

December 08 | Sunday

Merry Christmas (and Mary too)

Read [Luke 1:26-45](#)



09 | Mon – Season’s greetings | Read [Luke 1:39-45](#)

On special holidays, it is common to hear people greeting those they know and even strangers with ‘Happy Thanksgiving’ or ‘Merry Christmas.’ It is a way to connect with others and remind us all of the joy this season can bring. See how Mary’s greeting affected Elizabeth and even her unborn baby. Have you experienced that kind of response to someone’s words? Your own cheerful words and smiles can give that same leap of joy to the person right in front of you.

10 | Tue – A mixed bag | Read [Proverbs 12:25](#)

Joy is magnified in this season but so is grief. Those you meet on the street may be dealing with family issues, financial strain, or recent losses that are still raw. Your greetings might not be well-received but it can lead you to pray for that person as you walk away or in the days to come. Especially in this time of year, will you allow the Holy Spirit to make you more aware of people who are struggling? Will you offer appropriate words of compassion and hope?

11 | Wed – Stressed? | Read [Matthew 12:34-35](#)

Jesus said that the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. Do you sometimes find yourself snapping at someone who was trying to be helpful? Impatient when you would normally be kind? If so, notice what is going on inside your own head and heart. Are you worried about things outside your control? Facing difficult situations that won’t go away just because it is Christmas? Will you release those things to the One who understands?

12 | Thu – Good religion | Read [James 1:19, 26 and 3:9-10](#)

Have you ever connected your religion with the way you use your tongue? James sets the standard and then describes what nullifies it. While a person may be very self-disciplined in eating/exercise, they can cause damage to others by not watching their words. And it erodes your credibility as a Christian. The best way to successfully *stop* a habit is to replace it with another. What are some ways a person could be more self-disciplined in their speech?

13 | Fri – A sharp contrast | Read [1 Samuel 25](#)

Words you use can spark life or kill the spirit. In this story, contrast the words of Nabal in v. 10-11 and his wife Abigail’s in 23-31. What were the results of each in verses 35-37? Have you ever found yourself in Nabal’s shoes? What would you have done differently? Or have you been in Abigail’s position trying to do damage control? If so, what happened? Are there ways you can prepare yourself before confronting a difficult person?

14 | Sat – A goal, a prayer, a promise | Read [Eph. 4:29-32](#) / [Ps. 19:14](#) / [Matt. 10:19-20](#)

Family celebrations can be challenging during the holidays. In Ephesians, Paul describes the goal you can set for yourself. In Psalm 19, David provided a prayer for help. And in Matthew, Jesus gives you a promise. No one is a perfect communicator but when your heart is in the right place, you will notice more peace; your words may have a more positive effect and you will certainly be honoring Jesus, the reason for the season. Merry Christmas!