

# The **ACT** of **LENT**



**Preparation, Prayer & Daily Action  
for Teens and Young Adults**

# The ACT of LENT

## A Clean Start

Ash Wednesday

*Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Psalm 51:2*

When someone hands me a pile of clean, fresh clothes, I love to feel each warm, soft piece. I even like to smell the fresh scent. It's much nicer than that pile under my bed!

Yeah, clean things are definitely better than dirty things. But washing them is hard, like trying to wash my dog, who struggles to run away from the water.

Sometimes I can be like that. I want to be clean, but I don't always like to wash out my selfish ways. Luckily, God will do that for me. Lent is a time to remember that I just have to hold still and let him wash my sins away.

**ACTing It Out**

*Find something dirty—I mean really dirty—and wash it today.*

## Get A Grip!

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

*Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days ... Deuteronomy 30:19-20*

Lent is starting—wait, Lent has already begun! What should we give up this year? What are we going to do? Hold on! Before we start worrying, remember that God doesn't need us to fix all our problems. All God asks is that we love him and obey him. When we grab on to God's love, we are given all the time we need.

### **ACTing It Out**

*Keep a small item like a cross, stone, charm or card in your pocket. As you go about your day, hold it in your hand as a reminder that God is with you.*

## **The Lowdown**

**Friday after Ash Wednesday**

*Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head ... and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Isaiah 58:5*

The fasting God wishes is “to let the oppressed go free,” to “share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless... into your house” ( v. 6-7). It is more important to share your gifts and blessings with others—especially the needy—than to get caught up in deeds that draw attention to yourself or rituals that make you feel self-satisfied. Do you want to fast? Do you want to please the Lord? Then go help someone in need.

### **ACTing It Out**

*When you see someone in need this weekend, humble yourself and serve his or her needs: food, clothing, money, a smile or even just some time hanging out.*

## **Jesus Points Out The Way**

**Saturday after Ash Wednesday**

*If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil... Isaiah 58:9*

There's there's a saying that goes, when you point your finger, there are three pointing back at you. It means that we should be

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more concerned with the way we treat others than with the way others treat us.

Jesus did not come to earth to condemn us. He came to set us free from sin and death.

## **ACTing It Out**

*Instead of pointing out mistakes and faults, point out someone's good traits. When you notice some one helping out or following God's ways, point to that person by giving him or her a compliment or word of thanks.*

## **Open Your Eyes!**

**Sunday, the First Week**

*Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. Genesis 3:7*

As soon as they took a bite of forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve became afraid. Why? Because their eyes were opened to their sin. They knew they were deserving of punishment. So they hid in the trees. They even made the world's first clothes to protect their bodies from harm.

Can you see your sins? Or are you blind to them? Don't be afraid to admit you were wrong; we all make mistakes sometimes. If you want to make things better, just tell God you are sorry, and ask for God's help to do better.

## **ACTing It Out**

*Hold open your arms and hands as you pray to know God better. Then open your Bible and read God's word.*

# Drop The Load

Monday, the First Week

*You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself I am the LORD. Leviticus 19:18*

When we “bear” something, we use our strength to lift and carry the weight of a load. Jesus bore many things. He carried the weight of the cross and lifted the load of our sins. They must have been very heavy!

If we bear a grudge against someone, our need to get even with that person becomes a burden that gets heavier and heavier. But when we forgive him or her, the weight falls off our shoulders.

## ACTing It Out

*Find a heavy item. When you pick it up, think of someone you have been angry or vengeful with, and when you let go of it, forgive that person in your heart.*

# Pray Simply

Tuesday, the First Week

*When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Matthew 6:7*

Imagine that you are preparing to go outside. You have on a shirt and some pants, but the weather report shows that’s not enough. So you put on a sweater, a pair of shoes and a hat. But that’s still not enough! You add some gloves, a coat and a second pair of socks. Pretty soon you can hardly move, and you feel like a heap of clothing!

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Sin put us in a state of inaction. We were not doing God's will. We were not following as we should. God set a plan in motion to get us moving toward paradise again. Through the perfect, sinless actions of a Savior, we are blanketed with God's righteousness. We can be seen as God's perfect creations again! This booklet of devotions for teens and young adults puts attention, first, on the loving action God took to claim us as his own and then on our active response to God's saving grace. Daily Scripture and faith-full action prompts accompany each daily devotional thought.