

Today's Devotional is provided by Peter Covington

## PURIFICATION

Recently, my friend, Shalom, who comes from Israel, posted a picture of himself in a facial mask. My first reaction was to realize it was unlike any selfie I had seen. So I asked him about it.

He explained that it is for him a purification ritual as he prepares to worship each sabbath. He helped me understand that Jewish tradition takes a concrete, active approach to purification, such as cleaning all the leavening out of the house for Passover or the ancient temple practice of sacrificing an animal to bring purification from sin (the latter no longer done).

This contrasts with Christian practice which often sees purification as a matter of not doing something. Lent is a kind of purification ritual before Easter, so it seems a good time to consider a variety of methods to purify our hearts and minds in the days before Easter.



In moving back to the US, my finances have become increasingly difficult and a kind of scarcity mentality has set in upon me. I'm learning that spending regularly set times in praising God for his provision has a tremendously purifying effect on my mind.

I also have a bunch of things that I had to take out of storage and have filled my apartment. I am now on a regular mission to give things away, and continued thoughts of downsizing are a kind of meditation. This is similar to the more traditional methods of purification by giving up my comfort in owning things, but it is also active and creates a purifying experience. I had a doll house that my daughters used to love and found

a colleague at work who was glad to take it to his daughters, so purification brought the joy of sharing.

I've also found writing as a kind of purification meditation, whether it is writing some meditations for you or writing to my parents about the things I enjoy in life right now or writing to my boyfriend who is missing me terribly and having a tough time waiting to be together. Writing is both a ministry and a re-sorting of thoughts which, like housecleaning, knocks the dust off and let's more light in.

As I have pondered this, I have a few thoughts about some elements of active purification that can help it be a rich and healing experience.

I suggest thinking about what you have, what you do, and who you are. I also suggest engaging in active giving or doing or sorting or contributing, because the best purification rituals connect us back to God and/or other people. This can help us develop a more positive life focus.

This journey has helped me to purify before Easter, and I hope it might inspire you, too.