

## Four Gifts Devotional- Week Three- Righteousness

By Sharon Stults

### Day One

**Verse:** “Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever,” Daniel 12:3 NLT.

### To Think About

Righteousness is a big Bible word. There is an easy way to understand it. See that word “right” inside the bigger word? That is our clue. Righteousness means to act and think right. How do we know what is right? God tells us in the Bible. He gives us laws and commands. Let’s put that all together. A righteous person obeys God.

Some people don’t know how to act right because they don’t know God. My grandpa Robins was a pastor, but he did not always know Jesus. When he was young, Charley Robins talked dirty. He stole money from people by cheating them at card games and pool. Charley was also a ship builder by trade. One day he fell all the way from the top of a ship’s mast to the floor of the deck. He broke so many bones, the doctors told him there was nothing they could do.

Charley laid in his hospital bed and cried. He didn’t want to die. One day, a week later, a bright light appeared in Charley’s hospital room. Standing inside that light was Jesus. My grandpa knew it was Jesus because God helped his mind to see and understand. Jesus said, “Charley, I love you and I will heal you. I want you to serve me the rest of your life. I want you to tell other people about me.” That day, my grandpa changed from a sinful man to a righteous man.

Jesus healed Charley and changed him from a foolish thief to a wise man. He didn’t steal anymore. He became a pastor and preached about the light of Christ. He showed people how to accept Jesus as their Savior. My grandpa shone “bright as the sky.”

The prophet Daniel connects light and righteousness just like the Apostle Paul did in Ephesians 5:8-9. When God repeats something in his Word, we better pay attention.

God wants you and me to act and talk right so we can be bright like the sky too.

When others act wrong, but we act right, we point people to Jesus’ light.

When others talk ugly, but we talk right, we point people to Jesus’ light.

**Prayer:** God, help me to speak and act right so I can show others who you are.

**Just for fun:** Here’s some wonderful books for kids and adults with stories of people who lived the light of Christ and led others to him.

[\*The Lightkeeper Series- Ten Girls Who Changed the World \(plus four more volumes\)\*](#)

[\*The Lightkeeper Series-Ten Boys Who Changed the World \(plus four more volumes\)\*](#)

[\*Same Kind of Different as Me\*](#) Awesome book also made into a movie. A must read.

## Day Two- Week Three-Righteousness

**Verse:** “All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants,” John 3:20-21 NLT.

### To Think About

When I was little my mom received a special perfume from my Dad. It was in a pretty bottle and sat on her bedroom vanity. One day, I picked it up to smell it. My mom said, “Sharon, please don’t play with that. I don’t want you to spill it.” I felt angry that my mom scolded me.

Later, I snuck back into my parent’s bedroom. I took the top of the perfume bottle off just to smell it but spilled perfume on the vanity. Oh no! I knew my mom would smell it when she went to bed. I opened her bedroom window. I ran to the bathroom to grab a rag.

After I wiped up the spill, I saw a terrible thing. The perfume left a stain on the vanity. It took the color and shine off the wood. Oh no! I did not know what to do. I tried to cover up the stain with the perfume bottle. Maybe Mom would think it leaked. I felt sick. Mom would see that stain when she got ready for bed. As soon as she turned on the lamp on her vanity, she would see it. All day I feared her turning on that light. She would know it was me that spilled the perfume.

This is what Jesus is talking about in our verse. People who do wrong things like dark better than light.

Thieves

Liars

Cheaters

Bullies

All these people like to hide what they are doing. They don’t want bright lights and other people watching what they are doing. That is the opposite of how we act in the royal family of God. Christians who speak and do right love the light. They want lost people to see the good things that we do and say in our kingdom family. We don’t try to hide our good works and our actions. Today, think about what you do and say.

Are you telling the truth or lying about something?

Are you using kind words with your family or nasty ones?

Are you helping or hurting?

**Prayer:** God help me do right things today and walk in the light. Forgive me for when I don’t.

**Just for fun:** *Here’s a link to some Christmas luminaries (lights) you can make yourself.*

[DIY Christmas Luminaries](#)

## Day Three-Week Three-Righteousness

**Verse:** “The LORD is more pleased when we do what is right and just than when we offer him sacrifices,” Proverbs 21:3.

### To Think About

Most of us know about King David. How about King Saul, the king before David? Did you know that God told King Saul he could not be king anymore because he did not do the right thing? Wait! How is that fair? Didn't David do wrong things too? He stole Bathsheba from her husband. How come he still got to be king? Let's look at Saul first.

God chose Saul to be the first king of Israel. In the beginning, he did a great job. He did right things and made God happy. Then, Saul started to think he was hot stuff. The Bible calls that pride. That's a sin God hates. It is the reason Satan was tossed out of heaven. Saul thought that he did not have to obey God's commands. First, Saul offered a sacrifice that only a prophet was supposed to offer. He never said he was sorry about that.

