

# Lenten Reflection

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In the today's world it is very easy to get caught and enamored with having possessions. It is easy to get obsessed with computers , tablets and all of the other things that help us to save time and to be able to get things done in our buy lives. Materialism is a part of our society today.

We see Church membership and participation dwindling. We see crime, poverty and injustice all around us. The Lord is working very hard to show us the Law of God. The problem is that too many people have no interest in the Law of God. The devotion to material possessions borders on adoration. Yes, these same people get angry with God when they have stress in their lives. They have limited coping skills and do not know what to do or how to manage their feelings. They have limited faith and want to treat faith as a coat you put on when you need to put it on. The worshiping of idols is rampant and is not going to go away.

We cannot and will not judge these people. We will not preach in their faces and lead them into Church against their will. What we are called to do is live a life that is an example of what the Law of God tells us. Be kind to others, be patient, respect the rights of others and accept the person for who they are. Scripture says that God sent his angels and we do not know who these angels will appear as. Maybe the very person who is irritating us the most that day is sent to us that day. We need to resist the urge to correct everything and everyone. We often hear another person say “I will straighten them out.”

If the authority of position is there that is one thing. If the need to “put someone in their place” is the goal, that is another. Spite, jealousy and meanness are not what we are to be manifesting. You might not like a person or their actions, but that does not give you the right to interfere or try to change them. These kinds of interactions are hurtful, and they do harm. Mind your own business. Tend to your own shortcomings. That is what the Lord wants of us. He wants us to be the best we can be. He wants us to live in harmony with others and to accept them as he accepts them.

Accusing, mind reading, and all of that have no place here. The Lord is kind and merciful. He is slow to anger and quick to forgive. The Lord sees the intentions of our hearts and the Lord is the one who will judge us when it is our time. He has given us all of the tools to live a happy and peaceful life. He has shown us what he wants. The Scriptures are full of stories of the Lord's forgiveness and acceptance and of his mercy. We are human - not divine - we need to be the people that we have the ability to be.

Years ago I worked with a physician who did not dress in fine clothes. In fact, he often looked like a beggar. It was always amazing how many people who did not know him snubbed him and made hurtful comments to him. He went about his business being an excellent physician. One day a group of us were talking and he told us why he dressed as he did. He told us that his gifts were from the Lord, the gifts of healing, of compassion and of serving. That was his mission. He also told us that he watched for the expression in people's eyes to change when they were treated by him. His clothes faded away and only the man was what they saw.

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.