

A LIVING FAITH Lesson on SELF DISCIPLINE

- Theme:** The Season of Lent;
Planting seeds of love in the hearts of others.
- Object:** An old shoe box, a broom, and a flower pot with small hand shovel. *(Use these as you teach the lesson.)*
- Scripture:** **Ephesians 1:3 (RSV or KJV)**
Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.



Paree Looy!

Today is the beginning of a very important season in our church year- the season of Lent. Do you remember how long Lent lasts? That's right, Lent is the 40 days before Palm Sunday, which leads right in to Holy Week and Easter Sunday. The word "Lent" comes from another word "Lencten" which means spring. That makes sense...since Lent and Easter always happen during springtime.

As I was thinking about Lent and springtime, I realized that many of the things I like to do in the springtime are similar to the kinds of things you and I can and should do during Lent as we prepare for Easter. Let me explain.

In the springtime, I like to OPEN UP. I open up my windows and let fresh spring air fill my home. **For Lent**, a great thing to do is OPEN UP our Bibles and read them more. When we read our Bibles, God speaks a fresh word to us and fills our hearts with His presence. Use **self discipline** to read your Bible by putting it someplace easy to access.

In the springtime, I like to CLEAR OUT- especially the clutter in my closets. I go through my closets and take out the things I don't really need: heavy coats, old shoes- things that will just be in the way. **For Lent**, it is good to CLEAR OUT the things in our lives that we don't really need—things that get in the way of following our Lord Jesus Christ. For example, maybe you watch TV or play video games a lot. Why not put them away for a while and use that extra time to pray. Use **self discipline** to know when you've had enough "screen" time and pray for what really matters.

In the springtime, I always need to SWEEP UP. I try to find and clean up all the dirt in my home that has been hiding all winter- like under my rugs, dirt that no one else sees, but dirt that I know is there. **For Lent**, it is good to ask ourselves, "Have I made any mistakes or messes that I need to clean up? Do I need to apologize to someone for something I said or did? Do I need to ask God to forgive me? Use **self discipline** to take action and challenge yourself in this area . . . taking the first step is hardest, but you'll feel so good once you've gone the full distance!

In the springtime, I love to PLANT. I plant seeds in my garden pots and water them as I wait and watch them grow into something beautiful. **For Lent**, it is good for us to PLANT- different kind of seeds. We can plant seeds of love in the hearts of others when we are kind, or helpful, or when we tell someone about Christ. For Lent, think of something you can do that will become something beautiful for someone else, and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, the one who did something really beautiful for you. Use **self discipline** to make this happen for someone who really needs Christ in his/her life .

Dear Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ, We love you. Help us to Open up our Bibles, Clear Out our clutter, Sweep up our messes, and Plant the seeds of your Love. Amen.