

Luke 11:24-26 (KJV)

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. ²⁵And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. ²⁶Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

The key words in this passage is *he findeth it swept and garnished. Luke 11:25 (ESV)* And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order but the house is empty. The unclean spirit comes back and finds his old home swept clean and scrubbed down but vacant.

Luke 11:26 (ESV) *Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first."*

In Lent, we talk a lot about getting rid of the things in our lives that keep us from God, getting rid of the demons that we have developed all through our lives up to now.

But that is only part of the task that faces us all. We have to fill up our lives with God so that we are not going to be in the same state of the person in today's Gospel.

Jesus tells us in ***John 14:23 (KJV)*** *If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

If we love Jesus we will keep his words, we will keep his commandments and then he and the Father will move into that house, into our souls and live there, make it their home, furniture, rugs, pictures on the walls, the whole maggilla.

Then the demon that we have run off will not have a place to come back home to.

Much less bring along with him seven friends that are worse than he was to start with.

Jesus tells us to keep his words, to keep his commandments in **John 15:10 (KJV)**

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

1 John 5:3 (KJV) *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

The key is to love God and keep his commandments.

What are His commandments for us to follow? Let us start with the most familiar, the one that we hear at each Eucharist.

Matthew 22:37-40 (KJV) *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

Then Jesus said, **John 13:34-35 (KJV)**

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Then, again, **John 15:12-13 (KJV)** *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

And again, **John 15:17 (KJV)** *These things I command you, that ye love one another.*

The job then is to love God and after that each other

We are commanded to stop making ourselves the center of the universe and to put God in the central place of our lives, to invite God to come and take up housekeeping in our souls.

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