic to let the worries go and give them to God. (Burn them safely, rip them up, throw them away.)

DAY

33

***"Your faith is strong. Go in peace" – Luke 7:50***

Jesus says this to a woman he meets who shows great love in God.

Q: What does having strong faith look and feel like?

Act: Send messages of peace to those in your life who need them.

DAY

34

***"Bring the bread and the fish to me" - Matthew 14:18***

Jesus says this just before he performs a miracle by multiplying a small amount of food into enough to feed 5,000 people.

Q: How does it make you feel that some people in the world go hungry from lack of food? Have you ever felt worried about when your next meal will be?

Act: As a family, decide which items in your home you can donate to a food bank. If you're not in a position to do that, make a meal together as a family and tell each other some things that you're grateful for.

SUNDAY

*Sabbath day.  
Today, we rest.*



DAY

35

***"Your faith is small, why did you doubt?"  
- Matthew 14:31***

Jesus tells Peter to join him by as he walks on water, but Peter is afraid to do this and ends up calling on Jesus to rescue him.

Q: Why do you think Peter doubted?

Act: Encourage those around you today to reach their goals and tasks.

DAY

36

***"Go and be like that kind person" - Luke 10:37***

Jesus says this after telling the parable of the Good Samaritan, instructing us to be like the kind and helpful person in the parable.

Q: How do you react when you see people who need help on the street?

Act: Brainstorm all the ways you could help those in need. (Maybe a smile, some food, a loonie or a toonie ...?)

DAY

37

***"You are worried about many things, but few things are needed - or indeed only one." - Luke 10:41***

Jesus says this to Martha who is hosting Jesus and is upset that her sister, Mary, is not helping to prepare a meal but instead just talking to Jesus. Jesus tries to tell Martha that the fellowship and conversation is all that is needed.

Q: At a party, would you rather help make and serve food or talk with all the guests?

Act: Have dinner together tonight as a family and choose several topics to chat about.

DAY

38

***"Take this bread and eat it. This is my body" - Matthew 26:26***

Jesus says this as he shares a final meal with his disciples. He takes the bread and uses it as a symbol for his body. He asks that whenever we eat this, we remember him. Today, we remember that last meal he shared with his disciples.

Q: Have you had communion yet at church? What does that experience feel like?

Act: Break bread with your family tonight and all share one thing you remember about Jesus.

DAY

39

***"My heart is full of sorrow and breaking with sadness. Stay here with me and watch" - Matthew 26:28***

Today we mark Good Friday, which is the day Jesus dies. Jesus says these words to Peter while he sits and prays in the garden, the night before he is killed. He knows what is coming and is asking for someone to stay with him.

Q: Have you ever needed someone to just sit with you while you are sad or scared? What did that feel like?

Act: Say a prayer for Jesus and for all those suffering and in pain.

DAY

40

***"Yes, I am" - Matthew 27:11***

When Jesus was asked "Are you the King of the Jews?" he responded, "Yes, I am." These three simple words led to his death because, although God made Jesus our leader, other powerful leaders felt threatened by his.

Q: What are your favourite qualities in a leader?

Act: Take on those qualities that you admire and try to be a good leader today.