Second, God commanded Saul and his army to conquer the Amalekites. He told them not to keep any of the Amalekite's stuff. Saul kept lots of stuff. After that, God said, “You're done, Saul. David is the new king.” God wanted Saul to do the right things, not offer sacrifices.

King David sinned too when he stole Bathsheba from her husband. The reason David kept his crown was because he told God he was sorry. He turned away from doing wrong. He asked God to forgive him and God did. Saul did wrong things and never told God he was sorry.

Saul is a warning for us. God wants us to obey his commands more than he wants us to do nice things for him. I can think of times in life, when I did good stuff for God but didn't obey him.

- I went to church and praised God with singing, but I fought with my brothers in the car all the way there. I disobeyed God's ideas about love in 1 Corinthians 13.
- I donated time to a local school, painting, and cleaning, then I complained about how tired I was. I disobeyed God's command about complaining in Philippians 2:14.

Can you think of times when you did a good thing for God but then turned around and disobeyed him about something else? Don't be like King Saul. Be like King David. Tell God you are sorry when you talk or act wrong. Ask him to forgive you. Do not let pride get you in trouble with God.

**Prayer:** God, I want to obey your commands. Help me to show others your light by being humble and obeying you.

**Just for fun:** Read the story of King Saul's life and failures at one of these links.

[King Saul's story for High School and older](#)

[King Saul's story for kiddos](#)

## **Day Four-Week Three- Righteousness**

**Verses:** “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance,” 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT.

### **To Think About**

We learned from Saul yesterday that doing right means to obey God’s commands. There are a lot of commands in the Bible! Jesus made it simple. He said, “Love God and then love your neighbor. No other commands are more important than these two.” Tomorrow we will look at the “love God,” part. Today, let’s think about the “love your neighbor,” part. (Mark 12:29-31) The Apostle Paul helps us out in our verses for today. He made a list of what love looks and acts like. Here it is in my words:

- Love is calm and keeps a good attitude when people and things move slowly. Love waits calmly for God to do things.
- Love is sweet to people, even when they are not.
- Love does not act ugly when someone else has something they want.
- Love does not toot its own horn.
- Love does not think they are smarter or better than others. People of love obey God’s commands too. They don’t act like they are smarter than God.
- Love is polite and uses nice words and manners.
- Love does not pitch a fit when it doesn’t get its way.
- Love is never snarky.
- Love does not hold a grudge.
- Love is not happy when other people are treated meanly. Especially people they don’t like.
- Love always wants the truth to win.
- Love is not a quitter.
- Love believes in God even when life is hard.
- Love is upbeat and positive.

Whew! Did you see some places in that list where you are not acting like Love? I sure did. We cannot act right, without God’s help. That is why he gave us the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit will teach us and guide us, so we think, talk and act right.

**Prayer:** God fill me with your love today. Forgive me for not thinking, talking, or acting in love. Holy Spirit change me on the inside.

**Just for fun:** Watch one of the movies or read, “How the Grinch Stole Christmas.” Take note of all the ways the Grinch is the opposite of our list from 1 Corinthians 13.

## Day Five-Week Three-Righteousness

**Verses:** “Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it,” James 4:17 NLT. “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. By chance, a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by,” Luke 10:30-31 NLT.

### To Think About

Did you know that you can sin by doing nothing? Sometimes we sin by doing and saying the wrong thing. Other times, we sin when we know the right thing to do but we don't do it. In Luke 10, Jesus tells his followers the story of the Good Samaritan. The priest walked past the Jewish man in trouble. Did he beat him up? No. Did he steal his clothes? No. Okay, so he didn't do those wrong things, but he still sinned. How? He did not stop and help the beaten man. That was the right thing to do at that moment, but he did not do it.

There are times when Christians sin because they are silent and still.

- A student is bullied by someone. Other students see it but say and do nothing.
- An older man struggles to shovel snow off his sidewalk. Neighbors see, but do not help.
- A woman takes earrings from a store and hides them in her purse. She walks out of the store without paying. Other customers see but say nothing to the store clerk.
- A person we know does not know Jesus. We do not share his light with that person because we are afraid they might think we are weird. We say nothing.
- We see someone who is sad. We are not sure what to say. We say nothing.

Can you think of times when you knew the right thing to do but did not do it? James tells us that is sin. Righteous people think, speak and act rightly wherever they are.

When we are afraid, we can ask God to help us do the right thing.

When we are tired, God will help us do the right thing.

When we are sad or sick, God can still help us do the right thing.

**Prayer:** God, we want to be like Jesus. He never ignored people and their needs. Help us to speak up and stand up for other people.

***Just for fun:** If your church has not joined Right Now Media yet, it's a great way to access thousands of Christian teaching series and videos. Corrie Ten Boom, a courageous woman, who stood up for what was right, has her story featured there. Other links are for other versions.*

[Corrie Ten Boom movie for kids](#)

[Corrie Ten Boom Book "The Hiding Place"](#) [Corrie Ten Boom movie on Amazon Prime](#)

